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CHAVCER.

Out of the old fields, as men ſayth,
Commeth all this new corn, fro yere to yere:
And out of old books, in good fayth,
Cõmeth al this new ſcience that men lere.

THE Workes of our Antient and Learned Engliſh Poet, GEFFREY CHAVCER, newly Printed.

In this Impreſsion you ſhall find theſe Additions.

1 His Portraiture and Progenie ſhewed.
2 His Life collected.
3 Arguments to euery Booke gathered.
4 Old and obſcure words explaned.
5 Authors by him cited, declared.
6 Difficulties opened.
7 Two Bookes of his, neuer before Printed.

LONDON,
Printed by Adam Iſlip, at the charges of Thomas Wight. *Anno* 1598.

СНІСУСО ГВИЧУВА
ПИЛАЄЧЛА
ЗО
ЛНЕ УГАЄЧЛА

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TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE SIR *ROBERT CECIL* KNIGHT, PRINCIPAL SECRETARIE TO THE QVEENS MOST EXCELLENT MAIESTIE, CHAVNCELLOR OF THE DVCHIE OF LANCASTER, AND ONE OF HIR HIGHNES MOST HONOVRABLE PRIVIE COVNSEL.

THis book when it was firſt publiſhed in print (right Honorable) was dedicated to the Kings moſt excellent Maieſtie *Henry* the eight, who fauourably entertained the ſame, as a work deſeruing a worthy patrone. Theſe collections and corrections vpon Chaucer as they earneſtly deſire, ſo might they better haue deſerued acceptance at your honors hands, had they ben as fully perfected, as they haue beene painefully gathered. But what is now wanting through lacke of time, may happily hereafter be ſupplied. I truſt your Honor, for the Poets ſake, ſo much alwais liked of the learned, and commended by the beſt, will receiue withall this already done in the Poets behalfe, till longer time and further ſearch giue me better inſtructions. My dutifull remembrance of that honourable good Lady your mother, who gaue mee yearely exhibition all the time of my continuance in Cambridge, enforceth me to offer this ſlender preſent vnto your Honour, as a teſtimonie of the dutie, wherein I acknowledge my ſelfe bound both to her and hers during my life. And ſo crauing your honorable acceptance of the ſame, and patronage of my good meaning towards the Poet, I humbly take my leaue, beſeeching God long to continue your Honour in health and happineſſe.

Your Honors in all duty at commandement,

Tho. Speght.

To the Readers.

SOme few yeers past, I was requested by certaine Gentlemen my neere friends, who loued Chaucer, as he well deserueth; to take a little pains in reuiuing the memorie of so rare a man, as also in doing some reparations on his works, which they iudged to be much decaied by iniurie of time, ignorance of writers, and negligence of Printers. For whose sakes thus much was then by me vndertaken, although neuer as yet fully finished: First, His life collected. Secondly, The text by old written Copies corrected. Thirdly, Arguments to euery booke prefixed. Fourthly, Old words explaned. Fiftly, Difficulties opened. Sixtly, Authors by him cited, declared. Seuenthly, Sentences noted. Eightly, Some things of his added which neuer had bene printed. As that little which then was done, was done for those priuat friends, so was it neuer my mind that it should be published. But so it fell out of late, that Chaucers Works being in the Presse, and three parts thereof alreadie printed, not only these friends did by their Letters sollicit me, but certaine also of the best in the Companie of Stationers hearing of these Collections, came vnto me, and for better or worse would haue something done in this Impression. Whose importunitie hath caused me to commit three faults: first in publishing that which was neuer purposed nor perfected for open view: then, in putting diuerse things in the end of the booke, which els taken in time might haue bene bestowed in more fit place: lastly, in failing in some of those eight points, which might more fully haue bene performed, if warning and conuenient leisure had bene giuen. But seeing it is as it is, I earnestly entreat all friendly Readers, that if they find anie thing amisse they would lend me their skilfull helpe against some

other time, & I wil thankefully receiue their labors, assuring them that if God permit, I wil accompliſh whatſoeuer may be thought vnperfect. And if herein I be preuented, thoſe honeſt and learned Gentlemen that firſt ſet me on worke, haue promiſed to ſucceed mee in theſe my purpoſes. But howſoeuer it happen either in mine or their determination, I earneſtly entreat al to accept theſe my endeuours in beſt part, as wel in regard of mine owne well meaning, as for the deſert of our Engliſh Poet himſelfe: who in moſt vnlearned times and greateſt ignorance, being much eſteemed, cannot in theſe our daies, wherein Learning and riper iudgement ſo much flouriſheth, but be had in great reuerence, vnleſſe it bee of ſuch as for want of wit and learning, were neuer yet able to iudge what wit or Learning meaneth. And ſo making no doubt of the friendly acceptance of ſuch as haue taken pains in writing themſelues, and hoping wel alſo of all others, that meane to employ any labour in reading, I commit our Poet to your fauourable affection, and your ſelues to the protection of the Almightie.

F. B. to his very louing friend, T. S.

I Am ſorrie that neither the worthineſſe of *Chaucers* owne praiſe, nor the importunate praiers of diuerſe your louing friendes can yet mooue you to put into print thoſe good obſeruations and collections you haue written of him. For as for the obiections, that in our priuate talke you are wont to ſay are commonly alledged againſt him, as firſt that many of his wordes (as it were with ouerlong lying) are growne too hard and vnpleaſant, and next that hee is ſomewhat too broad in ſome of his ſpeeches, and that the worke therefore ſhould be the leſſe gratious: theſe are no cauſes, or no ſufficient cauſes to withhold from *Chaucer* ſuch deſert of glorie, as at your pleaſure you may beſtow vpon him. For firſt to defend him againſt the firſt reproofe.

It is well knowne to wiſe and learned men, that all languages be either ſuch as are contained in learning, or ſuch as be vſed amongſt men in daily practiſe: and for the learned tongues, they hauing *Iure teſtamentario*, their legacies ſet downe by them that be dead, wordes muſt bee kept and continued in them in ſort as they were left without alteration of the Teſtators wils in any thing. But for vſuall languages of common practiſe, which in choiſe of wordes are, and euer will bee ſubiect vnto chaunge, neuer ſtanding at one ſtay, but ſometimes caſting away old wordes, ſometimes renewing of them, and alwaies framing of new, no man can ſo write in them, as that all his wordes may remaine currant many yeares. Which thing *Horace* rightly noteth, where hee ſaieth, that words in common tongues, like vnto fruites, muſt of neceſſitie haue their buddings, their bloſſomings, their ripenings, and their fallings: ſo that it was impoſſible that either *Chaucer* or any man liuing could keep thē from falling after ſo long a time: And this hath happened amongſt the Latin writers themſelues, when the Latine tongue was a ſpoken tongue, as ours now is: for diuers of *Statius*, *Ennius*, and *Plautus* wordes haue beene long ſince by later Latiniſts reiected. But yet ſo pure were *Chaucers* wordes in his owne daies, as *Lidgate* that learned man calleth him *The Loadſtarre of the Engliſh language*: and ſo good they are in our daies, as Maiſter *Spencer*, following the counſaile of *Tullie in de Oratore*, for reuiuing of antient wordes, hath adorned his owne ſtile with that beauty and grauitie, which *Tully* ſpeakes of: and his much frequenting of *Chaucers* antient ſpeeches cauſeth many to allow farre better of him, then otherwiſe they would. And furthermore by your interpretation of the moſt vnuſuall words, that hardneſſe and difficultie is made moſt cleare and eaſie: and in the paines and diligence you haue vſed in collecting his life, mee thinkes you haue beſtowed

ſtowed vpon him more fauorable graces then *Medea* did vpon *Pelias*: for you haue reſtored vs *Chaucer* both aliue again and yong again, and deliuered many of the doubtfull coniectures they conceiued of him. And therefore though you haue not made euery thing perfect to your owne mind (for nothing at one time is both begun and perfected) yet ſince you haue opened the way to others, and attempted that which neuer was begun before you, your endeuours herein cannot bee but very well accepted, vnleſſe of ſuch as are more readie to find fault, then willing to amend.

Touching the inciuilitie *Chaucer* is charged withall; What Romane Poet hath leſſe offended this way then hee? *Virgil* in his *Priapus* is worſe by a thouſand degrees, and *Ouid* in *de Arte amandi*, and *Horace* in manie places as deepe as the reſt: but *Catullus* and *Tibullus* in vncleane wantonneſſe beyond meaſure paſſe them all. Neither is *Plautus* nor *Terence* free in this behalfe: But theſe two laſt are excuſed aboue the reſt, by their due obſeruation of *Decorum*, in giuing to their comicall perſons ſuch manner of ſpeeches as did beſt fit their diſpoſitions. And may not the ſame bee ſaied for *Chaucer*? How much had hee ſwarued from Decorum, if hee had made his Miller, his Cooke, and his Carpenter, to haue told ſuch honeſt and good tales, as hee made his Knight, his Squire, his Lawyer, and his Scholler tell? But ſhewing the diſpoſition of theſe meaner ſort of men, hee declareth in their prologues and tales, that their chiefe delight was in vndecent ſpeeches of their owne, and in their falſe defamations of others, as in theſe verſes appeareth:

Let be thy leud dronken harlotry,
It is a ſinne and eke a great folly
To apairen any man, or him defame,
And eke to bring wines in ſuch blame.

And a little after in excuſe of himſelfe for vttering thoſe broad ſpeeches of theirs, he vſeth theſe words:

Demeth not for Gods loue, that I ſay
Of euill entent, but that I mote reherce
Her tales all, ben they better or werce,
Or elſ falſen ſome of my matere.

So that no man can imagine in that large compaſſe of his, purpoſing to deſcribe all men liuing in thoſe daies, how it had beene poſſible for him to haue left vntouched theſe filthie delights of the baſer ſort of people.

And now to compare him with other Poets: His Caunterbury tales con-

taine

taine in them almoſt the ſame kind of Argument, that is handled in Comedies; his Stile for the moſt part is lowe and like vnto theirs; but herein they differ: *Terence* followeth *Plautus*, *Plautus Statius*, *Statius Menander*, and *Menander* other Græcians before him. The ring they beate is this, and farther they goe not: to ſhewe the wantonneſſe of ſome young women: the looſeneſſe of many young men: the craftie ſchoole-poynts of olde bawdes: the fawning flatterie of clawing Paraſites: the miſerie of diuers fonde fathers, who for ſauing their money keepe their ſonnes ſo long vnmarried, till in the ende they prouide ſome vnfortunate matches for themſelues: and their notable follie in committing theſe children of theirs, to the attendance of their leudeſt and worſt diſpoſed ſeruing men. *Chaucers* deuiſe of his Canterburie Pilgrimage is meerely his owne, without following the example of any that euer writ before him. His drift is to touch all ſortes of men, and to diſcouer all vices of that Age, and that he doth in ſuch ſort, as he neuer failes to hit euery marke he leuels at.

In his fiue Bookes of *Troylus* and *Creſide*, and the Booke of the praiſe of good women, and of the mercileſſe Ladie, and that of Blaunch, and of his Dreame (which is in your handes and was neuer yet imprinted) hee ſoareth much higher then he did in the other before: and in his *Troylus* is ſo ſententious, as there bee fewe ſtaues in that Booke, which are not concluded with ſome principall ſentence: moſt excellently imitating *Homer* and *Virgil*, and borrowing often of them, and of *Horace* alſo, and other the rareſt both Oratours and Poets that haue written. Of whome, for the ſweetneſſe of his Poetrie may be ſaide, that which is reported of *Steſichorus*: and as *Cethegus* was tearmed *Suadæ medulla*, ſo may *Chaucer* bee rightly called, The pith and ſinewes of eloquence, and the verie life it ſelfe of all mirth and pleaſant writing: beſides, one gifte hee hath aboue other Authours, and that is, by the excellencie of his deſcriptions to poſſeſſe his Readers with a ſtronger imagination of ſeeing that done before their eyes, which they reade, than any other that euer writ in any tongue. And here I cannot forget to remember vnto you thoſe auncient learned men of our time in Cambridge, whoſe diligence in reading of his workes them ſelues, and commending them to others of the younger ſorte, did firſt bring you and mee in loue with him: and one of them at that time was and now is (as you knowe) one of the rareſt Schollers of the worlde. The ſame may bee ſaide of that worthy man for learning, your good friend in Oxford, who with many other of like excellent iudgement haue euer had *Chaucer* in moſt high reputation.

Now (M. *Speght*) tell mee, ſeeing not onely all Greeke and Latine Poets haue had their interpretours, and the moſt of them tranſlated into our tongue, but the French alſo and Italian, as *Guillaume de Saluſte ſeigneur du Bartas*, that moſt diuine French poet, *Petrarke*, and *Arioſto*, of whome this laſt inſtructed by M. *Harrington* doeth now ſpeake as good Engliſh as he did Italian before, and is withall encreaſed with many good notes, ſhall onely *Chaucer* our Poet, no leſſe worthy than the beſt of them amongſt all the Poets of the world lie alwaies neglected and neuer be ſo well vnderſtood of his owne

countrey

countriemen as ſtrangers are? Well ſet your heart at reſt, for ſeeing I was one of them which firſt ſet you in hand with this worke, and ſince you haue giuen me of your Copies to vſe priuatly for mine owne pleaſure, if you will not put them abroad your ſelfe, they ſhall abroad whether you will or no. Yet leaſt many inconueniences might happen by this attempt of mine, and diuers things ſet foorth contrarie vnto your owne liking, let mee once againe entreat you (as I haue done often heretofore) to yeeld to my iuſt and reaſonable ſuit. Wherein you ſhall not onely ſatisfie that conceit which I haue many yeares carried of your vnfained loue towards me: but pleaſure many who daylie expect your paines herein, and perfourme vnto *Chaucer* great part of that honour that he moſt worthely deſerueth. So with my thriſe-heartie commendations I bid you farewel.

From Leiceſter the laſt of Iune,

Anno. 1597.

Your aſſured and euer louing friend,

Francis Beaumont.

The Reader to Geffrey Chaucer.

Rea. *WHere hast thou dwelt, good Geffrey all this while,*
Vnknowne to vs, ſaue only by thy bookes?

Chau. *In haulks, and hernes, God wot, and in exile,*
Where none vouchſaft to yeeld me words or lookes:
Till one which ſaw me there, and knew my friends,
Did bring me forth: ſuch grace ſometime God ſends.

Rea. *But who is he that hath thy books repar'd,*
And added moe, whereby thou art more graced?

Chau. *The ſelfe ſame man who hath no labor ſpar'd,*
To helpe what time and writers had defaced:
And made old words, which were vnknown of many,
So plaine, that now they may be known of any.

Rea. *Wellfare his heart: I loue him for thy ſake,*
Who for thy ſake hath taken all theſe paines.

Chau. *Would God I knew ſome means amends to make,*
That for his toile he might receiue ſome gains.
But wot ye what? I know his kindneſſe ſuch,
That for my good he thinks no paines too much:
And more than that; if he had knowne in time,
He would haue left no fault in proſe nor rime.

H. B.

THE PROGENIE OF GEFFREY CHAUCER

Payne Roet Knight

Blanch daughter to Henry. D of Lancast

Iohn of Gaunt D. of Lancaster

Cathren Swinford Duches of lancast.

The Daughter of Payne Roet

Geffrey Chaucer

Sir Iohn Burnash Knight

Henry 4. King of England

Mary Daughter to Humfry Bohun Earl of Hereford

Imania Daughter to Simon Hannap

Sir Iohn Burnash Knight

Iohn Duke of Bedford

Humfrey Duke of Gloscester

Iohn Beaufort Earl of Somerset

Thomas Chaucer Lord of Ewelme

Maude Daughter & coheir to S. I. B.

Margaret married to Ie Arundel of Cleue

Marga D. of Sr Iohn Beauchamp of Bletso

Iohn the first Duk of Somerset

Alce Countes of Sal. & Duches of Suff.

William De La Pole Duke of Suffolk

Margaret Countesse of Richmond

Iohn De La Pole Duke of Suff.

Henry 7. King of England

Edmund De La Pole Duke of Suffolk

The true portraiture of GEFFREY CHAUCER the famous English poet, as by THOMAS OCCLEUE is described who liued in his time, and was his Scholar.

Thomas Chaucer armiger quondam dominus illius villæ, et patronus istius ecclesiæ qui obiit Decem. 12. A. Dñi. 1434.

THE LIFE OF OVR LEARNED *English Poet*, Geffrey Chaucer.

So much as we can find by Heraulds, Chronicles, & Records, of his

- Countrey.
- Parentage.
- Education.
- Mariage.
- Children, With their
  - Mariage.
  - Lands.
  - Seruice.
  - Reward.
  - Issue.
  - Death.
- Reuenues.
- Seruice.
- Reward.
- Friends.
- Bookes.
- Death.

Guilielmus Camdenus.

Gaufredus Chaucer ſui ſæculi ornamentum extra omnem ingenij aleam poſitus, & Poetaſtras noſtros longo poſt ſe interuallo relinquens,

——iam monte potitus
Ridet anhelantem dura ad faſtigia turbam.

The Life of Geffrey Chaucer.

His Countrey.

THis famous and learned Poet Geffrey Chaucer Esquire, was supposed by[a] Leland to haue beene an Oxfordshire or Barkeshireman borne: For so reporteth Iohn Bale in his Catalogue of English writers: *Quibusdam argumentis adducebatur Lelandus, vt crederet, &c.* Some reasons did moue Leland to thinke, that Oxfordshire or Barkshire was his natiue Countrey.

But as it is euident by his owne wordes in the Testament of Loue, hee was borne[b] in the Citie of London: For thus he writeth there: **Also in the Citie of London that is to me so deare and sweete, in which I was foozth growen, and moze kindely loue haue I to that place, then to any other in yerth (as euery kindly creature hath full appetite to that place of his kindly ingendure, and to wilne rest and peace in that stede to abide) thilke peace should thus there haue been broken, which of all wise men is commended and desired.**

In the Records of the Guild Hall in London wee find, that there was one Richard Chaucer[c] Vintener of London in the 23. yeere of Edward the third, who might well be Geffrey Chaucers father.

Also there was a Nunne of Saint Hellens in London named Elizabeth Chaucer, in the first yeere of Richard the second, as it is in Record, which seemeth either to haue beene his sister, or of his kindred, and by likelihood a Londoner borne.

Moreouer in the eight yeere of the same King, Geffrey Chaucer was Controller of the Custome-house in London, as after out of Recordes shall appeare.

Other dealings hee had in the citie, as we may plainly see in the Testament of Loue, all the which may mooue vs to thinke, that he was borne in London.

[a] *This Leland had commissiō from K. Hen. 8. to search all libraries in Englād for matters of Antiquitie: hee dyed in the daies of Edw. 6.*

[b] *About the second or third yeer of Edward 3. In the first booke & the fift Section.*

[c] *Vintner, quasi Winetunner, that is, a Merchaunt of the Vintrey, which sold by whole sale.*

His Parentage.

FOr his Parentage and place of birth, although Bale termeth him *Galfridus Chaucer nobili loco natus, & summa spei iuvenis,* yet in the opinion of some Heralds (otherwise then his vertues and learning commended him) hee descended not of any great house, which they gather by his Armes, *De argento & rubeo colore partita per longitudinem scuti cum benda extransuerso, eisdem coloribus sed transmutatis depicta sub hac forma.*

It may be that it were no absurditie to thinke (nay it seemeth likely, Chaucers skill in Geometry considered) that hee tooke the groundes and reasons of these Armes out of Euclyde, the 27. and 28. Proposition of the first booke: and some perchaunce are of that opinion, whose skill therein is comparable to the best.

And indeede both in respect of the name, which is French, as also by other coniectures it may be gathered, that his progenitors were Strangers.

But whereas some are of opinion, that the first comming of the Chaucers into England was, when Queene Isabell [a] wife to Edward the second, and her sonne Prince Edward with Philip his new married wife, returned out of [b] Henault into England, at which time also almost three thousand Straungers came ouer with them (as by Chronicles appeareth) I can by no meanes consent with them; but rather must thinke, that their name and familie was of farre more auncient antiquitie, although by time decayed, as many moe haue been of much greater estate: and that the parents of Geffrey Chaucer were meere Englisth, and he himselfe an Englishman borne. For els how could he haue come to that perfection in our language, as to be called, The first illuminer of the Englisth tongue, had not both he, and his parents before him, been born & bred among vs. But what their names were or what issue they had, otherwise then by coniecture before giuen, wee can not declare.

[a] *This Queene Isabell beeing sent into Fraunce with her yong sonne Edward by the King of England her husband, to conser about matters with her brother the Frēch king, would by no meanes returne, hauing cōceiued a great hatred both against the Spensars, and also against the King for suffering himselfe to be misledde by their naughtie counsaile, but by all meanes stirred the people to rebellion, and in the ende came ouer her selfe with almost three thousand straungers besides Englishmen.* [b] *Henault, a prouince lying betweene France and Flaunders.*

Now whether they were Merchants, (for that in places where they haue dwelled, the Armes of the Merchants of the Staple haue been seene in the glasse windowes) or whether they were of other calling, it is not much necessary to search: but wealthy no doubt they were, and of good account in the common wealth, who brought vp their Sonne in such sort, that both he was thought fitte for the Court at home, and to be imployed for matters of state in forraine countreyes.

His

His Education.

HIs bringing vp, as *Leland* saieth, was in the Vniuersitie of Oxford, as also of Cambridge, as appeareth by his owne wordes in his booke entituled *The Court of Loue*: and in Oxford by all likelihood in Canterburie or in Merton Colledge, with *Iohn Wickelise*, whose opinions in religion he much affected: where besides his priuate studie, hee did with great diligence frequent the publique schooles and disputations: *Hinc acutus Dialecticus, hinc dulcis Rhetor, hinc lepidus Poeta, hinc grauis Philosophus, ac sanctus Theologus euasit. Mathematicus insuper ingeniosus erat à Iohanne Sombo, &c.* Hereupon, saith Leland, he became a wittie Logician, a sweete Rhetorician, a pleasant Poet, a graue Philosopher, and a holy Diuine. Moreouer he was a skilfull Mathematician, instructed therin by Iohn Some & Nicholas [a] Lynne friers Carmelites of Linne, and men verie skilfull in the Mathematikes, whome he in his booke called *The Astrolabe*, doth greatly commend, and calleth them, Reuerend clerkes.

Caterbury Colledge in Oxford founded by Simon Islippe *Archbishop of Canterbury, was suppressed in the reigne of K. Henry the* 8. *& ioyned vnto Christs Church.*

[a] *Nicolaus de Lynna studiorum præcipuas partes in Mathesi collocauit, quæ quatuor disciplinarum orbem complectitur: videlicet, Arithmeticam, Geometricam, Musicam, & Astrologiam. Bale.*

By his trauaile also in Fraunce and Flaunders, where hee spent much time in his young yeeres, but more in the latter end of the reigne of K. Richard the second, he attained to great perfection in all kind of learning. For so doe *Bale* and *Leland* also report. *Circa postremos Richardi secundi annos in Gallijs floruit, magnamque illic ex assidua in literis exercitatione gloriam sibi comparauit. Domum reuersus forum Londinense, & Collegia Leguleiorum, qui ibidem patria iura interpretantur, frequentauit, &c.* About the latter end of King Richard the seconds daies he florished in Fraunce, and got himselfe great commendation there by his diligent exercise in learning. After his returne home, he frequented the Court at London, and the Colledges of the Lawyers, which there interprete the lawes of the lande, and among them he had a familiar frend called [b] Iohn Gower. This Gower in his booke which is intituled *Confessio Amantis*, termeth Chaucer a worthie Poet, and maketh him as it were, the Iudge of his workes,

[b] Iohn Gower, *a Yorkshire mã borne & a knight, as Bale writeth, studied not onely the common lawes of the land, but all other kind of good literature. Hee lyeth buried in Saint Mary Oueries in Southwarke, with his image lying ouer him in a habite of purple damaske downe to his feete: a collar of esses gold about his necke, and on his head a garland of yuie and roses, the one being the ornament of a knight, and the other of a Poet. Vnder his head he hath the likenesse of three bookes, which hee compiled: the first,* Speculum meditantis *in French: the second,* Vox clamantis *in Latine: the third,* Confessio amantis *in English.*

It seemeth that both these learned men were of the inner Temple: for not many yeeres since, Master *Buckley* did see a Record in the same house,

where *Geoffrey Chaucer* was fined two ſhillings for beating a Franciſcane fryer in Fleetſtreete.

Thus ſpending much time in the Vniuerſities, Fraunce, Flaunders, and Innes of Court, he prooued a ſingular man in all kind of knowledge.

His Marriage.

HE matched in marriage with a Knights daughter of Henault, called *Paon de Ruet*, King of Armes, as by this draught appeareth, taken out of the office of the Heraldes. This gentlewoman, whome hee married (whoſe name we can not finde) as it may be gathered by Chaucers owne wordes in his dreame, was attendant on Blanch the Ducheſſe in the Duke of Lancaſters houſe, as alſo her ſiſter Katherine was: or els waited on the Ducheſſe Maude ſiſter of Blanch, who was married to William Duke of Bauare, Earle of Henault, Zeland, and Holland. But howſoeuer it was, by this marriage he became brother in law to 'Iohn of Gaunt Duke of Lancaſter, as hereafter appeareth.

'*Iohn Plantagenet, ſurnamed* Gaunt, *of Gaunt in Flaunders where hee was borne was the fourth ſonne of King Edward the third. Hee was Duke of Lancaſter, Earle of Lincolne, Salisbury, Darby, and Leiceſter, King of Caſtile & Lyrne, and ſteward of England. He was alſo Earle of Richmond, Conſtable of Fraunce, and Duke of Aquitayne. He had three wiues,* Blanch, Conſtance, *and* Katherine. *He lyeth buried in the Quier of Poules.*

Stemma

Stemma peculiare Gaufredi Chauceri
Poetæ celeberrimi.

Paganus de Rouet Hannoniensis, aliter dictus Guien Rex Armorum.

Iohannes Burgherſhe, Miles. — *Matildis filia William Kerdeſton Militis.*

Catherina de Rouet à priore marito Hugone Swinford Equite cognominata Swinford: Quæ poſtea renupta Iohanni Gandavenſi tertij Edovardi Regis filio Lăcaſtriæ Duci illi procreavit filios tres & vnicam filiam.

Gaufredus Chaucer poeta celeber, ſui ſeculi ornamentum ac decus ingens.

Altera filiarum & cohæredũ Guienni Armorum Regis, cuius nomen non editur.

Ioannes Burgherſhe Miles.

Imania filia natu maxima, & una hæredum Simonis Hannap vel Hanning de Comit. Glouc.

Thomas Chaucer armiger dominus Manerij de Ewhelm in Oxonienſi Comit.

Matildis filia & cohæres Iohannis Burgherſhe Militis.

Margareta altera filiarum & hæredum Iohannis Burgherſhe nupta Iohanni Arundell de Com. Cornubia.

William de la Pole Comes Marchio, & poſtea Dux Suffolciæ.

Alicia vnica filia, & hæres Thomæ Chaucer ter nupta Iohanni Philip. equiti, deinde comiti Sarum, & poſtea Will. com. Suff.

Iohannes Arundell.

Hinc deſcendit hodiernus Iohannes Arundell.

Iohannes de la Pole Dux Suffolciæ.

Edmundus de la Pole Dux Suffolciæ, vltimus ex hac ſtirpe attinctus tempore Regis Hen. 7.

His Children, with their aduancement.

IT should seeme, that Geffrey Chaucer had another sonne besides [a] Thomas: for in the Preface to the [b] Astrolabe he writeth to one, whome hee calleth his little sonne Lewys. Yet some hold opinion (but I know not vpon what grounds) that Thomas Chaucer was not the sonne of Geffrey Chaucer, but rather some kinsman of his, whome hee brought vp. But this pedigree by the hands of Master Glouer *alias* Somerset, that learned Antiquarie, as also the report of Chronicles shew it to be otherwise.

[a] *Written Anno domini* 1391. *Richar. secundi* 14.

[b] *Thomas Chaucer was borne about the* 38. *or* 39. *yeere of Edward* 3.

Some say that in recompence of Geffrey Chaucers seruice in France, being sent thither Embassadour, Edward the third gaue him this Maude daughter and heire of Sir [c] Iohn Burghershe Knight, whome he married to Thomas Chaucer his sonne to the great increase of his liuing, and amendment in blood.

[c] *Bartholomæus Burghershe, vnde hi fluxerunt, ab Edvardo* 3. *in ordinem Equestris Periscelidis cum alijs cooptatus erat in prima ipsius ordinis institutione.* G. C.

This Thomas Chaucer besides his owne inheritance of [d] Ewhelme and [e] Dunnington Castle (which M. Camden Englands most excellent Antiquiographer termeth, *Quondam Chauceri, & postea Delapolorum Castellum exiguum*) was diuers waies preferred, as out of records in the Tower of London here we may partly see.

[d] *Ewelme olim Chauceri & Delapolorũ, nunc Regiæ ædes. Dum enim Iohannes Lincolniæ Comes Gulielmo Delapolo è filio Iohanne nepos res nouas contra Henricum septimum moliretur proscriptus omnibus honoribus, & his possessionibus excidit: quæ in patrimonium Regium transcriptæ fuerunt.* G. C.

[e] *Donnington Castle standeth in a Parke in Barkshire not far from Newbery, where to this day standeth an olde oke called Chaucers Oke.*

Vicesimo secundo Richardi secundi viginti Marcæ datæ Thomæ Chaucer per annum durante vita.

Anno primo Henrici quarti idem donum viginti Marcarum confirmatum.

Thomas Chaucer primo anno Henrici sexti capitalis Pincerna regis Angliæ.

Thomas Chaucer Sheriffe of Oxfordshire and Barkeshire, and Constable of [f] Wallingford Castle and [g] Knaresborow Castle, and the forrest of Knaresborow during life.

[f] *Wallingforde in Barkeshire: Castrũ admirandæ amplitudinis & magnificentiæ duplici murorũ ambitu, duplici item vallo circundatum, in medio, moli in magnam altitudinem æditæ arx imponitur, in cuius accliui per gradus ascensu fons est immensæ profunditatis. Incolæ constructum à Danis credunt, alij à Romanis.* G. Camden. [g] *Knaresborow in Yorkeshire. Castrum rupi asperrimæ impositum, quod Serlonem de Burgo fratrem Eustacij Vescij condidisse ferunt: nunc patrimonii Lancastrensis censetur.* G. Camden.

Queene [h] Iane wife to Henry the fourth, the twelfth yeere of his raigne, gaue to Thomas Chaucer for his good seruice, *Manerium de Woodstocke, Hannebrough, Wotton, & Stuntesfield, cum omnibus membris & Hamlet. Suis durante vita.*

[h] *This Iane of Nauarr widow to Iohn of Mounford Duke of Britain, was maried to Henry the fourth, in the fourth yeere of his raigne.*

Thomas

Chaucers Life.

Thomas Chaucer, the laſt heire male of the Chaucers, and owner of Ewhelme and Donnington Caſtle, the inheritance of the Chaucers, lieth buried in a blacke marble tombe in a faire Chappell in the pariſh Church of Ewhelme, in the ſouth ſide of the Quier, with this Epitaph: *Hic iacet Thomas Chaucer Armiger, quondã dominus iſtius villæ, & patronus iſtius Eccleſiæ, qui obiit 18. die menſis Nouemb. anno Dom. 1434. & Matildis vxor eius, quæ obiit 28. die menſis Aprilis anno Dom. 1436.*

Thomas Chaucer had one only daughter named Alice, married thrice: firſt to Sir Iohn Phillip knight; then to Thomas Mountacute Earle of Saliſbury; and the third time to [a]William de la Pole earle, and after Duke of Suffolke, who for loue of his wife and commodity of her landes, fell much to dwell in Oxfordſhire and Barkeſhire, where his wiues lands lay.

[a] *The Pooles were thus aduanced. William de la Pole merchaunt of Hull, for that he did frankely and freely lend to K. Edward the third, a great ſumme of money at Mertaigne in Fraunce, when he was greatly diſtreſſed, had not onely the ſame paid againe, but was alſo honoured with the girdle Militarie and made Baneret, and endued with 1000. Markes by the yeere: and his ſucceſſours after were aduanced to be Dukes of Suffolke, as in Chronicles appeareth.*

William de la Pole was firſt ſecretely maried to the Counteſſe of Henault, by whome hee had a daughter, and after being diuorced frõ her, publikely to T. Chaucers daughter Counteſſe of Salisburie, who proued this daughter being maried to one Barentine a baſtard. The which Barentine afterward for a ryot made againſt the Counteſſe, was condemned, and loſt an hundred pounds by the yeere.

This William and his wife tranſlated and encreaſed the Manor place of Ewehelme, and builded there a pariſh Church, and an hoſpitall called Godshouſe, for two prieſtes and thirteene poore men to be ſuſtained for euer. One of the prieſts to be maſter of the Almes-houſe and Almespeople, them to inſtruct: the other Prieſt a Schoolemaſter, freely to teach the children of the Tenants of the laid Lordſhip their Grammar: and either of them to haue x. pounds by the yeere. Alſo one of the poore men to be called Miniſter to preſent the faults of the other to the Maſter, and to ring their common Bell to ſeruice, and to haue ſixteene pence the weeke, and the reſt fourteene pence. To the which houſe they gaue the Manours of Ramridge in Hampſhire, Conocke in Wiltſhire, & Merſh in Buckinghamſhire. They alſo founded an hoſpitall at Donnington Caſtle.

In the 28. of King Hen. 6. 1450. this William de la Pole was baniſhed the Realme for 5. yeers, to pacifie the harde opinion which the commons had conceiued againſt him. In his iourney to his baniſhment hee was taken and beheaded, and his body caſt vp at Douer ſands, and buried in the Charterhouſe at Hull.

This Alice wife of Duke William ſuruiuing her husband, was after buried in the pariſh Church of Ewhelme, on the South ſide of the high altar, in a rich tombe of Alablaſter, with an image in the habite of a Voweſſe, & Ducheſſe crowned, lying on the ſame tombe: And another image vnder the tombe, ſo neare as may be, likevnto her at the time of her death, with this Epitaph: *Orate pro anima ſereniſſimæ principiſſæ Aliciæ Suffolchiæ, huius Eccleſiæ patronæ, & primæ fundatricis huius Eleemoſynariæ, quæ obiit 20. die menſis Maii, anno Dom. 1475. Litera dominicali, A.*

[b] *This Tho. Mountacute, called the good Earle of Saliſbury, was ſlaine at the ſiege of Orleãce with ſhot as he loked out at a window.*

This Alice had a daughter by her ſecond husband [b]Thomas Montacute Earle of Salisbury, named after her mother Alice, married to Richard Neuell ſonne to Raph Earle of Weſtmerland, by whome ſhe had Richard, Iohn, and George: Richard eſpouſed Anne, ſiſter and ſole heire to the Lord Beaucampe and after Duke of Warwicke: in whoſe right he was created Earle of Warwicke.

Among many things that greatly renowned Geffrey Chaucer, this was one ſaith Bale, That he had a kinſwoman, *Quæ Gulielmo Sudovolgiorum Duci nupſit, ac magno in ſplendore Aquelmi vitam egit:* that is, which being maried to William Duke of Suffolke, liued in great honour at Ewhelme.

His

His Reuenues.

BVt now to returne to Geffrey Chaucer, although he had lands and reuenues in diuers places, and that to the yearely value, as some say, almost of a thousand pounds, yet the place of his most abode was at Woodstocke in a faire house of stone next to the Kings place, called to this day Chaucers house, and by that name passed by the Queene to the tenant, which there now dwelleth. Chaucer tooke great pleasure to lie there in regard of the Parke, in sundry of his writings much by him commended: as also to be neare the Court, where his best friends were, and they who were able to doe him most pleasure: By whose meanes hee had sundry rewards bestowed vpon him, and that worthily for his good seruice, which often he performed, and whereof in Chronicles we may partly read thus:

His Seruice.

IN the last yeare of King Edward the third, he with * Sir Richard Dangle, and Sir Richard Stan, was sent to Montreuill to moone a marriage to bee had betweene Richard Prince of Wales, and the Lady Mary daughter to the French King. Some write that he with Petrarke was present at the marriage of Lionell Duke of Clarence with Violant daughter of Galeasius Duke of Millaine: Yet Paulus Iouius nameth not Chaucer, but Petrarke he saith, was there. And yet it may well be: for it is in record that twice or thrice he was employed in foraine countries: which if it be true, wel might the man be at such charges and expences as he might stand in need of king Richard the seconds protection (as after shall appeare) till he had better recouered himselfe. But for his seruice he was not vnrewarded.

* *This Sir Richard Dangle, a knight of Poictu, came ouer with the Duke of Lancaster, who for his valiancie and tried truth to the King of England, was made knight of the Garter.*

His Rewards.

EDward the third hauing seised the lands of Edmond Staplegate, and also the said Edmond in his Minority at the death of his father for the maner of Bilsington in Kent, committed the said body to Geffrey Chaucer: to whom he paid 104 pounds for the same: as appeareth in the Book of Fees and Sergiancies in the Exchequer.

Anno. 8. Richardi. 2. Galfridus Chaucer Contrarotulator Customariorum & Subsidiorum in portu ciuitatis nostræ London.

Anno. 17. Richardi. 2. Viginti libræ datæ Galfrido Chaucero per annum durante vita.

Vigessimo secundo anno Richardi secundi conceßum Galfrido Chaucero vnum dolium vini per annum durante vita, in portu ciuitatis London per manus capitalis Pincernæ nostri.

Anno primo Henrici Quarti Galfrido Chaucero Armigero literæ patentes

Out of the Records in the Tour of London.

patentes confirmatæ pro viginti libris nummorum per annum durante vita & uno dolio vini.

Eodem etium anno concessæ adhuc & datæ eidem Galfrido Chaucero Quadraginta marcæ per annum durante vita.

His Friends.

FRiends he had in the Court of the best sort: for besides that he alwaies held in with the Princes, in whose daies he liued, hee had of the best of the Nobility both lords & ladies, which fauoured him greatly. But chiefly Iohn of Gaunt Duke of Lancaster, at whose commandement he made the Treatise *Of the alliance betwixt Mars and Venus*: and also the booke of the Ducheſſe. Likewise the lady Isabel daughter to King Edward the third, and wife to Ingeram De Guynes, Lord De Coucy: also the lady Margaret daughter to the same King, maried to Iohn Hastings Earle of Penbrooke, did greatly loue and fauour Geffrey Chaucer, and hee againe did as much honour them, but specially the Lady Margaret, as it may appeare in diuers Treatises by him written. Others there were of great account, wherof some for some causes tooke liking of him, and other for his rare giftes and learning did admire him. And thus hee liued in honour many yeares both at home and abroad.

Some say hee did but translate it: and that it was made by sir Otes de Grantsome *Knight, in French: of my lady of Torke daughter to the King of Spain representing Venus: & my lord of Huntingdon sometime Duke of Excester. This lady was younger sister to Constance Iohn of Gaunts second wife. This lord of Huntingdon was called Iohn Holland, halfe brother to Richard the second: he married Elizabeth the daughter of Iohn of Gaunt Duke of Lancaster.*

Yet it seemeth that he was in some trouble in the daies of King Richard the second, as it may appeare in the Testament of Loue: where hee doth greatly complaine of his owne rashnesse in following the multitude, and of their hatred against him for bewraying their purpose. And in that complaint which he maketh to his empty purse, I do find a written copy, which I had of Iohn Stow (whose library hath helped many writers) wherein ten times more is adioined, then is in print. Where he maketh great lamentation for his wrongfull imprisonment, wishing death to end his daies: which in my iudgement doth greatly accord with that in the Testament of Loue. Moreouer we find it thus in Record.

Out of the Records in the Towre.

In the second yeare of Richard the second, The King tooke Geffrey Chaucer and his lands into his protection. The occasion wherof no doubt was some daunger and trouble whereinto he was fallen by fauouring some rash attempt of the common people. For liuing in such troublesome times, wherein few knew what parts to take, no maruell if he came into some danger, nay great maruell that hee fell not into greater danger. But as hee was learned, so was he wise, and kept himselfe much out of the way in Holland, Zeland, and France, where he wrote most of his bookes.

His Bookes.

CHaucer had alwaies an earnest desire to enrich & beautifie our English tongue, which in those daies was verie rude and barren: and this he did following

following the example of *Dantes* and *Petrarch*, who had done the same for the Italian tongue; *Alanus* for the French; and *Iohannes Mena* for the Spanish: neither was Chaucer inferior to any of them in the performance hereof: And England in this respect is much beholden to him, as *Leland* well noteth:

Anglia Chaucerum veneratur nostra poetam,
Cui veneres debet patria lingua suas.

Our England honoureth Chaucer poet, as principall
To whome her country tongue doth owe her beauties all.

Besides those bookes of his which we heretofore haue had in print, he wrote diuers others: as,

The Flower and the Leafe, neuer till now printed.

In obitum Blanchiæ Ducissæ, neuer before published: which seemeth rather to be his Dreame: and that other called his Dreame, The complaint for Blanch: as after the perusing of them both, any meane Reader will iudge.

De Vulcani vetu.
De Leone & eius dignitate.
Comœdias & Tragœdias.
Facetias & Iocos.
Dantem Italum transtulit.
Petrarchæ quædam transtulit.

Iacke Vpland is supposed to be his. But the A.B.C. called Priere de nostre Dame, *is certainely Chaucers doing.*

Others I haue seene without any Authours name, which for the inuention I would verily iudge to be Chaucers, were it not that wordes and phrases carry not euery where Chaucers antiquitie.

Now, concerning those bookes which we haue in print: the Canterburie Tales for the most part were of his owne inuention, yet some of them translated, and penned in King Richards daies the second, and after the insurrection of Iacke Strawe, which was in the 4. yeere of the same King: for in the Tale of the Nunnes priest, he maketh mention thereof.

The Romant of the Rose was translated out of French.

Troilus and Creseid called *Throphe* in the Lumbard tongue, translated: not *verbatim*, but the Argument thence taken, and most cunningly amplified by Chaucer.

Mary Magdalen translated out of S. Origen.

The balad, *Fly from the preasse*: made by Chaucer on his death bed.

The Letter of Cupid is none of Chaucers doing, but was compiled by [a] Thomas Occleue of the office of the priuie Seale, sometime Chaucers scholler. The which Occleue for the loue he bare to his Master, caused his picture to be truly drawen in his booke *De Regimine Principis*, dedicated to Henry the fift: the which I haue seene, and according to the which this in the beginning of this booke was done by Iohn Spede, who hath annexed thereto all such cotes of Armes, as any way concerne the Chaucers, as he found them (trauailing for that purpose) at Ewhelme and at Wickham.

[a] *Thomas Occleue*, vel *Ockelese*, *vir tã bonis literis, quam generis prosapia clarus exquisita quadã Anglici sermonis eloquẽtia post Chaucerum, cuius fuerat discipulus, patriam ornauit linguam. Iohannis Wicleui, & ipsius Berengarij in religione doctrinam sequebatur. Tractatus hos fecit: Planctum proprium. Dialogum ad amicum. De quadam Imperatrice. De arte moriendi. De cœlesti Hierusalem. De quodam Ionatha. De regimine principis.*

Occleue in that booke where hee setteth downe Chaucers picture, addeth these verses:

Although his life be queint, the resemblaunce
Of him hath in me so fresh lifelines
That to put other men in remembraunce
Of his person, I haue here the likenes
Doe make, to the end in sothfastnes
That they, that of him haue lost thought & mind
By this peinture may againe him find.

His Death.

GEffrey Chaucer departed out of this world the 25. day of October, in the yeere of our Lord 1400. after he had liued about 72. yeeres. Thus writeth Bale out of Leland: *Chaucerus ad canos deuenit, senſitque senectutem morbum eſſe: & dum cauſas ſuas, Londini curaret, &c.* Chaucer liued til he was an old man, and found old age to be grieuous: and whilst he followed his causes at London, he died, and was buried at Westminster.

The old verses which were written on his graue at the first, were these:

Galfridus Chaucer vates & fama poeſis
Maternæ hæc ſacra ſum tumulatus humo.

But since M. *Nicholas Brigham* did at his owne cost and charges erect a monument for him, with these verses:

Qui fuit Anglorum vates ter maximus olim
Gaufredus Chaucer conditur hoc tumulo:
Annum ſi quæras domini, ſi tempora vitæ
Ecce notæ ſubſunt, quæ tibi cuncta notant.
Anno Domini 1400. *die menſis Octob.* 25.

Now it shall not be amisse to these Epitaphes, to adde the iudgements and reports of some learned men, of this worthy and famous Poet. And first of all Thomas Occleue, who liued in his daies, writeth thus of him in his booke *De Regimine Principis.*

But welaway so is mine hart woe
That the honour of English tongue is deed,
Of which I wont was counsaile haue and reed.
O maister dere and fadre reuerent,
My maister Chaucer floure of Eloquence,
Mirror of fructuous entendement,
O vniuersall fadre of Science:
Alas that thou thine excellent prudence
In thy bed mortall mightest not bequeath.
Whateyld death: Alas why would the thee sle.
O death thou didest not harme singler in slaughter of him
But all the land it smerteth.
But natheless yet hast thou no power his name sle
His hie vertue asterteth:
Unslaine fro thee, which ay vs likely herteth
With bookes of his owne enditing
That is to all this land culumining.

The

The same Author againe in the same booke.

My deare maister, God his soule quite,
And sithen Chaucer faine would haue me taught,
But I was young, and leered lite or nought
Alas my worthy maister honorable,
This lands very treasure and richesse
Death by thy death hath wrought irreparable,
Unto vs done: her vengeable durresse
Dispoiled hath this land of the sweetnesse
Of Rhetorique: for vnto Tullius
Was neuer man so like amongst vs
Also who was heire in philosophy
To Aristotle in our tongue but thou
The steppes of Virgill in Poesie
Thou suedest eke (well mowe we know well inough)
That combre world that thee my maister slough
Would I clarke were: Death was too hastife
To renne on thee, and reue thee thy life
She might haue tarried her vengeance a while,
To that some man had egall to thee be
Nay lat be that: she knew wele that this Ile
May neuer man lothly dying like vnto thee:
And her office needs do must she,
God bad her so, I trow all for the best,
O maister, maister, God thy soule rest.

Dan* Iohn Lidgate likewise in his prologue of Boecias of the fall Princes, by him translated, saith thus in his commendation.

* *Iohn Lidgate Monke of Burie an excellent poet: he traueiled Fraunce and Italy to learn the languages and sciences.*

My maister Chaucer with his fresh comedies
Is dead alas chiefe Poet of Britaine,
That whilome made full pitous Tragedies,
The fame also of Troilus he did complaine,
As he that was of making soueraine,
Whom all this land should of right preferre
Both of our language he was the Loadsterre.

Afterward in the same place do follow fourescore and three verses in the commendation of Chaucer, and the bookes that he made particularly named.

In a booke of *Iohn Stowes* called Little Iohn (but I know not who was the Author) I find these verses.

O fathers and founders of eloquent eloquence
That enlumined haue our great Britaine
To soone we haue lost your lauriat science
O lushy licoure of that fulsome fountaine,
O cursed death, why hast thou those poets slain,
I meane Gower, Chaucer, and Gaufride
Alas the time that euer they fro vs dide.

Iohn Lidgate againe in a booke which hee writeth of the birth of the Virgine Mary hath these verses.

And eke my maister Chaucer now is in graue,
The noble Rethoze, poet of Britaine
That worthy was the laurel to haue
Of poetry, and the palme attaine
That made first to distill and raine
The gold dew dzops of speech and eloquence
Into our tongue, through his excellence.

And found the floures first of Rhethozicke
Our rude speech only to enlumine,
That in our tongue was neuer none hym like:
For as the sunne doth in heauen shine,
In midday spere downe to vs by line,
In whose presence no sterre may appeare
Right so his ditties withouten any peare.

Euery making with his light distaine,
In soothfastnesse, who so taketh heed:
Wherefore no wonder though my hart plaine
Upon his death, and for sorrow bleed
For want of him now in my great need
That should (alas) conuay and eke direct,
And with his support amend and correct.

The wrong traces of my rude penne,
There as I erre, and goe not line right.
But that for he, ne may me not kenne,
I can no more but with all my might
With all mine heart, and mine inward sight
Praieth for him that now lieth in cheft
To God aboue, to giue his soule good reft.

This William Caxton of London Mercer, About William Caxtons time Stephanus Surigonus Poet Laureat of Millaine, did write this Epitaph vpon Geffrey Chaucer, in Latin.

brought printing out of Germany into England about the year 1471, in the 37 year of Henry the sixt, and practised the same in the Abbey of S. Peter at westminster. It was first found in Germanie at Maguncc by one Iohn Cuthembergus a knight: and brought to Rome by Conradus an Almaigne.

Epitaphium Galfridi Chaucer, per poetam laureatum Stephanum Surigonum Mediolanensem in decretis licenciatum.

Pierides musæ, si possint numina flectus
Fundere, diuinas atque rigare genas:
Galfridi vatis Chaucer crudelia fata
Plangite: sit lachrimis abstinuisse nephas.
Vos coluit viuens: at vos celebrate sepulcrum,
Reddatur merito gratia digna viro.

Grandi

Grandè decus vobis eſt docti muſa Maronis,
Qua didicit meliùs lingua latina loqui.
Grande, nouumque decus Chaucer, famamq; parauit:
Heu quantum fuerat priſca Britannæ rudis.
Reddidit inſignem maternis verſibus, vt iam
Aurea ſplendeſcat, ferrea facta prius.
Hunc latuiſſe virum nil, ſi tot opuſcula vertes,
Dixeris, egregiis quæ decorata modis,
Socratis ingenium, vel fontes Philoſophiæ,
Quicquid & arcani dogmata ſacra ferunt.
Et quaſcumque velis, tenuit digniſſimus artes
Hic vates, paruo conditus hoc tumulo.
Ah laudis quantum, præclara Britannia, perdis,
Dum rapuit tantum mors odioſa virum.
Crudeles Parcæ, crudelia fila ſororum:
Non tamen extincto corpore, fama perit:
Viuet in æternum, viuent dum ſcripta poëtæ:
Viuent æterno tot monumenta die
Si qua bonos tangit pietas, ſi carmine dignus,
Carmina, qui cecinit, tot cumulata modis,
Hæc ſibi Marmoreo ſcribantur verba ſepulchro,
Hæc maneat laudis ſarcina ſumma ſuæ.
Galfridus Chaucer vates, & fama poëſis
Materna hac ſacra ſum tumulatus humo.

Poſt obitum Caxton voluit te viuere cura
Guillelmi, Chaucer clare poëta, tui.
Nam tua non ſolum compreſſit opuſcula formis,
Has quoque ſed laudes iuſſit hic eſſe tuas.

AND as for men of later time, not onely that learned gentleman M. William Thynne, in his Epiſtle Dedicatorie to the Kings Maieſtie, but alſo two of the pureſt and beſt writers of our daies: the one for Proſe, the other for Verſe, M. *Aſcham* and M. *Spenſer*, haue deliuered moſt worthy teſtimonies of their approouing of him. Maſter *Aſcham* in one place calleth him *Engliſh Homer*, and makes no doubt to ſay, that hee valueth his authoritie of as high eſtimation, as euer he did either Sophocles or Euripides in Greeke. And in another place, where he declareth his opinion of Engliſh verſifying, he vſeth theſe wordes: *Chaucer and Petrarke, thoſe two worthy wittes, deſerue inſt praiſe.* And laſt of all, in his diſcourſe of Germanie, hee putteth him nothing behind either *Thucidides* or *Homer* for his liuely deſcriptions of ſite of places, and nature of perſons both in outward ſhape of bodie, and inward diſpoſition of minde; adding this withall, That not the proudeſt, that hath written in any tongue whatſoeuer, in theſe pointes can carrie away the praiſe from him.

Maſter *Spenſer* in his firſt Eglogue of his Shepheardes Kalender, calleth him *Titirus*, the god of Shepheards, comparing him to the worthineſſe of the Romane Titirus Virgil. In his Faerie Queene in his diſcourſe of friendſhip, as thinking himſelfe moſt worthy to be Chaucers friend, for his like naturall diſpoſition that Chaucer had, hee ſheweth that none that liued with him, nor none that came after him, durſt preſume to reuiue Chaucers loſt labours in that vnperfite tale of the Squire, but only himſelfe: which he had not done, had he not felt (as he ſaith) the infuſion of Chaucers owne ſweete ſpirite, ſuruiuing within him. And a little before he termeth him, Moſt renowmed and Heroicall Poet: and his Writings, The workes of heauenly wit: concluding his commendation in this manner:

Chaucers Life.

Dan Chaucer, Well of English vndefiled,
On Fames eternal beadrole worthy to be filed.
I follow here the footing of thy feet,
That with thy meaning so I may the rather meet.

And once againe I must remember M. *Camdens* authority, who as it were reaching one hand to Maister *Ascham*, and the other to Maister *Spenser*, and so drawing them togither vttereth of him these words. *De Homero nostro Anglico illud verè asseram, quod de Homero eruditus ille Italus dixit:*

——Hic ille est, cuius de gurgite sacro
Combibit arcanos vatum omnis turba furores.

And that wee may conclude his praises with the testimony of the most worthiest Gentleman that the Court hath afforded of many yeares: Sir Philip Sidney in his Apologie for Poetry saith thus of him. Chaucer vndoubtedly did excellently in his Troylus and Creseid; of whom truly I know not, whether to meruaile more, either that he in that mistie time, could see so clearely, or that we in this cleare age walke so stumblingly after him. Seeing therefore that both old and new writers haue carried this reuerend conceit of our Poet, and openly delared the same by writing, let vs conclude with Horace in the eight Ode of his fourth booke:

Dignum laude virum musa vetat mori:

FINIS.

Arguments to euery Tale and Booke.

The Argument to the Prologues.

THe Authour in theſe Prologues to his Canterbury Tales, doth deſcribe the reporters thereof for two cauſes: firſt, that the Reader ſeeing the qualitie of the perſon, may iudge of his ſpeech accordingly: wherein Chaucer hath moſt excellently kept that *decorum*, which Horace requireth in that behalfe. Secondly to ſhew, how that euen in our language, that may be performed for deſcriptions, which the Greeke and Latine Poets in their tongues haue done at large. And ſurely this Poet in the iudgement of the beſt learned, is not inferiour to any of them in his deſcriptions, whether they be of perſons, times, or places. Vnder the Pilgrimes, being a certaine number, and all of differing trades, he comprehendeth all the people of the land, and the nature and diſpoſition of them in thoſe daies; namely, giuen to deuotion rather of cuſtome then of zeale. In the Tales is ſhewed the ſtate of the Church, the Court, and Countrey, with ſuch Arte and cunning, that although none could deny himſelfe to be touched, yet none durſt complaine that he was wronged. For the man being of greater learning then the moſt, and backed by the beſt in the land, was rather admired and feared, then any way diſgraced. Who ſo ſhall read theſe his works without preiudice, ſhall find that he was a man of rare conceit and of great reading.

The Knights tale.

1 Palamon and Arbite, a paire of friends and fellow priſoners, fight a combat before Duke Theſeus, for the lady Emeli, ſiſter to the Queene Ipolita wife of Theſeus. A Tale fitting the perſon of a Knight, for that it diſcourſeth of the deeds of Armes, and loue of Ladies.

The Millars tale.

2 Nicholas a Scholler of Oxford, practiſeth with Aliſon the Carpenters wife of Oſney to deceiue her husband, but in the end is rewarded accordingly.

The Reues tale.

3 Denyſe Simkin, the Millar of Trompington, deceiueth two Clarkes of Schollers Hall in Cambridge, in ſtealing their corne: but they ſo vſe the matter, that they reuenge the wrong to the full. The Argument of this Tale is taken out of Bochace in his Nouels.

The Cookes tale.

4 The deſcription of an vnthriftie Prentice giuen to dice, women, and wine, waſting thereby his maſters goods, and purchaſing Newgate for himſelfe. The moſt of this Tale is loſt, or els neuer finiſhed by the Authour.

The Arguments.

The man of Lawes Tale.

5 Lady Cuſtance the Emperours daughter of Rome, after her mariage with the Sowdan of Surrey, through the malice of the Sowdans mother, ſuffereth great trouble and miſerie with her young child Mauris: but yet in the end is reſtored to comfort.

The Squiers tale.

6 The King of Arabie ſendeth to Cambuſcan King of Sarra, an horſe and a ſword of rare qualitie: and to his daughter Canace a glaſſe and a ring, by the vertue whereof ſhee vnderſtandeth the language of all foules. Much of this Tale is either loſt, or els neuer finiſhed by Chaucer.

The Merchaunts tale.

7 Old Ianuarie marrieth young May, and for his vnequall match, receiueth a foule reward.

The wife of Bathes tale.

8 A bacheler of king Arthures Court, is enioyned by the Queene to tell what thing it is, that women moſt deſire. At length he is taught it by an old woman, who for that cauſe he is enforced to marrie.

The Fryars tale.

9 The Somner and the Deuill meeting on the way, after conference, become ſwotne brethren, and to hell they goe togither. A couert inuectiue againſt the briberie of the ſpirituall Courts in thoſe daies.

The Somners tale.

10 A begging Fryar comming to a farmars houſe who lay ſicke, obtaineth of him a certaine legacie, which muſt be equally deuided among his Couent. A requitall to the Fryar, ſhewing their couſenage, loytering, impudent begging, and hypocriticall praying.

The Clarke of Oxfords tale.

11 Walter the Marqueſſe of Saluce prooueth the patience of his wife Griſill, by three moſt ſharpe trials.

The Frankelins tale.

12 Aurelius after much labour and coſt beſtowed to winne the loue of Dorigen, another mans wife, is content in the end through the good dealing of her and her husband, to looſe both labour and coſt. The ſcope of this tale ſeemeth a contention in curteſie.

The ſecond Nonnes tale.

13 The life and death of Saint Cecily.

The Chanons yeomans tale.

14 A prieſt of London more couetous then wiſe, is deceiued by a Chanon profeſſing the Arte of Alchymie.

The Doctor of Phisickes tale.

15 Virginius slaieth his onely daughter, rather then that she shall bee defiled by the lecherous Iudge Appius.

The Pardoners tale.

16 A company of riotours conspire to kill Death, who killeth them one after another.

The Shipmans tale.

17 A Marchant of S. Denise is confined by his owne wife, and by a Monke called Dan Iohn. This argument is taken out of Bochas in his Nouels.

The Prioresses tale.

18 A miracle of a Christians child, murthered by the Iewes.

The Rime of Sir Topas.

19 A Northren tale of an outlandish Knight purposely vttered by Chaucer, in a differing rime and stile from the other tales, as though he himselfe were not the authour, but only the reporter of the rest.

Chaucers Tale.

20 Prudence perswadeth her husband Melibæus to patience, and to receiue his enemies to mercy and grace.

The Monkes tale.

21 A Tragicall discourse of such as haue fallen from high estate to extreame miserie.

The Nonnes priests tale.

22 Of a Cocke and an Henne: the morall whereof is to embrace true friends, and to beware of flatterers.

The Manciples tale.

23 Phœbus keepeth a white Crow, which can speake as a Iay. The Crow accuseth his wife, of whom he was too iealous, to haue plaied false in his absence. Hereupon with an arrow hee slaieth his wife: but after repenting of his rashnesse, hee taketh reuenge of the Crow.

The Plowmans tale.

24 A complaint against the pride and couetousnesse of the cleargie: made no doubt by Chaucer with the rest of the Tales. For I haue seene it in written hand in Iohn Stowes Library in a booke of such antiquity, as seemeth to haue beene written neare to Chaucers time.

The Persons tale.

25 A sermon against diuers greeuous sinnes, and remedies for the same, perswading men to pænitence.

The Romant of the Rose.

26 This booke was made in French by Iohn Clopinell, *alias* Iohn Moone, borne at Mewen

The Arguments.

Mewen vpon the riuer of Loyer not farre from Paris, and translated into English meetre by Geffrey Chaucer, but not finished. It is entituled, The Romant of the Rose; or, The Arte of Loue: wherein is shewed the helpes and furtherances, as also the lets and impediments that Louers haue in their sutes. In this booke the Authour hath many gibbes at the hypocrisie of the Clergie; whereby hee got himselfe such hatred amongst them, that *Gerson* Chauncellour of Paris, writeth thus of him: saith hee, There was one called *Iohannes Meldinensis*, who wrote a booke called, The Romant of the Rose: which booke if I onely had, and that there were no more in the world, if I might haue 500. pound for the same, I would rather burne it then take the mony. He saith more, That if he thought the Authour thereof did not repent him for that booke before he dyed, he would vouchsafe to pray for him no more then he would for Iudas that betrayed Christ.

Troylus and Creseid.

27 In this excellent booke is shewed the feruent loue of Troylus to Creseid, whome he enioyed for a time: and her great vntruth to him againe in giuing her selfe to Diomedes, who in the end did so cast her off, that she came to great misere.

The Legend of good women.

28 For that some Ladies in the Court tooke offence at Chaucers large speeches against the vntruth of women, the Queene enioyned him to compile this booke in the commendation of sundry maydens and wiues, who shewed themselues faithfull to faithlesse men.

Boetius.

29 In this booke are handled high and obscure points: *viz.* The purueiance of God: The force of destinie: The freedome of our wils: and the infallible prescience of the Almightie: and that the contemplation of God himselfe is our *Summum bonum*.

The booke of the Duchesse, or the death of Blanch, misstermed heretofore, Chaucers Dreame.

30 By the person of a mourning knight sitting vnder an Oke, is ment Iohn of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, greatly lamenting the death of Blaunch the Duchesse, who was his first wife.

The Assembly of Foules.

31 All foules are gathered before dame Nature on S. Valentines day, to chuse their makes. A formall Egle being beloued of three tercels, requireth a yeeres respite to make her choise: vpon this triall *Qui bien aime tard oublie*: He that loueth wel, is slow to forget.

The Flowre of Courtesie.

32 In this booke is set foorth the rare vertues of a certaine Lady: made by Iohn Lidgate, as some thinke, in the behalfe of some gentlewoman in the Court.

La belle Dame.

33 M. *Alcyn* secretarie to the King of France, framed this Dialogue betweene a gentleman and a gentlewoman, who finding no mercie at her hand, dieth for sorrow.

Mewen

Queene

The Arguments.

Queene Annelida.

34 Arcite a Theban Knight, forſaketh Queene Annelida, who loued him intirely, and taketh a new Lady: whereupon Annelida maketh great complaint.

The Aſſembly of Ladies.

35 A gentlewoman dreameth that ſhee ſeeth a great number of Ladies put vp their billes of complaint before a Iudge, who promiſeth to relieue their grieuances.

The Aſtrolabe.

36 This booke written to his ſonne in the yeere of our Lord 1391. and in the 14. of K. Richard 2. ſtandeth ſo good at this day, eſpecially for the Horizon of Oxford, as in the opinion of the learned, it cannot be amended.

The blacke Knight.

37 The heauie complaint of a Knight, for that he can not win his Ladies grace.

The booke of Fame.

38 In this booke is ſhewed how the deedes of all men and women, bee they good or badde, are carried by report to poſteritie.

The Teſtament of Loue.

39 This booke is an imitation of *Boetius de Conſolatione philoſophiæ*, in the firſt part whereof, Loue by way of Legacie doeth bequeath to all them which follow her lore, the knowledge of truth from errour, whereby they may rightly iudge of the cauſes of croſſe fortune, and ſuch aduerſities as befall them, whether in their ſuites of loue or otherwiſe, and ſo in the end obtaine their wiſhed deſires. In the ſecond part ſhee teacheth the knowledge of one verie God our Creator, as alſo the ſtate of grace and the ſtate of glory: all the which good things are figured by a Margarite pearle. Chaucer did compile this booke as a comfort to himſelfe after great griefs conceiued for ſome raſh attempts of the commons, with whome he had ioyned, and thereby was in feare to looſe the fauour of his beſt friends.

The Lamentation of Mary Magdalen.

40 This treatiſe is taken out of S. Origen, wherein Mary Magdalen lamenteth the cruell death of her Sauiour Chriſt.

The Remedie of Loue.

41 This booke drawen for the moſt part out of the Prouerbs of Salomon, is a warning to take heed of the deceitfull companie of ſtrange women.

The Letter of Cupid.

42 This letter was made by Thomas Occleue of the office of the priuie Seale, Chaucers ſcholler; and was by him termed, A Treatiſe of the conuerſation of men and women in the little Iland of Albion: which gat him ſuch hatred among the gentlewomen of the Court, that he was inforced to recant in that booke of his, called *Planctus proprius.*

The

The Arguments.

The Cuckow and the Nightingale.

43 Chaucer dreameth that hee heareth the Cuckoweand the Nightingale contend for excellency in singing.

The Ballade of Henry Scogan.

44 In the written coppies the title hereof is thus: Here followeth a morrall balade to the Prince, the Duke of Clarence, the Duke of Bedford, the Duke of Glocester, the kings sonnes by Henry Scogan, at a supper among the Marchants in the Vintry at London in the house of Lewis Iohn.

The Court of Loue.

45 This booke is an imitation of the Romant of the Rose, shewing that all are subiect to loue, what impediments soeuer to the cõtrary: cõtaining also those xx. statutes which are to be obserued in the Court of Loue.

Chaucers dreame.

This dream deuised by Chaucer, seemeth to be a couert report of the mariage of Iohn of Gaunt the kings sonne with Blanch the daughter of Henry Duke of Lancaster, who after long loue, during the time whereof the Poet faineth them to be dead, were in the end by consent of friends happily married, figured by a bird bringing in her bill an hearbe, which restored them to life againe. Here also is shewed Chaucers match with a certaine Gentlewoman, who although shee was a stranger, was notwithstanding so well liked and loued of the Lady Blanch, and her Lord, as Chaucer himselfe also was, that gladly they concluded a marriage betweene them.

The Floure and the Leafe.

A Gentlewoman out of an Arbour in a groue, seeth a great company of knights and ladies in a daunce vpon the greene grasse: the which being ended, they all kneele downe, and doe honor to the Daisie, some to the Floure and some to the Leafe. Afterward this Gentlewoman learneth by one of these ladies the meaning hereof, which is this: They which honour the Floure a thing fading with euery blast, are such as looke after beautie and worldly pleasure. But they that honor the Leafe, which abideth with the root notwithstanding the frosts and winter stormes, are they which follow vertue and during qualities without regard of worldly respects.

FINIS.

The Epiſtle of William Thinne to King Henry the eight.

To the Kings highneſſe, my moſt gratious ſoueraine lord, Henry the eight, by the grace of God, King of England, and of France, defendour of the Faith, and Lord of Ireland, &c.

AMongs all other excel-lencies, moſt gratious ſoueraine lord, wherewith almightye God hath endowed mãkind, aboue ỹ reſidue of erthly creatures, as an outward declaration of reaſon or reaſonableneſſe, wherin cõſiſteth the ſimilitude of man vnto Angels, and the difference betweene the ſame and brute beaſts, I verily ſuppoſe, that ſpeech or language is not to bee reputed, amonges the ſmalleſt or inferiours: For thereby is expreſſed the conceit of one to another, in open and in plaine ſentence, which in the reſidue of liuely creatures, lacketh, and is not ſhewed amonges them, but by certain couert and derk ſignes, and that in few things, hauing courſe and operation onely of nature. This ſpeech or language, after the confuſion of tongues, ſent by Gods puniſhment for pride and arrogancy of people, hath ben by a certain inſtinct and diſpoſition naturall, deuiſed and inuented in ſundry partes of the world, as fellowſhips or companyinges of folkes one with another, chaunced muche to the outwarde expreſſing of the thyng in worde or ſound, according to that whereof it had meaning or ſignification. But in proceſſe of time, by diligence or policy of people, after diuers fourmes, figures, and impreſſions in mettall, barkes of trees, and other matter vſed for memory and knowledge of things, then preſent or paſſed, ſundry letters or carects were firſt amonges the Phenices deuiſed and found, with ſuche knittinges and ioinings of one to another, by a meruelous ſubtilty and craft, as counterueiled was and is equiualent to the ſame languages. So as the conceit of mans mind, which at the beginning was vſed to bee declared by mouth only, came to ſuch point, that it was as ſenſibly and liuely expreſſed in writing. Herebyon enſued a great occaſion and courage vnto them that ſhould write, to compone and adorne the rudeneſſe and barbariete of ſpeech, and to forme it to an eloquent and ordinate perfection: whereunto many, and many great Poets and Orators haue highly emploied their ſtudies and corages, leauing therby notable Renoume of themſelues, and example perpetuell to their poſterity. Amonges other, the Greekes in all kinds of ſciences, ſeemed ſo to preuaile, and ſo to ornate their tongue, as yet by other of right noble languages, cannot be parfitly imitated or followed. The Latins by example of the Greekes, haue gotten or won to them no ſmal glory, in the fourming, order, and vttering of that tong. Out of the which if it bee well ſearched, that is to ſay, Greeke and Latin (though by corruption of ſpeeche it ſhould ſeeme much otherwiſe) haue beene deriued the reſidue of the languages, that be written with the letters or carects, of either of them both: But of all ſpeches thoſe which moſt approch to the latine, be the Italian and Spaniſh tongues, of whom the one by corruption of the Gothes and Longobards had her beginning, as Latine ſpoken by ſtraungers of a barbare vnderſtanding: The other being alſo Latine, was by Vandales, Gothes, Moores, Sarracens, and other ſo manye tunes blemiſhed, as marueile it is to ſee now, vnto what perfection theſe two formed out of the Latin and barbares ſpeeches bee reduced. Next vnto them in ſimilitude to the Latin is ỹ French tongue, which by diligence of people of the ſame, is in fewe yeares paſſed, ſo amended, as wel in pronunciation as in writing, that an Engliſhman by a ſmall time exerciſed in that tong, hath not lacked ground to make a Grammere, or rule ordinarye thereof. Though of truth (which ſome ſhall ſcarcely

beleeue) the Germains haue so fourmed the order of their language, that in the same, is both as much plenty and as neare concordaunce to the phrase of the Latine, as the French tongue hath. And verily, like as all these and the rest haue beene thus vigilant and studious, to meliorate or amend their languages: so hath there not lacked amongs vs Englishmen, which haue right well and notably endeuoired and emploied themselues, to the beautifying and bettring of the English tong.

Amongs whom most excellent prince, my most redoubted and gracious soueraine lord, I your most humble vassall, subiect and seruaunt William Thinne, chiefe clerk of your kitchin, mooued by a certaine inclinacion and zeale which I haue, to heare of any thing sounding to the laud and honour of this your noble realme, haue taken great delectation, as the times and laisers might suffer, to read and heare the bookes of that noble and famous clerke Geffrey Chaucer, in whose workes is so manifest comprobation of his excellent learning, in all kindes of doctrines and sciences, such fruitfulnesse in words, well according to the matter and purpose, so sweete and pleasaunt sentences, such perfection in metre, the composition so adapted, such freshnesse of inuention, compendiousnesse in narration, such sensible and open stile, lacking neither maiesty ne mediocrity, conuenable in disposition, & such sharpenesse or quicknes in conclusion, ꝑ it is much to be maruailed, how in his time, whan doubtlesse all good letters were laid asleep throughout the world, as the thing, whych either by the disposition and influence of the bodies aboue, or by other ordinance of God, seemed like as was in daunger to haue vterly perished, such an excellent Poet in our tong, should as it were (nature repugning) spring and arise. For though it had been in Demosthenes or Homerus times, when all learning and excellency of sciences, flourished amongs the Greekes, or in the season that Cicero Prince of eloquence, amonges Latins lined, yet had it beene a thing right rare and straunge, and worthy perpetuall laud, that any clerke by learning or witte, could that haue framed a tongue before so rude and imperfite, to such a sweete ornature and composition, likely if he had lined in these daies, being good letters so restored & reuined as they be, if he were not empeched by the enuy of such as may tollerate nothing, which to vnderstond their capacity doth not extend, to haue brought it vnto a full and finall perfection. Wherefore gracious soueraine lord, taking such delite and pleasure in the workes of this noble clerke (as is afore mētioned) I haue of a long season much vsed to reade and visite the same, and as bookes of diuers imprints came vnto my handes, I easily and without great study, might and haue deprehended in thē many errours, falsities, and deprauacions, whych euidently appeared by the contrarieties and alterations found by collacion of the one with the other, wherby I was moued & stired to make diligent search, where I might finde or recouer any trew coppies or examplaries of the said bookes, whervnto in processe of time, not without cost and paine, I attained, and not onely vnto such as seeme to bee very trewe coppies of those workes of Geffray Chaucer, whiche before had beene put in print, but also to diuers other neuer till now imprinted, but remaining almost vnknown and in obliuion, whereupon lamenting with my selfe, the negligence of the people, that haue beene in this realme, who doubtlesse were very remisse in the setting forth or auauncement, either of the histories thereof, to the great hinderaunce of the Renoume of such noble Princes and valiaunt conquerours & captaines, as haue beene in the same, or also of the workes of memory of the famous and excellent clerkes in all kindes of sciences, that haue flourished therin. Of which both sortes it hath pleased God as highly to nobilitate this yle, as any other region of christendome: I thought it in maniere appertinaunt vnto my duty, and that of very honesty and loue to my countrey, I ought no lesse to doe, than to put my helpyng hand to the restauration & bringing againe to light of the said workes, after the true copies and examplaries aforesaid. And deuising with my selfe, who of al other were most worthy, to whome a thing so excellent and notable should be dedicate, which to my conceit seemeth for the admiration, nouelty, & strangenesse, that it might be reputed to be of in the time of the auctour, in comparison, as a pure and fine tried precious or policed iewel, out of a rude or indigest masse or matter,

none

none could to myt hinking occurre, that since, or in the time of Chaucer, was or is sufficient, but only your maiesty roiall, which by direction and iudgement, as most absolute in wisedome, and all kindes of doctrine, could and of his innate clemency & goodnesse, would adde or giue any auctority hereunto.

For this cause most excellent, and in al vertues most prestant Prince, I as humbly prostrate before your kingly estate, lowely supply and beseech thereunto, that it will vouchsafe to take in good part my poore studye, and delitous minde, in reducing vnto light this so precious and necessary an ornament, of the tongue of this your realme, ouer pitous to haue beene in any point lost, falsified, or neglected: So that vnder the shield of your most roiall protection and defence, it may go foorth in publick and prenaile ouer those that would blemish, deface, and in many thinges clearely abolish the laud, renoume, and glory heretofore compared, and merite worthy adquired by diuers princes, and other of this said most noble yle, whereunto not only straungers vnder pretext of high learning and knowledge, of their malicious and peruerse mindes, but also some of your owne subiectes, blinded in folly and ignorance, do with great study contend. Most gracious, victorious, and of God most elect and worthy prince, my most dread soueraine lord, in whome of very merite, duty, and succession, is renued the glorious title of Defensor of the Christen faith, which by your noble progenitour, the Great Constantine, sometime King of this Realme, and Emperour of Rome, was next God and his Apostles, chiefly maintained, corroborate, and defended:

almighty Jesu send to your highnes,

the continuall and euerlasting

habundance of his infinite grace, Amen.

Thus endeth the Preface.

Thus endeth the Table, and here followeth the second.

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Troilus and Creseide. 3
The testament of Creseid. 4
The Legend of good women, with a balad. 5
Boecius de Consolacione Philosophie. 6
The dreame of Chaucer, otherwise called the booke of the Duchesse, or Seis and Alcione, with a balad to his master Bucton. 7
The assemble of Foules. 8
The floure of Curtesie, with a balad. 9
How Pitie is dead and buried in a gentill hart. 10
La belle dame sans mercie. 11
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The house of Fame. 17
The Testament of Loue. 18
The Lamentacion of Mary Magdalen. 19
The remedie of Loue. 20
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❧ Eight goodly questions with their answeres.

SOmetime in Greece, that noble region
There were eight clerkes, of full great science
Philosophers, of notable discrecion:
Of whom was asked, to proue their prudence
Eight questions of derke intelligence
To which they answerd, after their entent
As here doth appear, plain and euident.

The first question was, what earthly thing
Is best, and to God most commendable
The first clerk answered, without tarying
A mans soule, euer ferme and stable
In right, from the trouth not variable
But now alas, ful soze may we wepe
Foz couetise hath brought trouth a slepe.

The second, what thing is most odious:
A double man said the Philosopher
With a virgine face, and a tale venemous
With a faire view, and a false profer
A corrupt carien, in a golden tree
It is a monster, in natures limage
One man to haue a double visage.

The third, what is the best dower
That may be to a wife appropriate:
A cleane life, was the clerkes answer
Without sinne, chast, and inuiolate
From all deceits, and speeches inornate
Or countenaunce, which shal be to dispise:
No fire make, and no smoke woll arise.

The fourth question, what maiden may
Be called cleane and pure in chastitie:
The fourth clerke answered, which alway
Euery creature, is ashamed on to lie
Of whom men reporten great honesty
Good maidens kepe your chastity forth
And remember that good name is gold worth

Who is a poore man euer ful of wo:
A couetous man, which is a nigon:
He that in his heart, can neuer say ho,
The more good, the lesse distribucion:
The richer, the worse of condition
Men in this cost, clepen him a niggard,
Sir Guy the byshour is his steward,

Which is a rich man, without fraud:
He that can to his good sufficie:
Whatsoeuer he hath, he yeueth God the laud
And kepeth him clene from all couetise
He desireth nothing in vngodly wise:
His body is here, his mind is aboue
He is a rich man, for God doth him loue.

Who is a foole, is the seuenth demaund:
He that would hurt, and hath no powere
Might he mikell, moch would he commaund
Were his malice not great, his might nought
He threteth fast, but little may he dere (were
He thinketh not how men haue said before,
God sendeth a shrewd Cow, a short horne.

Who is a wise man, is the eight question
He that might noy, and doth no noyaunce
Might punish, and leaueth punishion
A man merciful, without vengeaunce:
A wise man putteth still in remembraunce
Saying, had I venged all mine harme
My cloke had not be furred halfe so warme.

Explicit.

¶ To the Kings most noble grace, and to the Lords and Knights of the Garter.

TO you wele of honor and worthinesse
Our Christen king, the heire and successour
Unto Justinians deuout tenderesse,
In faith of Jesu, our redemptour:
And to you lords, of the Garter flour
Of cheualry, as men you clepe and call
The lord of vertue, and of grace auctour
Graunt the fruit of your lose, neuer appall.

O liege lord, that haue eke the likenesse
Of Constantine, thensample and mirrour
To princes all, in humble buxumnesse
To holy church, a very sustainour
And piller of our faith, and werriour
Again the heresies bitter Gall,
Doe forth doe forth, continue your succour
Hold vp Christs banner, let it nat fall.

This

This Ile or this had been but hethnesse
Had be of your faith, the force and vigoure
And yet this day the fends crabbidnesse
Meneth fully to catch a time and houre
To haue on vs your lieges, a sharpe shoure
And to his seruitude vs knit and thrall
But aye we trust in you, our protectour
On your constaunce we awaiten all.

Commandeth that ns wight haue hardinesse
O worthy king, our Christen Emperour
Of the faith, to dispute more or lesse
Openly emong people: Her errour
Springeth all day, and engendreth rumour
Maketh soch law, & for ought may befall
Obserue it wele, thereto be ye dettour
Doth so, and God in glory shall you stall.

Ye Lords eke shining in noble fame
To which appropred is the maintenaunce
Of Christs cause, in honour of his name
Shoue on and put his foes to vttraunce
God would so, so would eke your legiance
To tho two aye pricketh you your duty
Who so nat kepeth this double obseruaunce
Of merite and honour, naked is he.

Your stile saieth, ye be foes to shame
Now kith of your faith, the perseueraunce
In which an heape of vs, be halt and lame
Our Christen king of England & of Fraunce
And ye my lords with your alliaunce
And other faithfull people that there be
Trust I to God, shal quench all this noisance
And this land set in high prosperitie.

Conquest of high prowesse, is for to tame
The wild woodnesse of these miscreaunce
Right to the rote, daily repe ye that same
Slepe nat this, but for Gods pleasaunce
And his mother, and in significaunce
That ye been of saint Georges liuere
Doeth him seruice and knightly obeisaunce
For Christs cause is his, well knowen ye.

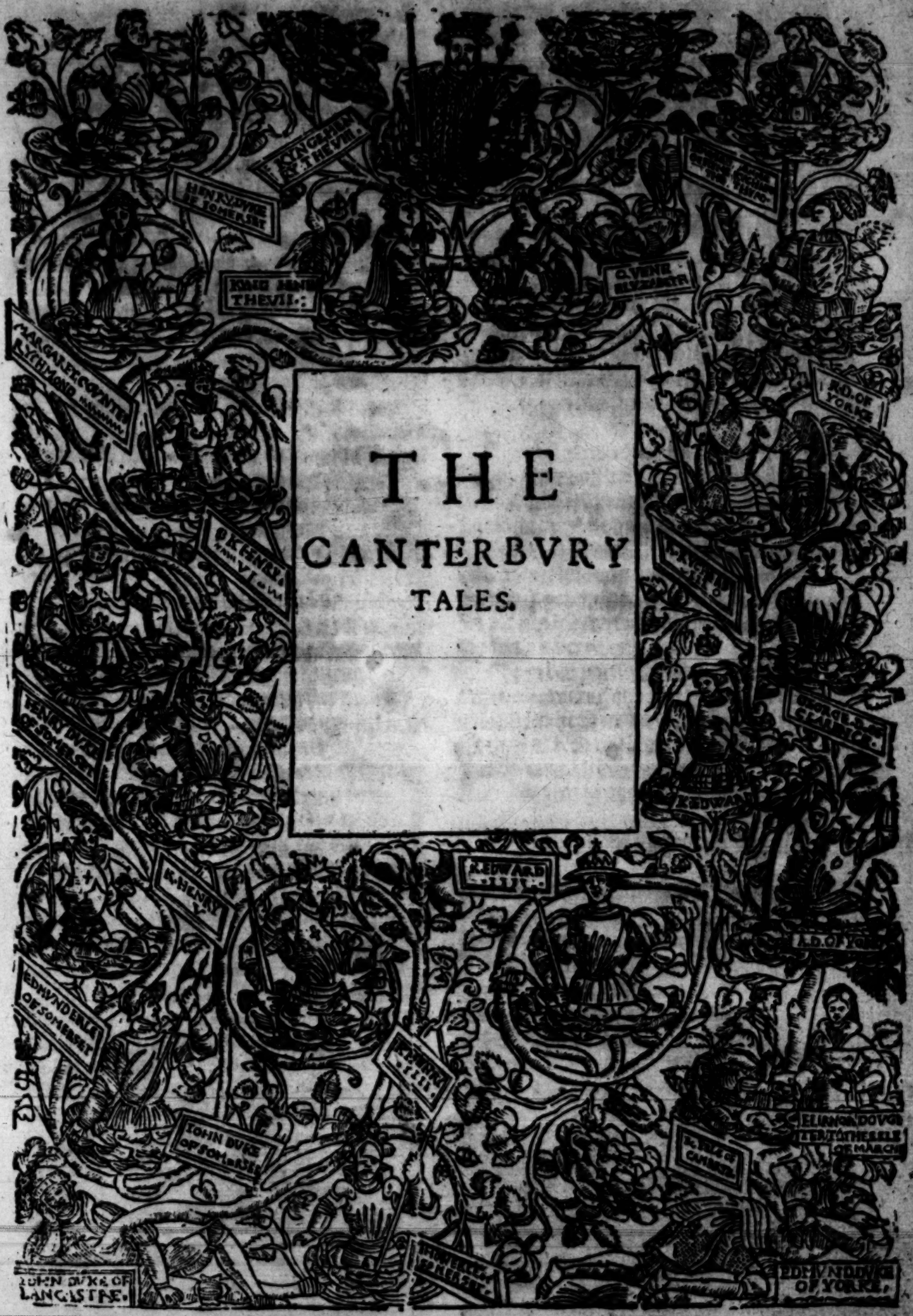
Stiffe stand in that, & ye shal greue & graine
The foe to peace, the norice of distaunce
That now is erneſt, turne it into game
Now kith of your beleue t be constaunce
Lord liege, and lords haue in remembraunce
Lord of all is the blissfull Trinitie
Of whose vertue the mightie habundaunce
Your herte and strength, in faithfull vnitie.

Explicit.

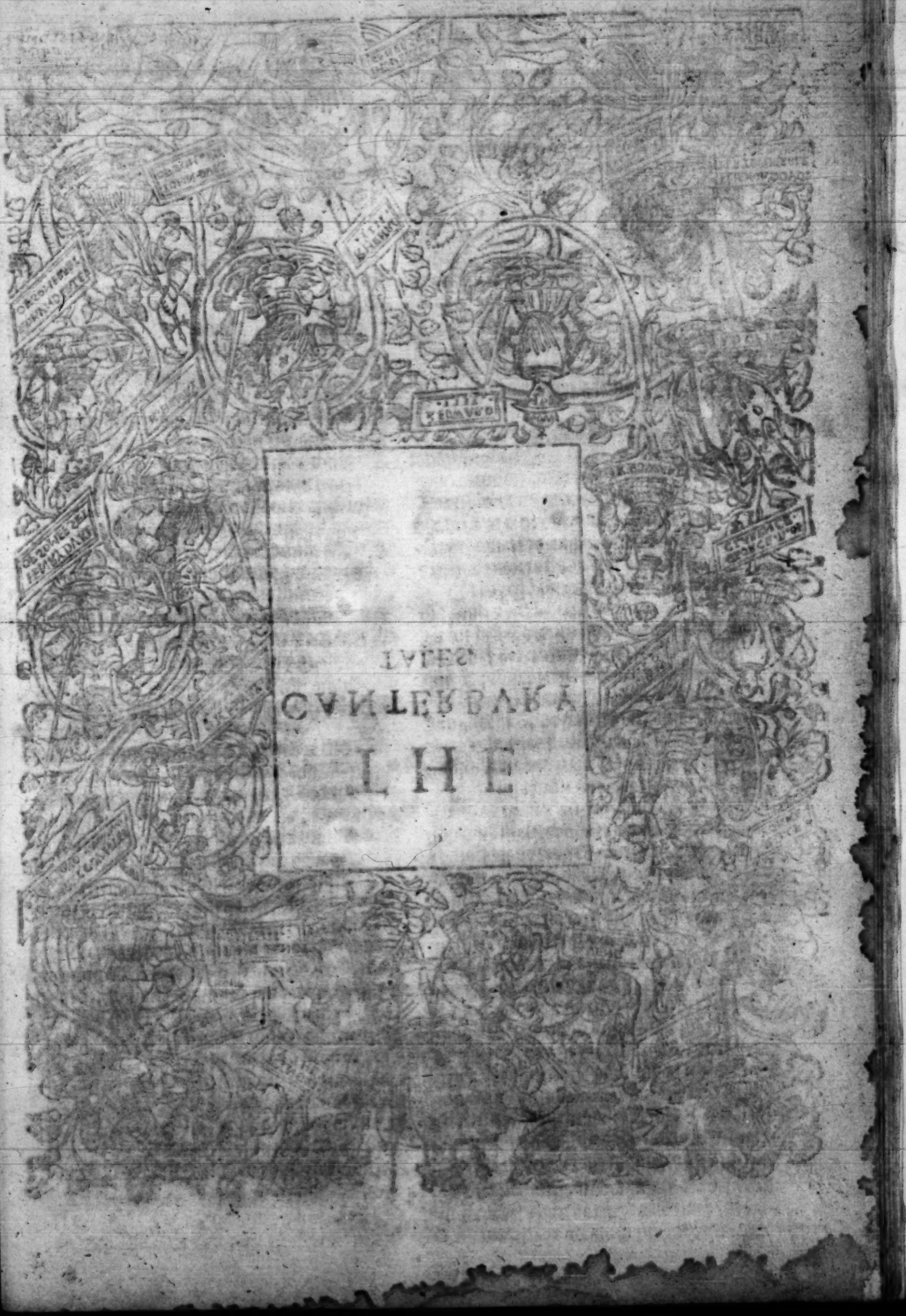
Han faith faileth in Priestes sawes
And lordes heſts are holden for lawes
And robberie is holden purchace
And lechery is holden solace
Than shall the lond of Albion
Be brought to great confusion.

It falleth for a gentilman
To say the best that he can
Alwaies as in mans absence,
And the sothe in his presence
It commeth by kind of gentill blood
To cast away all heauinesse
And gader togider words good
The worke of wisdome beareth witnesse.

Finis.



THE CANTERBVRY TALES.


THE
CANTERBVRY

WHen that Aprill with his shoures sote
The drought of march hath perced to ỳ rote,
And bathed euery vayn in such licoure,
Of which vertue, engẽdred is the floure:
When Zephirus eke with his sote breath
Ispired hath in euery holt and heath
The tender crops, and that the yong sonne
Hath in the Ram halfe his course yronne,
And smale foules maken melodie
That sleepen all night with open ie
So pricketh hem nature in her courage
Than longen folke to go on pilgrimage
And palmers for to seeken straunge strondes
To ferne halowes couth in sundry londes
And specially from euery shires end
Of Englond to Canterbury they wend
The holy blisful martir for to seeke
That hem hath holpen, whẽ they were seke.

IT befell that season on a day
In Southwark at ỳ Taberd as I lay
Ready to wend in my pilgramage
To Caunterbury with deuout courage
That night was come into that hostelry
Wel nine and twenty in a company
Of sundry folke by auenture yfall
In fellowship, and pilgrimes were they all
That toward Caunterbury would ride
The chambers and stables weren wide
And well weren they eased at the best
And shortly whan the sonne was to rest
So had I spoken with hem euerichone
That I was of her fellowship anone
And made forward early for to rise
To take our way there as I you deuise
But nethelesse, while I haue time and space
Or that I ferther in this tale pace
Me thinke it accordaunt to reason
To tell you all the condicion
Of ech of hem so as it seemed mee
And which they were, and of what degree
And eke in what array that they were in
And at a knight then will I first begin

The Knight. i.

A knight there was & ỳ a worthy man
That fro the time that he first began
To riden out, he loued cheualry
Trouth, honour, fredome, and curtesy
Full worthy was he in his lords warre
And therto had he ridden no man so farre
As wel in Christendome as in Hethenesse
And euer had honour for his worthinesse
At Alisaunder he was whan it was won
Full often time he had the bourd begon
Abouen all nations in Prusse
In Lettow had he ridden and in Ruce
No Christen man so oft of his degree
In Granade at the siege had he bee
At Algezer, and riden in Belmary
At Lees was he, and also at Sataly
Whan they were wonne, and in the great see
At many a noble army had he bee
At mortall battailes had he ben fifteene
And foughten for our faith at Tramissene
In listes thries, and aie slaine his foo
This ilke worthy knight had ben also
Sometime with the lord of Palathy
Ayenst another heathen in Turky
And euermore he had a soueraine prise
And though he was worthy he was wise
And of his port as meeke as is a maid
He neuer yet no villany ne said
In all his life, vnto no maner wight
He was a verey perfite gentil knight
For to tell you soothly of all his aray
His horse were good, but he was nothing gay
Of fustion he wered a gipon
All besmottred with his haubergion
For he was late come fro his voiage
And went for to done his pilgrimage.

The Squier. ii.

WIth him there was his sonne a yong squiere
A louer and a lusty bacheler
With his lockes crull as they were laid in presse
Of twenty yere of age he was as I gesse
Of his stature he was of euen length
And wonderly deliuer, and of great strength
And he had be sometime in chiuauchy
In Flaunders, in Artois, and in Picardy
And borne him well, as of so little space
In hope to stand in his ladies grace
Embrouded was he, as it weren a mede
All full of fresh floures, both white and rede
Singing he was, or floiting all the day
He was fresh as is the month of May
Short was his gown, with sleeues long & wide
Wel could he sit on a horse and faire ride
He coud songs make, and wel endite

Iust and eke dance, portray and wel write
So hote he loued, that by nighter tale
He slept no more then doth the Nightingale
Curteis he was, lowly and seruisable
And kerft before his Fader at the table,

The Squiers yoman. iii.

A Yoman had he and seruaunts no mo
All that time, for him list to ride so
And he was clad in cote and hood of grene
A sheefe of Pecocke arrowes bright and shene
Under his belt he bare ful thriftily
Wel cond he dresse his tackle yomanly
His arrowes drouped not with fethers low
And in his hand he bare a mighty bow
A notte heed had he, with a broune visage
Of wood craft, wel couth he all the vsage
Upon his arme he bare a gay bracer
And by his side a sword and a bokeler
And on that other side a gay daggere
Harneised well, and sharpe as point of spere
A Christofer on his brest of Siluer shene
An horne he bare, the baudrick was of grene
A forster was he soothly as I gesse

The Prioresse. iiii.

Ther was also a Nonne a Prioresse
That of her smiling was simple and coy,
Her greatest oth was but by saint Loy
And she was cleaped dame Eglentine
Ful wel she song the seruice deuine
Entuned in her nose ful seemely
And French she spake faire and fetously
After the schoole of Stratford at bow,
For French of Paris was to her vnknow
At meat was she well ytaught withall
She let no morsell fro her lips fall
Ne wet her fingers in her sauce deepe
Wel couth she carry a morsell and well keepe
That no drop ne fell vpon her brest
In curtesie was set ful much her lest
Her ouer lip wiped she so clene
That in her cup was no foule thing sene
Of grece, whan shee dronken had her draught
Ful seemely after her meat she raught
And sikerly she was of great disport
And ful pleasant, and amiable of port
And pained her for to counterfet chere
Of court, and be stateliish of manere
And to ben holden digne of reuerence
But for to speake of her conscience
She was so charitable and so pitous
She would weepe if that she saw a mous
Caught in a trap, if it were dead or bled
Of smal houndes had she that she fed
With rost flesh, or milke, and wastle bread
But sore wept she if any of hem were dead
Or if men smote hem with a yard smart
And all was conscience and tender hart
Ful seemely her wimple pinched was
Her nose tretes, her eyen gray as glas
Her mouth smal, and thereto soft and red
But sikerly she had a faire forehed
It was almost a span brode I trow
For hardily she was not vndergrow
Ful fetise was her cloke as I was ware
Of smal Corall about her arme she bare
A paire of bedes, gauded all with grene
And thereon hong a broch of gold ful shene
On which there was first writte a crowned. A
And after that (Amor vincit omnia)
Another Nonne also with her had she
That was her chaplein, and priests three.

The Monke. v.

A Monke there was, faire for the maistry,
An outrider, that loued venery
A manly man to ben an Abbot able
Ful many a deinte horse had he in stable
And whan he rode men might his bridle here
Gingling in a whistling wind as clere
And eke as loud, as doth the chappel bell
There as this lord was keeper of the cell
The rule of sainct Maure and of saint Benet
Because it was old and somdele streit
This ilke Monke did letten old thinges passe
And held after the new world the pace:
He yaue not of the text a pulled hen
That saith, that hunters be not holy men
Ne that a Monke whan he is recheleise
Is like to a fish that is waterleise
This is to say, a Monke out of Cloister:
This ilke text held hee not worth an Oyster
And I say his opinion was good
Wherto should he study, and make himself wood
Upon a booke alway in Cloister to pore
Or swinke with his hands, or labour
As Austin bid, how shal the world be serued

Let

Let Austin haue his swinke to him reserued
Therefore he was a prickesoure aright
Greyhounds he had as swift as foule of flight
Of pricking and of hunting for the hare
Was all his lust, for no cost would he spare
I saw his sleeues purfled at the hand
With Grece, and that the finest in a land
And for to fast his hood vnder the chinne
He had of gold wrought a curious pinne
A loue knot in the greater end there was
His head was bald, and shone as any glas
And eke his face, as he had ben annoint
He was a lord ful fat and in good point
His eyen steepe, and rolling in his heed
That stemed as a furneis of a leed
His boots souple, his horse in great estate
Now certainly he was a faire prelate
He was not pale as a forpined ghost
A fat swan loued he best of any rost
His Palfray was brownе as is a berry

The Frere. vi.

A Frere there was a wanton and a merry
A limitour, a full solempne man
In all the orders foure is none that can
So much of dalliaunce and faire langage
He had rid ful many a mariage
Of yong women all at his owne cost
Until his order he was a noble post
Ful wel beloued, and familier was he
With Frankelins ouer all his countre
And eke with worthy women of the toun
For he had power of confessioun
Wore then a parish priest or a curate
For of his order he was licenciate
Ful sweetly herd he confession
And pleasant was his absolution
He was an easie man to gine penaunce
There as he wist to haue a good pitaunce
For vnto a poore order for to giue
Is a signe that a man is well yshriue:
For if he gaue ought, he durst make auaunt
He wist that a man was repentaunt
For many a man is so hard of hert
That he may not weepe although him smert:
Therefore in stede of weeping and prayeres
Men mote giue siluer to the poore freres.
His tippet was aie farled full of knines
And pinnes, for to giue to faire wines:
And certainly he had a merry note
Wel could he sing and plaien on a rote
Of yedding he bare bitterly the pris
His neeke was white as the flour delice
Therto strong he was as a champioun
And knew the tauernes wel in euery toun
And euery hostelere and gapsterе
Bet than a lazer or a beggere.
For vnto such a worthy man as he
Accorded not, as by his facultе
To haue with lazers such acquaintaunce
It is not honest, it may not auaunce
For to deale with no such poraile,
But all with rich, and sellers of vittaile
And ouer all there as profite should arise
Curteis he was, and lowly of seruice
There nas no man nowherе so vertuous
He was the best begger in all his hous
And gaue a certaine ferme for the graunt
None of his brethren came in his haunt
For though a widdow had but a sho
(So pleasance was his In principio)
Yet would he haue a ferthing or he went
His purchase was better than his rent
And rage he couth as it were a whelpe
In loue dates there coud he mikle helpe
For there he was not like a cloisterere
With a threedbare cope, as a poore frere
But he was like a maister or a pope
Of double worstede was his semy cope
So rounded was as a bell out of prese
Somewhat he lisped for his wantonnesse
To make his English sweet vpon his tong
And in harping, whan that he song
His eyen twinckled in his hed aright
As done the sterres in a frosty night
This worthy frere was called Hubert

The Marchaunt. vii.

A Marchaunt was there with a long berd
In motley, on high on his horse beset
Upon his hed a Flanders beuer hat:
His boots clasped faire and fetously
His reasons he spake full solempnely
Shewing alwaye ỹ encrease of his winning
He would the see were kept for any thing
Betwixe Middelborough and Orewell
Wel could he in eschaunge shields sell
This worthy man ful wel his wit beset
There wist no wight that he was in det
So stately was he of his gouernaunce
With his bargeins, and with his chenisaunce
For sooth he was a worthy man withall

But sothly to sain, I not what men him call

The Clerke of Oxenford. viii.

A Clerke there was of Oxenford also
That vnto Logicke had long ygo
As leane was his horse as is a rake,
And he was not right fat I vndertake,
But looked hollow, and therto soberly
Ful thredbare was his ouer courtpy
For he had yet getten him no benefice
Ne was nought worldly to haue none office
For him was leuer haue at his beds hed
Twenty bookes, wel clad with blacke or reed
Of Aristotle, and of his Philosophy,
Than robes rich, or fiddle, or gay Sautry
But all be that he was a Philosopher
Yet had he but little gold in coffer
But all that he might of his friends hent
On bookes and on lerning he it spent
And busily gan for the soules pray
Of hem that helpen him to scholay
Of study took he most cure and heed
Not a word spake he more than was need
And that was said in fourme and reuerence
And short and quick, and of full hie sentence
Sowning in moral vertue was his speech
And gladly would he learn, and gladly teach.

The Sergiant at law. ix.

A Sergiant of lawe, ware and wise
That often had beene at the peruise
There was also full rich of excellence
Discreet he was, and of great reuerence
He seemed such, his words were so wise
Justice he was ful often in assise
By patent, and by plaine commission
For his science, and his hie renoun
Of fees and robes had he many one
So great a purchasour was no where none
All was fee simple to him in effect
His purchasing might not ben in suspect
No where so busie a man as he there nas
And yet he seemed busier than he was
In termes had he case and domes all
That fro the time of king William was fall
Thereto he coud endite, and make a thing
There coud no wight pinch at his writting
And euery statute coud he plaine by rote
He rode but homely in a medly cote
Girt with a ceint of silke, with barres smale
Of his aray, tel I no lenger tale.

The Frankelein. x.

A Frankelein there was in his Compayny
White was his berd, as is the daisy
And of his complexion he was sanguine
Wel loued he by the morrow a soppe in wine
To liuen in delite was euer his won
For he was Epicures owne son
That held opinion, that plain delite
Was very felicity perfite
An housholder, and that a great was he
Saint Julian he was in his countre
His bread, his ale, was alway after one
A better viended man was no where none
Without bake meat was neuer his house
Of fish and flesh, and that so plenteouse
It snewed in his house of meat and drinke
Of all deintes that men coud thinke
After the sundry seasons of the yere
So changed he his meat and his suppere
Ful many a fat Partrich had he in mue
And many a Breme, and many a luce in stue
Wo was his Cooke, but his sauce euer were
Poinant and sharpe, and redy all his gere
His table dormaunt in his hall alway
Stood redy couered all the long day
At sessions there was he lord and sire
Ful oft time he was knight of the shire
An anelace and gipsere all of silke
Hing at his girdle, white as morrow milke
A sheriffe had he ben, and a countour
Was no where such a worthy vauasour

The Haberdasher. xi.

A Goldsmith there was, an Haberdasher,
A webbe, a dier, and a tapiser
All they were yclothed in o liuere
Of a solempne and a great fraternite
Ful fresh and new her geare ypiked was
Her knives ychaped were not with bras
But all with siluer wrought ful clene and wele
Her girdels and her pouches euery dele
Well seemed euerich of hem a faire burgeis
To sitten at a yeeld hall, on the hie deis
Euerich for the wisdome that he can
Was shapen liche for to hen an alderman

For

For cattell had they right inough and rent
And eke her wones would it well assent
And eis certaine they were much to blame
It is full faire to ben icleped madame
And to gone to vigilles all before
And haue a mantle royallich ibore.

The Coke. xii.

A Coke they had with hem for the nones
To boil the chickens, with ỳ maribones
And ponder marchant, tarte & galingale
Well cond he know a draught of London ale
He couth roste, seethe, broiden, and frie
Maken mortreis, and well bake a pie
But great harme was it as it thought me
That on his shinne a mormall had he
And blanke manger, ỳ made he with the best.

The Shipman. xiii.

A Shipman was there, wonning ferre by West
For aught I wote, he was of Dertmouth
He rode vpon a rouncie, as he couth
In a goune, of falding to the knee
A dagger hanging by a lace had he
About his necke vnder his arme doune
The hote somer had made his hew all broune
And certaine he was a good felaw
Ful many a draught of wine, had he draw
Fro Burdeux ward, while the chapmen slepe
Of nice conscience tooke he no kepe
If that he faught and had the higher hand
By water he sent hem home to every land
But of his craft to recken well his tides
His streames and his dangers him besides
His herbrough, his moone, & his lodemanage
There was none such from Hull to Cartage
Hardie he was and wise to vndertake
With many a tempest had his beard be shake
He knew all the hauens as there were
Fro Scotland to the Cape de fenestere
And euerych crike in Britaine and in Spain
His barge was called the Maudelain.

The doctor of Physick. xiiii.

With vs there was a Doctour of Physike
In all this world, ne was there none him like
To speake of Physike and of Surgerie
For he was grounded in Astronomie
He kept his pacient a full great deil
In houres, by his Magike naturell
Well couth he fortune, the ascendent
Of his Image, for his pacient
He knew the cause of every malady
Whether it were of cold, heate, moist or dry
And whereof ingendred was each humour
He was a very parfit practisour
The cause know, & of his harme the roote
Anon he gaue to the sicke man his boot
Full ready had he his Apoticaries
To send him drugges, and his lectuaries
For each of hem made other for to winne
Her friendship was not new to beginne
Well knew he the old Esculapius
And Dioscorides and eke Rufus
Old Hippocrates, Galie, and eke Gallen
Serapion, Rasis, and also Auicen
Auerrois, Damascene, and Constantin
Bernard, Gatisden, and Gilbertin
Of his diet measurable was he
For it was of no superfluitee
But of great nourishing, and digestible
His studie was but little on the Bible
In sanguine and in perce yclad withall
Lined with Taffata and with Sendall
And yet he was but easie of dispence
He kept that he wan in time of pestilence
For gold in Physike is a cordiall
Therefore he loued gold in speciall.

The wife of Bathe. xv.

A Good wife also there was beside Bathe
But she was somedeale deefe, & that was scathe
Of cloth making she had such an haunt
She passed hem of Ipre or of Gaunt
In all the parish, wife ne was there none
That to the offring before her should gone
And if there did, certain wroth was she
Than she was all out of charitee
Her kerchers large were, & fine of ground
I durst sweare they waiden three pound
That on a Sonday were vpon her hedde
Her hosen were of fine scarlet reddc
Full strait ystreined, and shoes full new
Bold was her face and redde was her hew
She was a worthy woman all her liue
Husbands at the Church dore had she fiue
Withouten other company in youth
But thereof nedeth not to speake as nouth
And thrise had she bene at Jerusaleme
She had passed many a strange streme

At Rome had she been, and at Boloine
In Galis at saint James, and at Coloine
She couth much of wandring by the way
Gap tothed was she, sothly for to say
Upon an ambler easily she satte
Ywimpled well, and on her head an hatte
As broad as is a buckler or a targe
A foot mantell about her hippes large
And on her feet a paire of spurres sharpe
In fellowship well couth she laugh and carpe
Of remedies of loue, she knew perchance
For she couth of that arte the old dance.

The Parson. xvi.

A Good man there was of religioun
And was a poore Parson of a toun
But riche hee was of holy thought and werke
He was a learned man, and a clerke,
That Christs Gospels truly wold preach
His parishners deuoutly would he teach
Benigne he was, and wonder diligent
And in aduersitie full patient
And such he was proued oft sithes
Full lothe were him to curse for his tithes
But rather would he, yeuen out of doubt
Unto his poore parishners all about
Both of his offering, and of his substaunce
He couth in little thing haue sufficiaunce
Wide was his parish, and houses fer asonder
But he ne left neither for raine ne thonder
In sickness ne in mischiefe for to visite
The farthest in his parish, much or lite
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staffe
This noble ensample, to his sheepe he yaffe
That first he wrought, and afterward taught
Out of the Gospell he the words caught
And this figure he added eked thereto
That if gold rust, what should iron doe
For yef a preest to be foule on whome we trust
No wonder is a lewd man to rust
And shame it is if a preest take kepe
To see a shitten shepheard, and a cleane shepe
Well ought a preest ensample to yeue
By his cleannesse, how his sheepe should liue
He set not his benefice to hire
And let his sheepe, acomber in the mire
And renne to London to saint Poules
To seken him a Chauntry for soules
Or with a brotherhede to be withhold
But dwelt at home, and kept well his fold
So that the Wolfe, ne made hem miscary
He was a shepheard, and not a mercenary
And though he holy were and vertuous
He was to sinfull men dispitous
Ne of of his speach dangerous ne digne
But in his teaching discrete and benigne
To drawen folke to heauen with fairenes
By good ensample, this was his business
But if he were any person obstinate
Whether he were of high or low estate
Him would he snibbe sharply for the nonis
A better preest I trow, no where none is
He waited after no pompe ne reuerence
Ne maked him no spiced conscience
But Christs lore and his Apostles twelue
He taught, but first he followed it himselue.

The Plowman. xvii.

With him there was a Plowman his brother.
That had yladde of doung, many a fother
A true swinker and a good was he
Living in peace and perfit charitee
God loued he best, with all his whole hart
At all times, though him gamed or smart
And then his neighbours right as himselfe
He would thresh, and thereto dike and delfe
For Christes sake, for every poore wight
Without hire, if it lay in his might
His tithes paied, he full faire and well
Both of his proper swinke, and his cattell
In a tabard he rode, upon a Mare
There was also a Reue, and a Millare
A Sompnour, and a Pardoner also
A Manciple, and my selfe, there was no mo.

The Miller. xviii.

THE Miller was a stout carle for the nones
Full big he was of braune, and eke of bones
That proued well, for ouer all there he came
At wrastling he would haue away the Ram
He was short shouldred, broade a thicke knarre
There nas no dore, but he would heue ỹ barre
Or breake it, at a renning with his hed
His berd as any Sow or Fore was red
And thereto brode, as it were a spade
Upon the cop, right of his nose he hade
A wert, and thereon stood a tuft of haires
Red as the bristles, of a Sowes eares
His nostrils also blacke were and wide

A swerd and buckler bare he by his side
His mouth was as wide as a great fornes
He was a tangler and a golierdeis
And that was most of sinne and harlotrie
Well couth he steale corne, and toll it thrise
And yet he had a thombe of gold parde
A white coat and a blew hood weared he
A bagpipe well couth he blow and soune
And therwith dronght he vs out of towne.

The Maniple. xix.

A Gentle Maniple there was of the Temple
Of which all Catours might taken ensemple
For to ben wise in buying of vitaile
For whether he paied or took by taile
Algate he waited him so in his achate
That he was aye before in good estate
Now is not that of God a full faire grace
That such a lewd mans wit shall pace
The wisdome of an heape of learned men
Of maisters had he mo then thrise ten
That were of Law expert and curious
Of which there was a dousen in that hous
Worthy to been stewards of rent and land
Of any Lord that is in England
To maken him liue by his proper good
In honour debtelesse, but if he were wood
Or liue as scarsly as him list desire
And able to helpen all a shire
In any case that might fallen or happe
And yet the Maniple set all her cappe.

The Reue. xx.

THe Reue was a sclender Cholleriche man
His beard was shaue as nye as euer he can
His hair was by his eares round ishorne
His toppe was docked like a priest before
Full long were his legges, and full lene
Ylike a staffe, there was no Calfe ysene
Well couth he kepe a garner and a binne
There was none Auditour could on him win
Well wist he by the drought, and by the rain
The yeelding of his sede and of his grain
His Lordes sheepe, his Nete, and his Dairy
His swine, his horse, his store, and his pultry
Were holly in his Reues gouerning
And by his couenant yaue he reckening
Sith his Lord was twenty yere of age
There could no man bring him in arerage
There nas Baillie, Herde, ne other hine
That he ne knew, his sleight and his couine
They were adrad of him as of the death
His wonning was full faire vpon an heath
With greene trees shadowed was his place
He could better then his Lord purchace
Full rich he was and stored priuely,
His Lord he could well please and subtilly
To yeue and lene him of his owne good
And haue a thanke, and yet a coat and a hood
In youth he had learned a good mistere
He was a wheelwright and a Carpenter
This Reue sate vpon a right good stot
That was all pomell gray, and hight Scot
A long surcote of perse vpon he hade
And by his side he bare a rustie blade
Of Norfolke was this Reue of whith I tell
Beside a toune, men clepen it Baldeswell
Tucked he was as is a Frere about
And euer he rode hindermost of the rout.

The Sompnour. xxi.

A Sompnour was there with vs in the place
That had a fiereredde Cherubines face
For sawsleme he was with eyen narow
As hote he was and lecherous as a sparowe,
With scaled browes blacke, and pilled berd
Of his visage children were sore aferd
There nas quicksiluer, Litarge, ne brimstone
Borace, Ceruse, ne oile of Tartar none
Ne ointment that either would clense or bite
That him might helpe of his whelkes white
Ne of his knobs sitting on his chekes
Well loued he Garlike, Onions and Lekes
And for to drinke strong wine red as blood
Then would he speke and cry as he were wood
And when he had well idronke the wine
Then would he speake no word but Latine
A few termes he could, two or three
That he had learned out of some degree
No wonder is, he heard it all the day
And ye knowen well eke how that a Jay
Can clepe Watte, as well as can the pope
But who so couth in other thing him grope
Then had he spent all his philosophy
(A questio quid iuris) would he cry
He was a gentill harlot and a kind
A better felaw should a man not find
He would suffer for a quart of wine
A good felow to haue his concubine
A twelue monthe, and excuse him at the full

Full

Full prtuſly eke a Finch couth he pull
And if he fond o where a good felawe
He would teachen him tq haue none awe
In ſuch caſe of the Archdecons courſe
But if mans ſoule were in his pourſe
For in his pourſe, he ſhould ipuniſhed be
Pourſe is the archdekins hell, ſaied he
But well I wote, he lied right indede
Of curſing, ought ech giltie man dzede
For curſing woll flea, rizt as aſſoiling ſaueth
And alſo ware him of a ſignificauit
In danger had he at his owne giſe
The yong girles of the Diociſe
And knew her counſaile, and was of her red
A garlond had he ſet vpon his hed
As great as it were for an aleſtake
A buckler had he maked him of a cake.

The Pardoner. xrii.

WIth him there rode a gentill Pardonere
Of Rounceuall, his friend and his compere
That ſtrait was come fro the court of Rome
Full loud ſong he, come hider loue ſoone
This Sompnour bare to him a ſtiff burdoun
Was neuer Trompe of halfe ſo great a ſoun
This Pardoner had hair as yellow as waxe
But ſmooth it hing as doth a ſtricke of flaxe
By vnces hing his lockes that he had
And therewith he his ſhoulders ouerſprad
Full thynne it lay, by culpons one and one
But hode for iolitie ne weared he none
For it was truſſed vp in his walet
Him thought he rode all of the new iet
Diſheuild, ſaue his cappe he rode all bare
Soche glaring yen had he as an hare
A vernacle had he ſowed vpon his cappe
His wallet before him in his lappe
Bret full of pardon, come from Rome all hote
A voice he had as ſmall as hath a Gote
No berd had he, ne neuer ſhould haue
As ſmooth it was as it were new ſhaue
I trow he were a gelding or a Mare
But of his craft fro Barwike vnto Ware
Ne was there ſoch another pardonere
For in his male had he a pillowbere
Which as he ſaid, was our Ladies vaile
He ſaid he had a gobbet of the ſaile
That ſaint Peter had, when that he went
Upon the ſea, till Jeſu Chriſt him hent
He had a croſſe of Latine ful of ſtones
And in a glaſſe he had Pigges bones
But with theſe reliques, when that he fond
A poore Perſon dwelling in vplond
Upon a day he gate him more money
Then that Perſon gate in monethe twey
And thus with fained flattering and japes
He made the Perſon, and the people his apes
But truly to tellin at the laſt
He was in Church a great Eccleſiaſt
Well couth he reade a leſſon or a ſtorie
But alderbeſt he ſang an offertorie
For well he wiſt when that ſong was ſong
He muſt preach, and well affile his tong
To winne ſiluer, as he full well coud
Therefore he ſong ſo merry and ſo loud
Now haue I told you ſothly in a clauſe
Theſtate, the aray, eth nomber, and the cauſe
Why that aſſembled was this company
In Sothwerke at this gentill hoſtelry
That hight the Tabard, faſt by the Bell
But now is time to you for to tell
How that we baren vs, that ilke night
When we weren in that hoſtry alight
And after woll I tell of our voiage
And all the remnaunt of our pilgrimage
But firſt I pray you of your curteſie
That ye ne arette it nought my villany
Though that I plainly ſpeak in this mattere
To tellen you her words and eke her chere
Ne though I ſpeake her words properly
For this ye knowen as well as I
Who ſhall tellen a tale after a man
He mote rehearſe as nye as euer he can
Euerich word if it been in his charge
All ſpeke he neuer ſo rudely ne large
Or elſe he mote tellen his tale vntrue
Or feine things, or find words new
He may not ſpare altho he were his brother
He mote as well ſay o word as another
Chriſt ſpake himſelfe full broade in holy writ
And well I wote no villanie is it
Eke Plato ſaith, who ſo can him rede
The wordes mote been, cosin to the dede
Alſo I pray you forgeue it me
All haue I not ſet folke in her degre
Here in this tale as they ſhould ſtand
My wit is ſhort, ye may well vnderſtand

GReat chere made our hoſt vs euerichone
And to the Supper ſet he vs anon
And ſerued vs with vitaile at the beſt
Strong was the wine, & well to drink vs leſt
A ſemely man our hoſt was withall
For to been a marſhall in a lordes hall
A large man he was, with yen ſtepe

A fairer burgeis is there none in Chepe
Bold of his speach, wise and well ytaught
And of manhood him lacked right naught
Eke thereto he was a right merry man
And after supper plaien he began
And spake of mirth among other things
When that we had made our reckenings
And said to vs thus, now Lordings truly
Ye be to me welcome right heartily
For by my trouth if I should not lye
I nat sey this yere so merry a company
At ones in this herbergow as is now
Fain would I don you mirth and I wist how
And of a mirth I am right now bethought
To don you ease, and it shall cost nought
Ye gone to Canterbury God wote you spede
The blissful martyr quite you your mede
And well I wot as ye gone by the way
Ye shapen you to talen and to play
For truly comfort ne mirth is there none
To riden by the way as dombe as a stone
And therefore would I make you disport
As I said erst, and don you some comfort
And if you liketh all by one assent
For to standen at my word and judgement
And for to worchen as I shall you say
To morrow when we riden on the way
Now by my fathers soul that is dead
But ye be merry I wull give you my head
Hold vp your hands without more speech.
Our counsail was not long for to seech
Vs thought it was not worth to make it nice
And granted him without more avise
And bad him say his verdit as him lest
Lordings (qd. he) now harkeneth for the best
But take it not I pray you in disdaine
This is the point to speake it plat and plaine
That ech of you to shorten with your way
In this voyage shall tell tales tway
To Canterbury ward I mean it so
And homeward he shall tell tales other two
Of auentures whilom that han befall
And which of you that bereth him best of all
That is to sain, that tellen in tales case
Tales of best sentence and most solace
Shall have a supper at our aller cost
Here in this place sitting by this post
When that we comen ayen from Canterbury
And for to make you the more merry
I will my selven goodly with you ride
Right at mine owne cost, and be your gide
And who that will my judgement withsay
Shall pay all that we spend by the way
And if ye vouchsafe that it be so
Tell me anon without words mo
And I will early shape me therefore
This thing was granted and our othes swore
With glad hart, and praiden him also
That he would vouchsafe for to do so
And that he would ben our governour
And of our tales, judge and reportour
And set a supper at a certaine pris
And we would ruled bene at his devise
In high and low, and thus by one assent
We ben accorded to his judgement
And thereupon the wine was fet anon
We dronken, and to rest went ilke one
Withouten any longer tarying
A morrow when the day gan to spring
Up rose our host, and was our aller cock
And gathered vs togider on a flock
And forth we riden a little more than paas
Vnto the watering of saint Thomas
And there our host began his horse arest
And said, Lords harkeneth if you lest
Ye wot your forward, and I it record
If ever song and morrow song accord
Let se now who shall tell the first tale
As ever I mote drinke wine or ale
Who so is rebell to my judgement
Shall pay for all that by the way is spent
Now draweth cut, for that is mine accord
Cometh nere (qd. he) my lady Prioresse
And ye sir Clerke, let be your shamefastnes
Ne studieth not, lay hand thereto every man:
Anon to draw every wight began
And shortly for to tellen as it was
Were it by auenture, or chance, or cas
The soth is this, the cut fell to the knight
Of which full blithe and glad was every wight
And tellen he must his tale as it was reason
By forward and by composition
As ye han herd, what needeth words mo
And when this good man saw that it was so
As he that wise was and obedient
To keepen his forward by his free assent
He said, sithen I shall begin the game
What welcome cut to me a gods name:
Now let vs ride, and harkeneth what I say
And with that word we riden forth our way
And he began with a right merry chere
His tale anon, right as ye shall here.

¶ Thus endeth the Prologues of the Canterbury tales, and here followeth the knightes tale.

Vertue flourisheth in Chaucer still,
Though death of him, hath wrought his will.

WHylom, as olde stories tellen vs
There was a Duke that hight Theseus
Of Athens he was lord and gouernour
And in his time suche a conquerour
That greater was non vnder the sonne
Full many a rich countrie had he won
What with his wisdome, and his chiualrie
He conquered all the reigne of Feminy
That whylom was icleped Cithea
And wedded the queene Ipolita (countrie
And brought her home with him into his
With mikell glorie and solemnitie,
And eke her yong suster Emely.
And thus with victorie and melody
Let I this worthy duke to Athens ride
And all his host in armes him beside.
And certes, if it were to long to here
I would haue told fully the manere
How wonnen was the reigne of Feminy
By Theseus, and by his chiualrie
And of the great battaile for the nones
Betweene Athenes and Amasones
And how besieged was Ipolita
The yong hardie queene of Cithea
And of the feast, that was at her wedding
And of the tempest at her home comming
But all that thing, I mote as now forbere
I haue god wot, a large field to ere
And weked bene the oxen in the plowe
The remenant of my tale is long nowe
I will nat letten eke non of this rout
Let euery fellow tell his tale about
And let se now, who shall the supper win
And there I left, I will again begin.
This duke of whom I make mencioune
When he was come almost to the town
In all his wele and his most pride
He was ware, as he cast his eye aside
Where that there kneled in the high wey
A companie of ladys, twey and twey
Eche after other, clad in clothes blacke
But such a crie and such a woe they make
That in this world nys creature liuing
That euer heard such a waimenting
And of this crie they nold neuer stenten
Till they the reines of his bridell henten
What folk be ye that at myn home cõming
Perturben so my feast with crieng
Quod Theseus: Haue ye so great enuy
Of mine honour, that thus complaine & cry:
Or who hath you misbode, or offended:
Now telleth me, if it may be amended
And why that ye be clothed thus in blacke:
The oldest ladie of them all spake
When she had sowned with a deedly chere,
That it was ruth for to see and here
She said, lord to whom fortune hath yeue
Victory, and as a conqueror to liue
Nought greueth vs your glory and honour
But we beseke you of mercy and socour.
And haue mercy on our woe and distresse,
Some drope of pite throughout thy gentilnesse
Vpon vs wretched wymen let thou fall.
For certes lord, there nys none of vs all

That she ne hath be a duchesse or a quene
Now be we caytifes, as it is well sene
Thanked be fortune, and her false whele
That none estate assureth for to be wele.
Now certes lord, to abyde your presence
Here in this temple of the goddesse Clemence
We haue be waiting all this fourtenyght
Helpe vs lord, syth it lieth in thy might.

I wrecche, that wepe and waile thus
Whylom wife to king Campaneus
That starfe at Thebes, cursed be the day
And all we that ben in this aray
And maken all this lamentacion
We losten all our husbondes at that towne
Whyle that the siege there about laie
And yet the olde Creon (wel awaie)
That Lorde is nowe of Thebes cite
Fulfilled of yre and of iniquite
He for despite and for his tirany
To done the deed bodies villany
Of all our lords, which that ben slawe
Hath all the bodies on an heape ydrawe
And will nat suffer hem, by none assent
Neither to be buried, ne to be brent
But maketh hounds to eate hem in dispite
And with that word without more respite
They fallen grofly, and crien pitously
Haue on vs wretched wymen some mercy
And let our sorowe sinke in thine hert.
This gentle duke downe fro his horse stert
With hert pitous, whan he herd hem speke
Him thought that his hert wolde breke
Whan he sawe hem so pitous and so mate
That whylom were of so great astate
And in his armes, he hem all vp hent
And hem comforted in full good entent
And swore his othe, as he was true knight
He wolde don so ferforthly his might
Upon the tirant Creon hem to wreake
That all the people of Grece shulde speake
How Creon was of Theseus yserued
As he that hath his deth full well deserued
And right anon withouten more abode
His baner he displayed, and forth rode
To Thebes warde, and all his hoost beside
No nere Athens nolde he go ne ride
Ne take his ease fully halfe a daye
But onward on his way that night he laye
And sent anone Ipolita the quene
And Emely her yong suster shene
Unto the towne of Athenes to dwell
And forth he rideth, ther nys no more to tel.

The red statu of Mars with spere & targe
So shineth in his white baner large
That al the feldes glyttren vp and doun
And by his baner, borne is his penon
Of golde ful riche, in which there was ybete
The mynotaure, that he wan in Crete
Thus rideth this duke, this conquerour
And in his hoste of chiualry the flour
Till that he came to Thebes, and alight
Faire in a felde, ther as he thought to fight
But shortly for to speken of this thing
With Creon, which was of Thebes king
He faught, and slewe him manly as a knight
In plaine bataile, and put his folke to flight
And at a saute he wan the cite after
And rent adowne wall, sparre, and rafter
And to the ladies he restored againe
The bodies of her husbandes that were slain
To done obsequies, as tho was the gise.
But it were all to long for to deuise
The great clamour, and the weymenting
That the ladies made at the brenning
Of the bodies, and the great honour
That Theseus, the noble conquerour
Doth to the ladies, whan they from him went
But shortly to tellen is mine entent.
When ỳ this worthy duke, this Theseus
Hath Creon slaine, and wan Thebes thus
Still in the felde he toke all night his rest
And did with all the countre as him lest
To ransake in the taas of bodies dede
(Hem for to stripe of harneys and of wede)
The pillours did her busines and cure
After the bataile and the discomfiture
And so befell, that in the taas they founde
Thorough girt with many a grcuous wounde
Two yong knightes lyeng by and by
Both in armes same, wrought full richely
Of which two, Arcite hight that one
And that other hight Palamon
Not fully quicke, ne fully deed they were
But by her cote armours, and by her gere
The heraudes knewe hem best in speciall
As tho that weren of the blood riall
Of Thebes, and of sistren two yborne
Out of the taas the pillours hath hem borne
And han hem caried softe into the tent
Of Theseus, and he full sone hem sent
To Athenes, to dwellen there in prison
Perpetuell, he nolde hem not raunson
And whan this worthy duke had thus idon
He toke his hoste, and home he gothe anon
With laurel crouned as a conquerour
And there he liueth in ioye and honour
Terme of his life, what nedeth words mo?
And in a toure, in anguish and in wo
Dwelleth Palamon, and his felowe Arcite.

For euermore, there may no gold hem quite.

Thus palleth yere by yere, & day by day
Till it fell ones in a morowe of May
That Emely, that fayner was to sene
Than is the lylly, vpon the stalke grene
And fresher than May, with floures newe
For with the rose colour strof her hewe
I not which was the fayner of them two
Er it was day, as was her woon to do
She was arisen, and all redy dight
For May wold haue no slogardy a night
The season pricketh euery gentell herte
And maketh it out of the slepe sterte
And saith arise, and do May obseruaunce
This maketh Emely to haue remembraunce
To done honour to May, and for to rise
Iclothed was she fresh for to deuise
Her yelowe heare was brayded in a tresse
Behinde her backe, a yerde long I gesse
And in the gardyn at sunne vprist
She walketh vp and downe as her list
She gathereth floures, party white & reed
To make a subtell garland for her heed
And as an angell, hetenly she song
The great toure, that was so thicke & strong
Which of the castell was the chefe dungeon
Wherin the knightes were in prison
Of which I tolde you, and tell shall
Was euyn ioynaunt to the garden wall
There as this Emely had her playeng
Bright was the sonne, & clere the morning
And Palamon this wofull prisoner
As was his wont, by leaue of his gayler
Was risen, and romed in a chambre on highe
In which he all the noble cite sighe
And eke the gardyn, full of braunches greene
There as this fresh Emely the shene
Was in her walke, and romed vp and doun.
This sorowfull prisoner, this Palamon
Gothe in his chambre roming to and fro
And to him selfe complaining of his wo
That he was borne full oft he said alas
And so befell by auenture or cas
that through a windowe thick of many a bar
Of yren great, and square as any spar
He cast his eyen vpon Emilia
And therwith he blent and cried, ha,
As though he stongen were to the herte.
And with that crie Arcite anon vp sterte
And sayd, cosyn myne, what eyleth the
That art so pale and deedly for to se:
Why criest thou: who hath do the offence:
For goddes loue, take all in pacience
Our prison, for it maie none other be
Fortune hath yeuen vs this aduersite
Some wicked aspect or disposicion
Of Saturne, by some constellacion
Hath yeuen vs this, although we had it swore
So stode the heuen, whe that we were bore
We mote endure this is short and playn.
This Palamon answered, & sayde agayn
Cosyn forsoth of this opinion
Thou hast a vaine imaginacion
This prison caused me not to crye
but I was hurt right now thyough myn eye
Into mine hert, that woll my bane be
The fayrnesse of a lady that I se
Ponde in the gardyn, ronning to and fro
Is cause of all my crying and wo
I not whether she be woman or goddesse
But Venus it is, soothly as I gesse
And therwithall on knees doun he fyll
And said: Venus, if it be thy wyll
You in this garden thus to transfigure
Before me sorowfull wretched creature
Out of this prison helpe that we may scape
And if our destiny be so shape
By eternne worde, to dyen in prison
Of our lynage haue some compassion
That is so lowe brought by tirranny.
And with that worde Arcite gan espy
where as the lady romed to and fro
And with that sight her beaute hurt him so
That if that Palamon were wounded sore
Arcite was hurt as much as he, or more
And with a sigh he said pitously
The fresh beutie sleeth me sodenly
Of her that rometh in yonder place
And but I haue her mercy and her grace
That I may seen her at the leste way
I nam but deed, there nys no more to say

This Palamon, whan he these wordes herd
Dispitously he loked, and answerd:
whether sayest thou this in ernest or in play:
Nay quod Arcite, in ernest by my fay
God helpe me so, me list full yuell to play
This Palamon gan knit his browes twey
It were (quod he) to the no great honour
To be false, ne for to be traytour
To me, that am thy cosyn and thy brother
Iswore full depe, and eche of vs to other
That neuer for to dyen in the payne
Till that the deth departe vs twayne
Neither of vs in loue to hinder other
Ne in none other cace my leue brother
But that thou shuldest truly further me
In euery cace, as I shulde further the
This was thine othe, & mine also certain

I wote it well, thou darst it not withsayn
Thus art thou of my counsell out of doubte
And nowe thou woldest falsly ben aboute
To loue my lady, whom I loue and serue
And euer shall, till that myn herte sterue.
Now certes false Arcite thou shalt not so
I loued her first, and tolde the my wo
As to my counsell, and to my brother sworne
To further me, as I haue tolde beforne
For which thou art ybounden as a knight
To helpen me, if it lye in thy might
Or elis art thou false, I dare well saine.
This Arcite full proudly spake again
Thou shalt (quod he) be rather false than I
And thou art false, I tell the utterly,
For paramour I loued her first er thou,
What wilt thou sain, thou wist it not or now
Whether she be woman or goddesse
Thine is affection of holinesse:
And mine is loue, as to a creature
For which I tolde the mine auenture
As to my cosyn, and my brother sworne.
Suppose that thou loued her beforne
Wost thou not well the olde clerkes sawe
That who shall giue a louer any lawe
Loue is a greter lawe by my pan
Than may be yeuen to any erthly man
And therfore positife lawe, and such decree
Is broken all day for loue in eche degree
A man mote nedes loue maugre his heed
He may nat flee it though he shuld be deed
All be she maide, widowe, or wife.
And eke it is not likely all thy life
To stonden in her grace, no more shall I
For well thou wost thy selfe verely
That thou and I be dampned to prison
Perpetuell, vs gaineth no raunson.
We striuen, as did the houndes for the bone
That fought al day, & yet her part was non
Ther cam a cur, whil that they were so wroth
And bare away the bone from hem both
And therfore, at kings court my brother
Eche man for him selfe, there is none other
Loue if thou list, for I loue and ay shall
And soothly lefe brother this is all
Here in this prison mote we endure
And euerich of vs taken his auenture.
Great was the strife betwix hem twey
If that I had leyser for to sey
But to th'effect, it happed on a day
To tell it you shortly as I may.
A worthy duke that hight Perithous,
That felowe was to duke Theseus
Sith thilke day that they were children lite
Was come to Athenes, his felowe to visite

And for to play, as he was wont to do
For in this world he loued no man so
And he loued him as tenderly again
So wel they loued, as olde bokes sayne
That when that one was deed soothly to tell
His fellow went & sought him down in hell
But of that story list me not to write.
Duke Perithous loued well Arcite
And had him known at Thebes yere by yere
And finally at request and prayere
Of Perithous, without en any raunson
Duke Theseus let him out of prison
Freely to gon whither him list ouer all
In such a gyse, as I you tellen shall.
This was the forward, plainly to endite
Betwixt duke Theseus and him Arcite
That if so were, that Arcite were yfounde
Euer in his life, by day night or stounde
In any contree of this duke Theseus
And he were caught, it was accorded thus
That with a swerde he should lese his heed
There was none other remedy ne reed
But taketh his leue, and homward him sped
Let him beware, his nekke lieth to wedd.
How great sorowe suffreth now Arcite
The deth he feleth thorough his herte smite
He wepeth, wayleth, and crieth pitously
To sleen him selfe he wayteth priuely
And said, alas the day that I was borne
Now is my prison worse than beforne
Now is me shapen eternally to dwell
Nought in purgatory, but in hell
Alas that euer I knewe Perithous
For elis had I dwelt with Theseus
Yserued in his prison euermo
Then had I be in blisse, and nat in woo
Only the sight of her, whom that I serue
Though that I neuer her grace may deserue
Wolde haue sufficed right ynough for me
O dere cosyn Palamon (quod he)
Thine is the victorie of this auenture
Ful blisful in prison mayst thou endure
In prison, May certes but in paradise
Well hath fortune to the turned the dise
That hast the sight of her, and I thabsence
For possible is, sithens thou hast her presence
And art a knight, a worthie man and able
That by som cas, syn fortune is changeable
Thou mayst somtime to thy desire attaine
But I that am exiled, and barraine
Of all grace, and in so great dispeyre
That ther nys water, erthe, fyre ne eyre
Ne creature, that of hem maked is
That may me heale, or done comfort in this
Well ought I sterue in wanhope and distresse.
Farwell

Farewell my life, my lust, and my gladnesse
Alas, why playnen men so in commune
Of purueyance of God, or of fortune
That yeueth hem full oft in many agise
Well bette than hem selfe can deuise
Some man desireth to haue richesse
That cause is of his murdre or sickenesse
And some man wold out of his prison faine
That in his house, is of his meyne slaine
Infinite harmes bene in this mattere
We wote not what thing we prayen here
We faren as he that dronke is as a mouse
A dronken man woten well, he hath an house
But he wot not, which the right way thider
And to a dronken man the way is slider
And certes in this world so faren we
We seken fast after felicite
But we go wrong full ofte truely
Thus we may say all, and namely I
That wenden, and had a great opinion
That if I might scape fro prison
Than had I ben in ioye and parfite hele
There now I am exiled fro my wele
Sith that I may nat seen you Emely
I nam but deed, there lys no remedy.
¶ Upon that other side Palamon
When that he wist Arcite was gon
Such sorow he maketh, that the great tour
Resowned of his yelling and clamour
The pure fetters on his shinnes grete
Were of his bitter salt teares wete
Alas (quoth he) Arcite cosyn mine
Of all our strife, God wot the frute is thine
Thou walkest now in Thebes at large
And of my wo, thou yeuest litell charge
Thou maist, sith thou hast wisedom & mãhed
Assemble all the folke of our kinrede
And make warre so sharpe in this countre
That by some auenture, or by some treate
Thou maist haue her to lady and to wife
For whom I must nedes lese my life
For as by way of possibilite.
Sithe thon art at thy large of prison free
And art a lord, great is thine aduantage
More than is myne, that sterue here in a cage
For I may wepe & waile, whiles that I liue
With all the wo that prison may me yeue
And eke with paine, that loue yeueth me also
That doubleth all my torment and my wo
Therewith the fire of iealousy up sterte
Within his brest, and hent him by the herte
So wodely, that he likely was to behold
The boxe tree, or the ashen deed and cold
Than said he. O cruell goddes, that gouerne
This worlde with your word eterne
And written in the table of Athamant
Your parliament and eterne graunt
What is mankind more vnto you holde
Than is the shepe, that rouketh in the folde?
For slaine is man, right as another beest
And dwelleth eke in prison, and in arrest
And hath sickenesse, and great aduersite
And oft time giltelesse parde.
What gouernance is in this prescience
That giltelesse tormenteth innocence?
And encreaseth thus all my penaunce
That man is bounden to his obseruaunce
For Gods sake to letten of his will
There as a beest may all his lustes fulfill
And whan a beest is deed, he hath no payn
But after his death man mote wepe & plain:
Though in this world he haue care and wo
Without doute it may stonden so.
The answere of this lete I to diuines
But well I wote, in this world great pine is
Alas I se a serpent or a theefe
That many a trew man hath do mischiefe
Goon at his large, & where him list may turn
But I mote ben in prison through Saturn
And eke through Juno, ialous and eke wood
That hath slroied wel nye al the blood
Of Thebes, with his wast walles wide
And Venus sleeth me on that other side
For iealousie, and fear of him Arcite.
Now will I stinte of Palamon alite
And let him in his prison still dwell
And of Arcite forth will I you tell.
The sommer passeth, and the nights long
Encreseth double wise the paines strong
Both of the louer, and of the prisoner
I not which hath the wofuller mister
For shortly to say, this Palamon
Perpetuell is dampned to prison
In chaines and feters to the deed
And Arcite is exiled on his heed
For euermore as out of that countre
Ne neuermore shall his lady se
Now louers aske I now this question
Who hath the worse, Arcite or Palamon
That one may se his lady day by day
But in prison mote he dwel alway
That other where him list may ride or go
But se ne his lady shall he neuer mo
Now deemeth as ye list, ye that can
For I will tell forth my tale as I began.
¶ When that Arcite to Thebes comen was
Full ofte a day he swelte and said alas
For se ne his lady shall he neuer mo
And shortely to conclude, all his wo
So mikell sorowe made neuer creature

That is or shalbe, whyle the world may dure
His slepe, his meat, his drinke is him byraft
That lean he waxeth, and dry e as a shaft
His eyen holow, and grisly to behold
His hewe pale, and falowe as asshen colde
And solitary he was, and euer alone
And wailing all the night, making mone
And if he heard song or instrument
Then would he wepe, he might not stent
So feble were his spirites, and so lowe
And chaūged so, that no mā coude him knowe
His speech ne his voice, though men it herde
As in his gryse, for all the world it ferde
Nought comly like to louers malady
Of Hereos, but rather like many
Engendred of humours melancolike
Before his fell fantastike
And shortely was turned all vp so doun
Both habite and disposicion
Of him, this wofull louer Arcite
What shulde I all day of his wo endite
Whan he endured had a yere or two
This cruell torment, and this paine and wo
At Thebes in his countre, as I saide
Upon a night in slepe as he him laide
Him thought how that the winged Mercury
Before him stode, and bad him be mery
His slepy yerde in hande he bare vpright
An hatte he wered vpon his heares bright
Arayed was this god, as he toke kepe
As he was, whan Argus toke his kepe
And said him thus: to Athens shalt thou wend
There is the shapen of thy wo an end
And with that word Arcite awoke & stert
Now truely how sore that me smert
Quod he, to Athens right now wol I fare
Ne for no dred of death shal I spare
To se my lady, that I loue and serue
In her presence recke I not to sterue.
And with that word he caught a gret mirror
And sawe that chaunged was all his colour
And saw his visage all in a nother kinde
And right anon it ran him in his mind
That sith his face was so disfigured
Of malady, the which he had indured
He might well, if that he bare him lowe
Liue in Athenes euermore vnknowe
And se nere his Lady wel nigh day by day
And right anon he chaunged his aray
And clad him as a poore labourer
And all alone, saue only a squier
That knew his priuitie and al his cas
Which was disguised poorely as he was
To Athenes is he gon the next way,
And to the court he went vpon a day
And at the gate he proffered his seruice
To drugge & draw, what men would deuise
And shortly of this matter for to sayne
He fell in office with a chamberlayne
The which was dwelling with Emelye
For he was wise, and coude eouth espye
Of euery seruaunt, which that serued here
Well couth he hewen wood, and water bere
For he was yong and mighty for the nones
And therto he was strong and big of bones
To done that any wight can him deuise
A yere or two he was in this seruice
Page of the chamber, of Emelye the bright
And Philostrate he said that he hight
But half so welbeloued man as he
Ne was there none in court of his degre
He was so gentill of condition
That through all the court was his renon
Thei said that it were a charitie
That Theseus wold enhaunce his degre
And put him in a worshipfull seruice
There as he might his vertue exercise
And thus within a while his name is sprōg
Both of his dedes, and of his good tong
That Theseus hath taken him so nere
That of his chamber he made him squiere
And yaue him gold to maintaine his degre
And eke men brought him out of his contre
Fro yere to yere full priuely his rent
But honestly and slyly he it spent
That no man wondered how he it had
And thre yere in this wise his life he lade
And bare him so in peace and eke in werre
There was no man that Theseus hath der
And in this blisse let I now Arcite
And speake I woll of Palamon alite
In darkenesse horrible and strong prison
This seuen yere hath sitten this Palamon
Forpined, what for wo and distresse
Who feleth double sore and heuinesse
But Palamon: that loue distraineth so
That wode out of his wit, he goeth for wo
And eke therto he is a prisonere
Perpetuel, and not onely for a yere.
Who coud ryme in english properly
His martirdome, forsoth it am nat I
Therfore I passe as lightly as I may.
It befel that in the seuenth yere in may
The third night, as olde bokes sayne
(That al this storie tellen more playne)
Were it by aduenture or by destine
As when a thing is shapen, it shalbe
That soone after midnight, Palamon
By helping of a frende brake his prison
And fleeth the cite, as fast as he may go

For

For he had yeuen the gaoler drinke so
Of a clarrie, made of certain wine
With Narcotike and Opie, of Thebes fine
That all the night though men wold him
The gaoler slept, he might not awake (shake
And thus he fleeth as fast as he maie
The night was short, and fast by the daie
That nedes cost he most himselfe hide
And to a greue fast there beside
With dredfull foote than stalketh Palamon
For shortly this was his opinion
That in the greue he would him hide al daie
And in the night than would he take his waie
To Thebes warde, his friendes for to prie
On Theseus to helpe him to warrie
And shortly, either he would lese his life
Or winne Emelye vnto his wife
This is the effect, and his intent plain.
Now will I tourne to Arcite again
That little wist how nie was his care (snare
Till that fortune had wrought him in her
The merie Larke, messangere of the daie
Salueth in her song the morrow graie
And firie Phebus riseth vp so bright
That all the orient laugheth of the sight
And with his stremes, dryeth in the greues
The siluer droppes, hanging in the leues.
And Arcite, that in the court reall
With Theseus, his squier principall
Is risen, and looketh on the merie daie
And for to doen his obseruaunces to Maie
Remembryng on the point of his desire
He on his courser, startlyng as the fire
Is riden into the fieldes him to plaie
Out of the court, were it a mile or twaie
And to the greue of whiche I you tolde
By aduenture, his way he gan holde
To maken him a garlonde of the greues
Were it of Woodbind or Hauthorn leues
And loud he song ayenst the Sonne shene
Maie, with all thy floures and thy grene
Welcome be thou faire freshe Maie
I hope that I some grene get maie
And from his courser, with a lustie hert
Into the greue full hastely he stert
And in a pathe he romed vp and doun
There, as by aduenture this Palamon
Was in a bushe, that no man might hym se
For sore afraied of death was he
Nothing ne knew he that it was Arcite
God wote he would haue trowed full lite
Both soth is saied, go sithen many yeres
That field hath eyen, and wodde hath eres
It is full faire a man to beare him euin
For all daie men mete at vnset steuin
Full little wote Arcite of his felawe
That was so nigh to herken of his sawe
For in the bushe sitteth he now full still
When that Arcite had romed all his fill
And songen all the roundell lustely
Into a studie he fell sodenly
As doen these louers in their queint gires
Now in the crop, and now doun in the bires
Now vp now doune, as bokat in a well
Right as the fridaie, sothly for to tell
Now it raineth now it shineth fast
Right so gan gerie Venus ouercast
The hartes of her folke, right as her daie
As gerisull, right so chaungeth she araie
Selde is the Friday all the weke like
When that Arcite had song, he gan to sike
And set him doune without ony more
Alas (quoth he) the daie that I was bore
How long Juno with thy cruelte
Wilt thou warren Thebes the citee?
Alas thy ire is to confusion
The blood reall of Cadmus and Amphion
Of Cadmus, which was the first man
That Thebes builte, or first the toun began
And of the citee first was crouned king
Of his linage am I, and of his ofspring
By very line, as of the stocke reall
And now I am so caitife and so thrall
That he that is my mortall enemie
I serue him, as his squire poorely
And yet doeth me Juno well more shame
For I dare not be knowe myne owne name
But there as I was wont to hight Arcite
Now hight I Philostrat not worth a mite
Alas thou fell Mars, alas thou fell Juno
Thus hath your ire our linage all for do
Saue only me, and wretched Palamon
That Theseus martireth in prison
And ouer all this to sleen me vtterly
Loue hath his firie dart so brenningly
Ithicked through my true carefull hart
That shapen was my death erst my shert
Ye sleen me with your eyen Emelie
Ye been the cause wherefore I die
Of all the remenaunt of mine other care
Ne set I not the mountaunce of a Tare
So that I could do ought to your pleasaunce
And with that word he fel down in a traunce
A long time, and afterward he vp stert
This Palamon thought that through his hart
He felt a colde swerde sodenly glide
For ire he quoke, no lenger could he abide
And when that he had heard Arcites tale
As he were wode, with face dedde and pale
He stert him vp, out of the bushes thicke

And saied: Arcite false traitour wicke
Now art thou hent, that louest my ladie so
For whom that I haue this pain and wo
And art my blood, and to my counsell sworn
As I haue full oft tolde thee here beforn
And hast bee iaped here duke Theseus
And falsely hast chaunged thy name thus
I will be dedde, or els thou shalt die
Thou shalt not loue my ladie Emelie
But I will loue her only and no mo
For I am Palamon thy mortall fo
Though that I haue no weapē in this place
But out of prison am astert by grace
I dred nat, that either thou shalt die
Or thou ne shalt nat louen Emelye
Chese which thou wilt, or thou shalt not astert
This Arcite, with full dispitous hert
When he him knewe, and had his tale heard
As fers as a Lion, pulled out his sweard
And saied: By God that sitteth aboue
Ne wer that thou art sicke, and wod for loue
And eke that thou no weapē hast in this place
Thou shouldest neuer out this grove pace
That thou ne shouldest dien of mine honde
For I defie the suertie and the bonde (thee
Which that thou saist that I haue made to
What very foole, thinke wel that loue is free
And I will loue her maugre all thy might
But for asmoch as thou art a knight
And witnest to daren here by battaile
Haue here mi truth, to morow I wil not fail
Without witting of any other wight
That here I will be founden as a knight
And bringen harneis, right inough for thee
And chese the best, and leaue the worst for me
And meate & drinke, this night will I bring
Inough for thee, and clothes for thy bedding
And if so be that thou my ladie win
And slea me in this wodde, there I am in
Thou maiest weil haue thy ladie as for me.
This Palamon answerd, I grant it thee.
And thus thei been departed till a morow
When ech of hem had laied his faith to borow
O Cupide out of all charitee (thee
O reigne, that wouldest haue no felow with
Full soth is saied, that loue ne lordship
Will nat his thankes haue any feliship
We finde that of Arcite and Palamon
Arcite is ridden anon into the toun
And on the morow or it were daie light
Full priuely two harneis had he dight
Bothe sufficient and mete to darreigne
The battail in the field betwixt hem tweine
And on his horse, alone as he was borne
He carrieth all his harneis him beforne
And in the grove, at time and place set
That Arcite and this Palamon been met
To changen gan the colour in her face
Right as the hunter in the reigne of Trace
That standeth at a gappe, with a speare
When hunted is the Lion or the beare
And heareth him rushing in the leues
And breaketh the bowes in the greues
And thinketh, here cometh my mortal enemy
Without faile, he must be dedde or I
For either I mote slea him at the gap
Or he mote slea me, if me mishap
So ferden thei, in chaunging of her hewe
As farre as cueriche of other knewe
There nas no good daie, ne no saluing
But streight, without word or rehersing
Euerich of hem helped for to arme other
As friendly, as he were his owne brother
And after that, with sharpe speares strong
Thei foinen eche at other wonder long
Thou mightest weneu, that this Palamon
In his fighting, were a wodde Lion
And as a cruell Tigre was Arcite
As wilde Bores gan they fight and smite
That frothen white as fome for ire woode
Up to the ancle foughten thei in her bloode
And in this wise, I let hem fighting dwell
As forth I will of Theseus you tell
The destinie and the mintiker generall
That executeth in the worlde ouer all
The purueiāce, that God hath said beforne
So strong it is, that though the world had
The contrary of thing be ye & naie (sworne
Yet sometime it shall fall on a daie
That fell neuer yet in a thousand yere
For certainly our appetites here
Be it of warre peace hate or loue
All is ruled by the sight aboue
This meane I now by mightie Theseus
That for to hunt is so desirous
And namely at the great Hart in May
That in his bed there dawneth him day
That he nis clad, and ready for to ride
With hunt and horne, and houndes him beside
For in his hunting hath he soothe delit
That it is all his ioie and appetite
To been himselfe the greate Hartes bane
For after Mars, he serueth now Diane
Clere was the day, as I haue tolde or this.
And Theseus, with all ioy and blis
With his Ipolita, the faire queue
And Emelie, iclothed all in greue
In hunting been thei ridden rially
And to the grove, that stood there fast by
In which ther was an Hart as men hem told

Duke

Duke Theseus the streight way hath holde
And to the lande he rideth him full right
For thither was ye hart wõt to haue his flight
And ouer a broke, and so forth on his weye
This duke wol haue a cours at him or tweye
With houndes, such as him list commaunde
And whẽ the duke was comen into the launde
Under the sonne he loketh, and anon
He was ware of Arcite and Palamon
That fought eche other, as it were bulles two
The brightë swerdes wenten to and fro
So hidously, that with the leste stroke
It seemed that it would hewe a yoke
But what thei were, nothing he ne woote
This duke wol thitherward his courser smote
And at a start he was betwixt hem two
And pulled out his swerde, and cried, ho
No more, vpon paine of losing your heedde
By mighty Mars, he shall anon be dedde
That smiteth any stroke, that I may seen
But telleth me, what mister men ye been
That been so hardie for to fighten here
Without iudge or other officere
As though it were in listes rially
This Palamon answered hastily
And saide: sir, what nedeth wordes moe
We haue the deathe deserued bothe two
Two woful wretches been we and caitines
That been encombred of our owen liues
And as thou art a rightfull lorde and iudge
Ne yeue vs neither mercie ne refuge
But slea me first, for sainte charitee
But slea my felowe as well as me
Or slea him first, for though thou knowe it
This is thy mortall foe, this is Arcite
That fro thy lande is banished on his heedde
For which he hath deserued to be dedde
For this is he, that came vnto thy yate
And saied, that he highte Philostrate
Thus hath he iaped full many a yere
And thou hast made him thy chiefe squiere
And this is he, that loueth Emelie.
For sith the daie is come that I shall die
I make plainly my confession
I am thilke wofull Palamon
That hath thy prison broke wickedly
I am thy mortall foe, and he am I
That loueth so hote Emelie the bright
That I will die here present in her sight
Therefore I aske death and my iewise,
But slea my felowe in the same wise
For both we haue deserued to be slain.
This worthy duke answered anon again
And saied, this is a short conclusion
Your owne mouth, by your confession
hath damned you, and I will it record
It nedeth not to pine you with a corde
Ye shal be dedde by mighty Mars the redde.
The queene anon for very womanhedde
Gan for to weepe, and so dede Emelie
And all the ladies in the companie
Great pitie was it, as it thought hem all
That euer such a chaunce was befall
For gentilmen thei were of great estate
And nothing but for loue was this debate
And saw her bloody woundes wide and sore
And all cried both lesse and more
Haue mercie lord vpon vs women all
And on her bare knees adoune thei fall
And would haue kist his feete there he stode
Till at the last aslaked was his mode
For pitie renneth soone in gentle hert
And though he first for ire quoke and sterte
He hath conceiued shortly in a clause
Th'one partie and eke the cause
And although his ire hem thought accused
Yet in his reason he hem both excused
As thus: he thought well that euery man
Will helpe himselfe in loue all that he can
And eke deliuer himselfe out of prison
And eke his heart had compassion
Of women, for they weepen euery in one
And in his gentle hart he thought anone
And softe vnto himselfe he saied thus
Vpon a lorde that will haue no mercie
But be a lion both in worde and deede
To hem that been in repentance and drede
As well as to a proud despitous man
That will maintaine that he first began
That lorde hath little of discretion
That in suche case can no distinction
But weigheth pride and humblenesse after one
And shortly, when his ire was thus agone
He gan to looken vp with eyen light
And spake these wordes all on highte
The God of loue, ah benedicite
How mighty and how great a lorde is he
Against his might there gaineth none obstacles
He may be cleaped a God for his miracles
For he can make at his owne guise
Of euerich heart, as him list deuise.
Lo here this Arcite, and this Palamon
That quietly were out of my prison gon
And might haue liued in Thebes rially
And knowen I am her mortall enemie
And that her death is in my power also
And yet hath loue, maugre her eyen two
Brought hem hither both for to die.
Now loketh is not this a great folie
Who may be a foole, but if he loue

Behold

Behold for Goddes sake, that sit teth aboue
See how they lede, be they nat wel araied
Thus hath her lord, the god of loue him pai=
Her wager, and her fees for her seruice (ed
And yet ther wemen to be full wise
That serue loue, for ought that may befall.
But yet is this the best game of all
That she, for whom they haue this sotilte
Can hem therefore as moch thanke as me
She wote no more of all this hote fare
By God, than wote a Cokowe or an Hare
But all mote been assaied hote and cold
A man mote been a fole other young or old
I wotte it by my selfe full yore agone
For in my time, a seruaunt was I one
And therefore sith I know of loues paine
I wott how sore it can a man distrain
As he that oft hath be caught in her laas
I you forgeue all hooly this trespaas
At the request of the quene, that kneleth here
And eke of Emely, my suster dere.
And ye shall both anon unto me swere
That ye shall neuer more my countre dere
Make warre upon me night ne daie
But been my frendes in all that ye maie
I you forgeue this trespas euery dele
And ther hem swore his asking faire & wele
And him of lordship and of mercie praied
And he hem granted grace, and thus he said

To speake of worthie linage and richesse
Though that she were a quene or a princesse
Eche of you both is worthy doubtles
To wed when time is: but nethcles
I speake, as for my suster Emely
For whom ye haue this strif and ielosy
Ye wote your selfe, she maie not wedde two
At ones, though ye fighten euer mo
But one of you, all be him lothe or lefe
He mote go pipe in an Ivie lefe
This is to saie, she may not haue both,
Ne been ye neuer so ielous, ne so wroth
And therefore I you put in this degree,
That ech of you shall haue his destine
As him is shape, and herken in what wise
Lo here your end, of that I shall deuise.
My will is this, for plat conclusion
Without any replication.
If that you liketh, taketh it for the best
That euerich of you shall go where him lest
Frely without ransom or danger
And this day fiftie wekes, ferre ne nere
Euerich of you shall bring an .C. knightes
Armed for the listes vpon all rightes
Al redy to darrein here by battaile
And this behote I you withouten faile
Upon my trouthe, as I am true knight
That whether of you both hath that might
That is to saie, that whether he or thou
Maie with his hundred, as I spake of now
Slea his contrary, or out of listes dryue
Him shall I yeue Emely to wyue
To whom that fortune yeueth so fair a grace
The listes shall I make in this place
And God so wisely on my soule rewe
As I shall euen iudge be, and trewe
Ye shal non other ende with me make
That one of you shall be dede or take
And ye thinken this is well saied
Saith your auise, and hold you well apaid
This is your ende, and your conclusion
Who loketh lightly now but Palamon:
Who springeth vp for ioie but Arcite:
Who could tell, or who could endite
The ioie that is made in this place
When Theseus had doon so faire a grace:
But doun on knees went euery maner wight
And thanked him, with all her hert & might
And namely these Thebanes many a sithe
And thus with good hope and hert blithe
They take her leue, & homward gan they ride
To Thebes ward, with old walles wide
I trowe men would deme it negligence
If I forgeten to tell the diligence
Of Theseus, that goeth busily
To maken vp the listes rially
That such a noble Theatre, as it was
I dare well saie, in this world there nas
The circute a mile was about
Walled with stone, and dicched all about
Round was the shape, in maner of a compas
Full of degrees, the hight of sixtie paas
That when a man was set on one degree
He letted not his felowe for to see
Eastward there stoode a gate of marble white
Westward right such an other in thoppolite
And shortly to conclude, such a place
Was none in yearth, as in so litell space
For in the londe there nas no crafty man
That Geometrie, or Arithmetike can
Ne purtreiture, ne caruer of Images
That Theseus ne gaue him mete & wages
To make the Theatre, and deuise
And for to do his Rite and Sacrifice
He Eastward hath vpon the gate aboue
In worship of Venus, the Goddesse of loue
Done make an auter, and an oratorie
And on the Westside, in memorie
Of Mars he maked such an other
That cost of golde largely a fother

And

And Northward, in a turret in the wall
Of Alabaster white and redde Corrall
An oratorie rich for to see
In worship of Diane the Godes of chastite
Hath Theseus doe wrought in noble wise
But yet had I forgetten to deuise
The noble carninges and the purtreitures
The shape, the countnaunce and the figures
That were in the oratories three
First in the temple of Venus thou maist se
Wrought on the wall, full pitously to behold
The broken slepes, and the sighes cold
The sault teares, and the weimenting
The fire strokes, and the desiring
That loues seruauntes in this life enduren
The othes, that her couenauntes assuren
Pleasaunce and hope, desire foolhardinesse
Beautie and youth, baudrie and richesse
Charmes and sorcerie, leasinges and flattery
Dispence, busines, and iclousie
That weared of yelowe goldes a garlande
And a Cokow sitting on her hande.
Feastes, instrumentes, carolles, and daunces
Justes and araie, and all the circumstaunces
Of loue, which I reken and reken shall
By order, were painted on the wall
And mo than I can make of mencion
For sothly all the mount of Citheron
Where Venus hath her principall dwelling
Was shewed on the wall in purtreing
With all the ioy, and the lustinesse
Nought was forgetten the portresse idlenesse
Ne Narcessus the faire of yore agone
Ne yet the folie of king Salomon
Ne yet the great strength of Hercules
Thenchauntment of Medea and Circes
Ne of Turnus, with his hardie fers corage
The rich Cresus caitife in seruage
Thus may you sen, that wisedom ne richesse
Beuty ne sleight, strength ne hardinesse
Ne maie with Venus hold champartie
For as her list the world may she gie
Lo, all these folke so cought were in her laas
Till they for wo full oft saied alas
Sufficeth here one example or two
And though I coud reken a thousand mo
The statue of Venus glorious to see
Was maked fleting in the large see
And fro the nauell doune all couered was
With waues grene, and bright as any glas
A citriole in her right hand had she
And on her hedde, full semely for to se
A rose garland fresh, and wel smelling
Aboue her hedde Doues flittering
Before her stood her sonne Cupido
Upon his shoulders winges had he two
And blind he was, as it is oft sene
A bow he had and arrowes bright and kene
Why should I not as well tellen all
The purgatory that was ther about ouer all
Within the temple of mighty Mars the rede
All painted was the wal in length & in brede
Like to the Estris of the grisly place
That hight the great temple of Mars in
In thilke cold frosty region (Trace
There Mars hath his soueraine mancion
First on the wall was painted a forest
In which there wonneth nother man ne best
With knottie and knarie trees old
Of stubbes sharpe and hidous to behold
In which there was a romble and a shwow
As though a storme should breake euery bow
And downward vnder a hill vnder a bent
There stode the temple of Mars armipotent
Wrought all of burned stele, of which thentre
Was long and streight, and gastly for to see
And therout came soch a rage and soch a vise
That it made all the gates for to rise
The Northern light in at the dores shone
For window on the wall was there none
Through which mē might any light discern
The dores were all of athamant eterne
Yclenched ouerthwart and endlong
With Iron tough, for to maken it strong
Euery piller, the temple to sustaine
Was tonne great, of yren bright and shene
There saw I first the darke imagining
Of felonie, and eke the compassing:
The cruell ire, redde as any glede
The pickpurse, and eke the pale drede
The smiler, with the knife vnder the cloke
The shepen brenning with the blacke smoke
The treason of the murdring in the bedde
The open warre, with woundes all be bledde
Conteke with blody knives, & sharpe manace
All full of chirking was that sory place
The slear of himselfe yet saw I there
His hart blode hath bathed all his here
The naile ydriuen in the shode on hight
With cold death, with mouth gaping vpright
Amiddes of the temple sate Mischaunce
With Discomfort, and sory Countenaunce
Yet saw I Wodnesse laghing in his rage
Armed complaint on theft and fiers courage
The carraine in the bush, with throt yorne
A thousand slain, and nat of qualme istorne
The tiraunt, with the prai by force yraft
The toune destroied, there was nothing laft
Yet saw I brent the shippes hoppesteres
The hunter istrangled with the wilde beres

The

The Sow fretting the child in cradell
The Coke is scalded, for all his long ladell
Nought was forȝetté, the infortune of Mart
The Carter ouerridden by his own cart
Under the whele, full low he lay adoun
There were also of Martes deuision
The Barbour, the Botcher, and the Smith
That forgeth sharpe swordes on the stith
And all aboue depainted in a toure
Saw I Conquest, sitting in great honour
With the sharpe sword ouer his hedde
Hanging by a subtill twined thredde
Depainted was there the slaughter of Iulius
Of great Nero and of Antonius
All be that thilke time they were vnborne
Yet was her death depainted there beforne
By manacing of Mars, right by figure
So was it shewed in that portreiture
As is depainted in the certres aboue
Who shall be dead or els slain for loue
Sufficeth one ensample in stories old
I may not reken them all, though I would
The statue of Mars vpon a carte stode
Armed, and loked grim as he were wode
And ouer his head there shinen twoo figures
Of sterres, that been cleped in scriptures
that one (Puella) hight, that other (Rubeus)
This God of armes was arayed thus
A wolfe there stode beforne him at his fete
With iyen redde, and of a man he ete
With subtell pensill was painted this story
In redoutyng of Marte and of his glory
Now to the temple of Diane the chast
As shortely as I can I woll me hast
To tell you all the discription
Depainted been the walles vp and doune
Of hunting and of shamfast chastite
There saw I how wofull Calistope
When that Diane greued was with her
Was tourned fro a woman to a bere
And afterward was she made the lode sterre
Thus was it painted, I can say no ferre
Her sonne is eke a sterre as men may see
There saw I Dane tourned vnto a tree
I meane not the goddesse Diane (Dane
But Venus doughter, which that hight
There saw I Atheon an hert ymaked
For vengeance that he saw Diane all naked
I saw how that his hounds haue him cought
And freten him, for they knew him nought
Yet ypainted was a litell ferthermore
How Athalant hunted the wilde Bore
And Meliager, and many other mo
For which Diane wrought him care and wo
There saw I many another wonder storie
Which me list not to drawe in memorie
This goddesse full well vpon an hert shete
With smale hounds all about her fete
And vndereth her fete she had a Moone
Wexyng it was, and should wane soone
In gaudie greene her statue clothed was
With bow in hand and arrowes in caas
Her eine she cast full low adoun
There Pluto hath his darke region
A woman trauelling was her before
But for her child so long was vnborn
Full pitously Lucina gan she call
And said helpe, for thou maist best of all
Well coud he paint liuely that it wrought
With many a florein he the hewes bought.

Now bene these listes made, and Theseus
That at his great cost hath araied thus
The temples and the theatre euerydel
Whan it was done, it liked him wonder wel.
But stint I wol of Theseus alite
And speake of Palamon and Arcite.
The day approcheth of her returning
That euerich should an C. knights bring
The battaile to darraine, as I you told
And to Athenes her conenaunts to hold
Hath euerich of hem brought an C. knights
Well armed for the warre at all rights
And sikerly there trowed many a man
That neuer sithens the world began
As for to speake of knighthood of her hond
As far as God hath made see or lond
Nas of so few, so noble a company
For euery wight that loued chiualrie
And would his thanks haue a passing name
Hath praied that he might be of that game
And wel was him that therto chosen was
For if there fell to morrow such a caas
Ye know well that euery lustie knight,
That loueth paramours, and hath his might
Were it in England or elsewhere
They wold faine willen to be there
To fight for a lady, ah benedicite
It were a lustie sight for to se.
And right so farden they with Palamon
With him there went knights many on
Some wold ben armed in an habergeon
And in a brest plate, with a light gypon
And some wold haue a paire of plates large
And some wold haue a pruce shield or a targe,
Some would be armed on his legs wele
And haue an axe, and some a mace of stele
There nas none new guise, that it nas olde
Armed were they as I haue you tolde
Euerich after his opinion.

There

¶Ther maist thou se coming with Palamō
Ligurge himselfe, the great king of Trace
Blacke was his berd, & manly was his face
The sercles of his eyen in his heed
They glouden betwixt yelow and reed
And like a Lion loked he aboute
With kemped heares on his browes stoute
His limmes great, his braones strong
His shoulders brode, his armes round & long
And as the gise was in his countre
Full hie upon a chare of gold stode he
With foure white bulles in the trayes
In stede of a cote armure, ouer his harnayes
With nayles yelowe, & bright as any gold
He hath a beares skin, cole blake for olde
His long heare was kempd behind his back
As any rauens fether it shone for blacke
A wreth of gold arme gret, of huge weight
Upon his heed set full of stones bright
Of fine rubies and diamandes
About his chare there went white allaundes
Twentie and mo, as great as any stere
To hunten at the lion, or at the wilde bere
And folowed him, with mosell fast ybounde
Colers of gold, and torrettes filed rounde
An hundred lords had he in his route
Armed ful well, with hertes sterne & stoute.

With Arcite, in stories as men fynde
The great Emetrius the king of Inde
Upon a stede bay, trapped in stele
Couered with a cloth of gold diapred wele
Came riding like the god of Armes Marce
His cote armure was of clothe of Trace
Cauched with perle, white, round & gret
His sadle was of brent gold newe bet
A mantel upon his shoulders hanging
Bretted full of rubies, redde as fire sparkling
His crispe heer like rings was ronne
And that was yelow, & glitering as the sonne
His nose was hie, his eyen bright citryn
His lippes ruddy, his colour was sanguyne
A fewe freckles in his face yspente
Betwixt yelow, & somdele blacke ymeynte
And as a Lyon he his eyen kest
Of fiue & twenty yere his age I geste
His berde was wel begonne for to spring
His voyce was as a trompet sowning
Upon his heed he weared of laurer grene
A garlande freshe & lusty for to sene
Upon his hande he bare for his delite
An Egle tame, as any lylly white
An hundred lordes had he with him there
All armed saue her heades in her gere
Full richely in all maner thinges

For trusteth wel, that erles dukes, & kinges
Were gathered in this noble company
For loue, and for mercate of chiualry
About this king ther ran on euery parte
Ful many a tame Lion and libarte
And in this wise, these lords all & some
Ben on the sonday to the cite come
About prime, and in the toune alight.
This Theseus, this duke this worthy knight
When he had brought hem into his cite
And inned hem, euerich after his degre
He festeth hem, and doth so great laboure
To ease hem, and don hem all honoure
That yet men wenen that no mans wit
Of none estate coude amende it
The minstracie, the seruice at the feest
The great yeftes, to the most and leest
The rich aray, throughout Theseus palays
Ne who sate first ne last upon the deys
What ladies fayrest ben or best dauncing
Or which of hem can best daunce or sing
Ne who most felingly speketh of loue
Ne what haukes sitten on perchen aboue
Ne what hounds liggen on the flour adoun
Of all this now make I no mencion
But all the effect, that thinketh me the best
Now cometh the point, harkeneth if you lest.

The sonday at night, or day began to spring
When Palamon the larke herde sing
Although it were nat day by houres two
Yet song the larke, and Palamon right tho
With holy hert, and with an hie corage
He rose vp, to wenden on his pilgrimage
Unto the blisful Cithere a benigne
I meane Uenus, honourable and digne
And in her hour, he walketh forth a paas
Unto the lystes, there the temple was
And doune he kneleth, & with humble chere
And herte sore he said, as ye shal here.
¶Fairest of faire: O lady mine Uenus
Doughter of Ioue, and spouse to Uulcanus
Thou glader of the mount of Citheron
For thilke loue thou haddest to Adon
Haue pite of my bitter teares smerte
And take my humble praier at thine herte.
Alas, I ne haue no language to tel
The effect, ne the turment of mine hel
Mine herte may not mine harmes bewraie
I am so confused, that I cannot saie
But mercy lady bright, that woste wele
My thought, & seest what harmes that I fele
Consider al this, and rue vpon my sore
As wisly as I shal for euermore
Emforth my might, thy true seruaunt be

And holde warre alway with chastitie
That make I myn auowe, so ye me helpe
I kepe not of armes for to yelpe
Ne I ne aske to moꝛowe to haue victoꝛy
Ne renome in this cas, ne vaine glory
Of pꝛise of armes, to biowen vp and doun
But wolde haue fully possessioun
Of Emelye, and die in her seruice
Finde thou the maner howe, & in what wise
I recche not, but it may better be
To haue victoꝛy of hem, oꝛ they of me
So that I haue my lady in mine armes
Foꝛ though so be that Mars is god of Armes
Your vertue is so great in heauen aboue
That if you list, I shall well haue my loue
Thy temple shall I woꝛship euer mo
And on thine aulter, where I ride oꝛ go
I woll done sacrifice, and fires bete
And if ye woll not so, my lady swete
Than pꝛay I you, to moꝛowe with a spere
That Arcite me thꝛough the hert bere
Than recke I not, whan I haue lost my life
Though Arcite winne her to wife
This is the effecte and ende of my pꝛayere
Yeue me my lady, thou blisfull lady dere.

Whan the oꝛison was done of Palamon
His sacrifice he did, and that anon
Full pitously, with all circumstaunces
All tell I nat as now his obseruaunces.
But at the last, the statue of Venus shoke
And made a signe, whereby that he toke
That his pꝛayer accepted was that day
Foꝛ though the signe shewed a delay
Yet wist he well, that graunted was his bone
And with glad hert he wẽt him hom full sone.

The third houre inequall that Palamon
Began to Venus temple foꝛ to gon
Up rose the sunne, and vp rose Emelie
And vnto the temple of Diane gan hie
Her maidens, the which thider were lad
Full redily with hem the fyre they had
The encense, the clothes, & the remenaunt all
That to the sacrifice longen shall
The hoꝛnes full of meeth as was the gise
There lacked naught to don her sacrifice
Smoking the temple, full of clothes fayre
This Emely, with herte debonayre
Her body wisshe, with water of a well
But how she did right I dare not tell
But it be any thing in generall
And yet it were a game to here it all
To him that meaneth wel it were no charge
But it is good a man be at his large
Her bꝛight heare was vnkept & vntressed all
A cꝛowne of a greene oke cerriall
Upon her hed set ful fayre and mete
Two fyres on the aulter gan she bete
And did her things, as men may beholde
In Stace of Thebes, and these bokes olde
Whã kendled was ỳ fire, with pitous chere
Unto Diane she spake as ye may here.
O chaste goddesse of the woddes greene
To whom both heuen & yearth & see is sene
Quene of the reigne of Pluto derke and low
Goddesse of maidẽs, ỳ myn hert hath know
Full many a yere, and woste what I desire
As kepe me fro the vengeance of thyn yre
That Acteon abought cruelly
Chaste goddesse, well woste thou that I
Desyre to ben a mayde all my life
Ne neuer woll I be loue ne wife
I am (thou woste well) of thy company
I maide, and loue hunting and venery
And foꝛ to walken in the woddes wilde
And not foꝛ to ben a wife, & ben with childe
Nought will I know company of man
Now helpe me lady sith you may and can
Foꝛ tho three foꝛmes that thou hast in the
And Palamon, that hath such a loue to me
And eke Arcite, that loueth me so soꝛe
This grace I pray the, withouten moꝛe
And send loue and peace betwixt hem two
And fro me turne away her hertes so
That all her hotte loue, and her desire
And all her busy turment, and all her fire
Be queint, oꝛ turned in another place
And if so be thou woste not do me that grace
Oꝛ if so be my destinie be shapen so
That I shall nedes haue one of hem two
As sende me hym that most desireth me
Beholde goddesse of clene chastite
The bitter teares, that on my chekes fall
Syn thou art a maid, and keper of vs all
My maidenhede thou kepe, and wel conserue
And while I liue, a maiden woll I thee serue.
The fyres bꝛenne vpon the auter clere
While Emely was thus in her pꝛayere
But sodenly she sawe a thing queynte
Foꝛ right anon, one of the fyres queynte
And quicked again, and after that anon
That other fyre was queynte, and all agon
And as it queinte it made a whistling
As done these wete bꝛondes in her bꝛenning
And at the bꝛondes ende, out ran anone
As it were bloddy dꝛoppes many a one
Foꝛ which so soꝛe agaste was Emelye
That she was well nye madde, & gan to crye
Foꝛ she ne wiste what it signified
But onely foꝛ the feare thus she cried

And wept, that it was pite for to here
And therwithall Diane gan to apere
With bow in honde, right as an huntaresse
And said doughter, stint thine heuinesse
Among the goddes hie it is affirmed
And by eterne word, writtten and confirmed
Thou shalt ben wedded to one of tho
That haue for the so moch care and wo
But vnto which of hem I may not tell
Farewell, for I may no lenger dwell
The fires, which on mine auter brenne
Shall declaren, er that thou gon henne
This auenture of loue, as in this case
And with that word, the arowes in the case
Of the goddesse, clateren fast and ring
And forth she went, and made vanesshing
For which this Emely astonied was
And said: what mounteth this, alas
I put me vnder thy protection
Diane, and vnder thy disposition
And home she goeth the next way
This is the effect there is no more to say.

The next houre of Mars folowing this
Arcite vnto the temple walked is
Of fiers Mars, to done his sacrifice
With all the might of his paynem wise
With piteous hert and hie deuocion
Right thus to Mars he said his orison.
O stronge God, that in the reignes cold
Of Trace honoured art, and lord yhold
And hast in euery reigne and euery lond
Of armes, all the bridle in thine hond
And hem fortunest, as the list deuise
Accept of me my pitous sacrifice
If so be my thought may deserue
And that my might be worthy for to serue
Thy godhead that I may bene one of thine
Than pray I thee that thou rue on my pine
For thilke paine, and thilke hot fire
In which thou brentest whylom for desire
Whan thou vledest the faire beaute
Of faire yong fresh Venus fre
And haddest her in thine armes, at thy will
Although thou ones on a time mistill
Whan Vulcanus had caught the in his laas
And found thee ligging by his wife alas
For thilke sorrow, that was in thine herte
Haue ruthe as well on my pains smerte
I am yong and vnconning, as thou wost
And as I trow, with loue offended most
That euer was any liues creature
For she that doth me al this wo endure
Ne retcheth neuer where I sinke or flete
And well I wote, or she me mercy hete
I mote with strength win her in this place
And well I wote, without helpe or grace
Of thee, ne may my strength not auaile
Than help me lord to morrow in my battaile
For thilke fire that whilom brent the
As well as the fire now brenneth me
And do, that I to morrow haue the victorie
Mine be the trauell, and thine be the glorie
Thy souereign temple wol I most honouren
Of any place, and alway most labouren
In thy pleasaunce and in thy crafts strong
And in thy temple, I woll my banner hong
And all the armes of my companie
And euermore, vntill the day I die
Eterne fyre I wol before the finde
And eke to this auow I wol me binde
My herd, my heare, that hongeth low adoun
That neuer yet felt offencioun
Of rasour ne of shere, I wol the yeue
And ben thy true seruant while I liue
Now lord haue ruth vpon my sorrows sore
Yeue me the victorie I aske thee no more.
The praier stint of Arcite the strong
The ringes on the temple dore they rong
And eke the dores clatren full fast
Of which Arcite somewhat him agast.
The fires brennen vpon the auter bright
That it gan all the temple light
A swete smel anon the ground vp yaf
And Arcite anon his hond vp haf
And more ensence into the fire he cast
With other rites mo, and at the last
The statu of Mars began his hauberke ring
And with that sound he herd a murmuring
Full low and dym, that said thus: victory
For which he yaf to Mars honor and glory
And thus with ioy, and hope well to fare
Arcite anon into his inne is fare
As faine as foule is of the bright sonne
And right anon such a strife is begonne
For thilke graunting, in the heuen aboue
Betwixt Venus, the goddesse of loue
And Mars the sterne god armipotent
That Jupiter was busie it to stent
Till that the pale Saturnus the colde
That knew so many auentures olde
Found in his experience and art
That he full sone hath pleased euery part
And soth is said, eld hath great auauntage
In eelde is both wisdome and vsage
Men may the old out ren, but not out rede
Saturne anon, to stinten strife and drede
All be it that it be again his kind
Of all this strife he can remedy find
My dere daughter Venus, quod Saturn

My course that hath so wide for to turne
Hath more power than wote any man
Myne is the drenching in the see so wan
Myne is the prison in the derke cote (throte
Myne is the strangling & the hanging by the
The murmure, and the churles rebelling
The groning, and the priuy empoysoning
I do vengeaunce and plaine correction
While I dwell in the signe of the Lion
Mine is the ruine of the hie halles
The falling of the toures and of the walles
Upon the mynor, or vpon the carpenters
I slew Sampson shaking the pilers
And mine ben the maladies colde
The derke treasons, and the castels olde
My loking is the father of pestilence
Now weepe no more, I shall do my diligence
That Palamon, that is thin owne knight
Shall haue his lady, as thou him behight
Though mars shal help his knight natheles
Betwixt you it mote somtime be pees
All be ye not of one complexion
That causeth all day such devision
I am thine ayle, redy at thy will
Weepe no more, I woll thy lust fulfill.

Now wol I winden of these goddes aboue
Of Mars, and of Venus goddesse of loue
And plainly I woll tellen you as I can
The great effect, of which that I began.

Great was the feast in Athenes that day
And eke that lusty season in May
Made every wight to ben in such pleasaunce
That all that day iusten they and daunce
And spenten it in Venus hie seruice
But bicause that they shulden arise
Erly, for to se the great sight
Unto her rest went they at night
And on the morow whan day gan spring
Of horse and harneys noise and clatering
There was in the hostelries all about
And to the palays rode there many a rout
Of lordes, vpon stedes and palfreys.
There maiest thou see deuising of harneis
So vncouth, so rich, and wrought so wele
Of goldsmythry, of broudry, and of stele
The shildes bright, testers, and trappers
Gold hewē helmes, hauberkes & cote armers
Lordes in paramentes, on her coursers
Knightes of retenue, and eke squiers
Nayling the speres, and helmes bokeling
Gigging of shildes with lainers lacing
There as nede is, they were nothing ydell
The foming stedes on the golden bridell
Gnawing, and fast the armurers also
With file and hammer riding to and fro
Yemen on foot, and communes many one
With short staues thicke as they may gone
Pipes, trompes, nakoners, and clarions
That in the battell blowen blody sownes,
The palais full of people vp and doun
Here thre, there ten, holding her question
Deuining of these Theban knights two,
Some said thus, some said it should be so
Some held with him with the black berde
Som with the bald, som with the thick herd
Some said he loked grim and would fight
He hath a sparth of twenty pound of weight.
Thus was the hall full of deuising
Long after the sonne gan to spring
The great Theseus of his slepe gan wake
With minstralcie and noise that they make
Held yet the chamber of his palais rich
Till that the Theban knights both yliche
Honoured weren and into the place ifette
Duke Theseus is at the windowe set
Arayed right as he were a god in trone
The people preased thiderward ful sone
Him for to sene, and done him hie reuerence
And eke for to here his hest and his sentence
An heraude on a scaffold made an oo
Til all the noise of the people was ydo
And whan he saw the people of noise still
Thus shewed he the mightie dukes will.
The lorde hath of his hie discretion
Considered, that it were destruction
To gentle blood to fighten in this gise
Of mortall battaile now in this empryse
Wherefore to shapen that they shall not die
He wol his first purpose modifie
No man therfore, vp paine of losse of life
No maner shotte, polax, ne short knife
Into the listes sende, or thyder bring
Ne short sword to sticke with point biting
No man ne draw, ne beare it by his side
Ne no man shal to his fellow ride
But one course, with a sharp grounden spere
Foine if him list on foot, himselfe to were
And he that is at mischief shal be take
And not slain, but brought to the stake
That shal ben ordained on either side
But thider he shal by force, and there abide
And if so fall that the chieftain be take
On either side, or else sleen his make
No lenger shal the turnament last
God spede you, gothe and laieth on fast
With swords & long maces fighten your fill
Goth now your way, this is the lordes will.
The voice of the people touched heuen
So loud cried they with merry steuen

God

God saue such a lorde that is so good
He willeth no distruction of blood
Up gothe the trompes and the melody
And to the lystes, rideth so the company
By ordinaunce, throughout the cite large
Hanged with cloth of gold, & not with sarge
Ful like a lord this noble duke gan ride
These two Thebans on euery side
And after rode the quene and Emely
And after that an other companye
Of one and other, after her degre
And thus they passen throughout the cite
And to the lystes comen they be by time
It nas not of the day yet fully prime
Whan sat was Theseus ful riche and hye
Ipolita the quene, and Emelye
And other ladies in degrees aboute
Unto the setes preaseth all the route
And westward, through the gates vnder Mart
Arcite, and eke an hundred of his parte
With baner reed, is entred right anon
And in the selue moment entred Palamon
Is, vnder Uenus, estwarde in that place
With baner white, and hardy chere and face.
And in al the world, to seken vp and doun
So euen without variacion
There nas such companies twoey
For there nas none so wise that coude sey
That any had of other auauntage
Of worthines, ne of estate, ne age
So euen were they chose to gesse
And into the renges fayre they hem dresse
Whan that her names red were euerichone
That in her nombre, gyle were there none
Tho were the gates shut, & cried was loude
Do nowe your deuer yong knightes proude.
The heraudes left her pricking vp & doun
Now rynge trompes loude and clarioun
There is no more to say, este and west
In goth the sharpe speres sadly in the arrest
In goth the sharpe spurres into the side
There se men who can iust, and who can ride
There shiueren shaftes, vpon sheldes thicke
He feleth through the hert spoune the pricke
Up springeth the speres, twenty fote on hight
Out goth the swordes, as the siluer bright
The helmes they to hewe, and to shrede
Out burst the blood, with sterne stremes rede
With mighty maces, the bones they to breke
He throgh the thickest of the throng gã threke
There stomblen stedes strong, & doun go all
He rolled vnder the foote as dothe a ball
He foyneth on his feete with a tronchoun
And he hurleth with his horse adoun
He through the body is hurte, and sith ytake
Maugre his heed, & brought into the stake
As forward was, right there he must abide
An other is ladde on that other side
And sometime doth hem Theseus to reste
Hem to refreshe, and drinke if hem leste.
Full ofte a day haue these Thebans two
Togither met, and don eche other wo
Unhorsed hath eche other of hem twey
Ther was no tigre, in the vale of Galaphey
Whan her whelpe is stole, whan it is lite
So cruell on the hunte, as is Arcite
For ielous herte, vpon this Palamon
Ne in Belmarye, there is no fell Lion
That hunted is, or for his hunger woode
Ne of his pray, desireth so the bloode
As Palamon to slee his foe Arcite
The ielous strokes on her helmes bite
Out renneth the blood on both her sides rede
Sometime an end there is of euery dede
For er the sunne vnto the rest wente
The strong king Emetrius gan hente
This Palamõ, as he faught with this Arcite
And made his swerde depe in his flesh bite
And by force of twenty is he take
Unyolden, and drawen to the stake
And in the rescous of this Palamon
The strong king Ligurge is borne adoun
And king Emetrius, for all his strength
Is borne out of his sadle a swerdes length
So hurt him Palamon or he were take
but al for naught, he was broght to the stake
His hardy herte might him helpe naught
He must abide, when that he was caught
By force, and eke by compolicion
Who soroweth now but woful Palamon
That mote no more gon againe to fight.
And whan that Theseus had sene that sight
He cried hoe: no more, for it is don
Ne none shall lenger to his felowe gon
I woll be true iudge, and not party
Arcite of Thebes shall haue Emely
That by his fortune hath her fayre ywonne.
Anon there is a noyse of people bygonne
For ioye of this, so loude and hie withall
It semed that the lystes should fall.
What can now faire Uenus done aboue
What saith she now, what doth the quene of loue
But wepeth so for wanting of her wil
Till that her teares on the lystes fell
She sayd: I am ashamed doutles
Saturne saide: doughter holde thy pees
Mars hath al his wil his knizt hath his bone
And by mine heed, thou shalte be eased sone.
The trompes with the loude minstralcye
The heraudes, that so loude yel and crye

Ben in her wele, for lone of dan Arcite
But herkeneth me, and stinteth noise a lite
Which a miracle there bifell anon.
The fiers Arcite hath his helme of ydon
And on a courser for to shewe his face
He pricketh endlong the large place
Loking upward upon Emelie
And she ayen him cast a frendly eye
(For women as to speke in commune
They folowen all the fauour of fortune)
And was al his chere, as in his herte
Out of the ground a fyre infernall sterte
From Pluto sent, at the request of Saturne
For which his horse for feare gan to turne
And lepe a side, and foundred as he lepe
And er that Arcite may taken kepe
He pight him of on the pomel of his heed
That in the place he lay as he were deed
His brest to brosten with his sadel bowe
As blacke he lay as any cole or crowe
So was the blood ronne in his face.
Anon he was brought out of the place
With hert sore, to Theseus paleis
Tho was he corven out of his harneis
And in a bedde ybrought ful fayre and blive
For he was yet in memory, and on live
And alway criyng after Emely.
Duke Theseus, with al his company
Is comen home to Athenes his cite
With all blisse and great solempnite
Al be it that this auenture was fall
He would not discomfort hem all
Men said ese, that Arcite should not die
He should ben heraled of his maladie
And of another thing they were as faine
That of hem all there was none slaine
All were they sore hurt, and namely one
that with a spere was thronled his brest bone
Two other wounds, and two broken armes
Some had salues, and some had charmes;
Fermaces of herbes, and ese saue
They dronke, for they would her lines haue
For which this noble duke, as he well can
Comforteth and honoureth euery man
And made reuel al the long night
Unto the straunge lordes, as it was right
Ne there nas holde no discomforting
But as iustes or as turneying;
For sothly there nas no discomfiture
For falling is holde but an auenture
Ne to be lood by force vnto a stake
Unyolden, and with twenty knightes take
One person alone, withouten any mo
And haried forth, by arme, fote, and too
And ese his stede driuen forth with staues
With footemen, both yemen and knaues
It was aretted him no vilanie
There may no man clepen it cowardie
For which anon duke Theseus did cry
To stinten all rancour and enuy
The grete as well of one side as of other
And either side ylike, as others brother
And yaue hem richte s after her degre
And fully held a fest dayes three
And conueyed the knightes worthely
Out of his toune a dayes iourney largely
And hom they went euery man the right waie
Ther nas no more but fare wel & haue good day
Of this battaile, I wol no more endite
But speake of Palamon and Arcite
Swelleth the brest of Arcite, and the sore
Encreaseth at his hert more and more
The clotered blode, for any leches craft
Corrumped, and is in his body lafte
That neither veine blode, ne vencusing
Ne drinke of herbes, may be helping
By vertue expulsed, or anyn all
For thilke vertue cleped vnatural
Ne may the venim voide, ne expell
The pipes of his longes began to swell
And euery lacerte, in his brest adoun
Is shent with venim and corruption
Hem gaineth by neither, for to get his life
Vomite vpwarde, ne doumward laxatife
All is to burst thilke region
Nature hath no dominacion
And certainly ther as nature wol nat wirch
Farwel phisike, go beare the corse to chirch
This is all and some, that Arcite must die
For which he sendeth after Emelie
And Palamon his cosyn dere
Then said he thus, as ye shall after here
Nought may my wofull spirite in my hert
Declare a point of all my sorowes smert
To you my lady, that I loue most
But I bequeth the seruice of my gost
To you abouen any creature
Sin that my life may no lenger dure
Alas the wo, alas my paines strong
That I for you haue suffered, and so long
Alas the dethe, alas myn Emely
Alas departing of our company
Alas myn hertes quene, alas my liues wife
Myn hertes lady, ender of my life
What is the world, what aske men to haue
Now with his loue, now in his cold graue
Alone withouten any company
Farwel my swete foe, myn Emely
And soft take me in your armes twey
For the loue of God, herkeneth what I sey.

I

I haue here with my cosin Palamon
Had strife and rancour, many a daie agon
For loue of you, and for my iealousie
And Jupiter so wisely my soule gie
To speaken of a seruaunt properlie
With circumstances, all truelie
That is to say, trouth, honour, & knighthede
Wisedome, humblesse, estate, & high kinrede
Fredome, and all that longeth to that art
So Jupiter haue of my soule part
As in this world, right now knowe I non
So worthy to be loued as Palamon
That serueth you, & wold doen all his life
And if that you shall euer been a wife
Forget not Palamon, the gentle man
And with that worde his speche faile began
For from his feete vnto his brest was come
The colde death, that had hym nome
And yet more ouer, for in his armes two
The vitall strength is lost, and all a go
Saue onely the intellect, without more
That dwelleth in his hart sicke and sore
Gan failen, when the heart felt death
Dusked his yen two, and failed breath
But on his Ladie, yet cast he his eye
His last worde was mercie Emelie
His spirite chaunged, and out went there
Whether warde I cannot tell, ne where
Therefore I stint, I am no diuinistre
Of soules finde I not in this registre
Ne me leste not thilke opinion to tell
Of hem, though they writē where thei dwell
Arcite is cold, that Mars his soule gie
Now woll I speke forth of Emelie
Shright Emelie, and houlen Palamon
And Theseus his sister vp toke anon
Swouning, & bare her fro his corse awaie
What helpeth it to tary forth the daie
To tellen how she wept bothe euen & morow
For in such case women haue much sorowe
When that her husbands been fro hem go
That for the more partie they sorowen so
Or elis fallen in such maladie
That at the last, certainly they die
Infinite been the sorowe and the teres
Of old folke, and folke of tender yeres
In all the toune for death of this Theban
For hym there wepeth bothe child and man
So great wepyng was there not certain
When Hector was brought, all fresh islain
To Troie, alas the pite that was there
Cratching of cheekes, rentyng eke here
Why woldest thou be dedde, thus womē crie
And haddest gold inough, and Emelie,
No man maie glad Theseus

Sauing his old father Egeus
That knowe this worlds transmutacion
As he had seen it, bothe vp and doun
Joie after wo, and wo after gladnesse
And shewed hem ensamples and liknesse.
Right as there died neuer man quod he
That here liued in yearth in some degree
Right so there liued neuer man he said
In this world, that sometime he ne deied
This world is but a throughfare full of wo
And we been pilgrimes, passing to and fro
Death is an ende of euery worldes sore
And ouer all this yet saied he moche more
To this effect, full wisely to exhort
The people, that they should hem reconfort.
Duke Theseus with all his busie cure
Casteth now, where that the sepulture
Of good Arcite, shall best ymaked bee
And eke most honourable of degree
And at the last he took conclusion
That there as Arcite and Palamon
Had for loue the battaile hem betwene
That in the same selue groue, swete & grene
There as he had his amorous desires
His complaint, and for loue his hote fires
He would make a fire, in which the office
Funerall he might hem all accomplis
He hath anon commaunded to hack & hew
The okes old, and laie hem all on a rew
In culpons, well araied for to brenne
His officers with swift feete they renne
And right anon at his commaundement.
And after Theseus hath he sent
After a beare, and it all ouer spread
With cloth of gold, the richest that he had
And of the same sute he clothed Arcite
Upon his handes his gloues white
Eke on his hedde a croune of Laurell greene
And in his hand a swerde full bright & kene
He laied hym bare the visage on the bere
Therwith he wept that pite was to here
And for the people should seen hym all
When it was daie he brought him to the hall
That roreth of ỳ cries & of the sorowes soun
Tho gan this wofull Theban Palamon
With glitering beard, & ruddie shining heres
In clothes blacke dropped all with teres
And passing other of wepyng Emelie
The rufullest of all the companie.
And in as much as the seruice should bee
The more noble, and riche in his degree,
Duke Theseus let forth three stedes bring
That trapped were in steele all glitering
And couered with the armes of Dan Arcite
Upon these stedes great and white

Ther saten folk, of which one bare his sheld
An other his speare in his hand held
The third bare with him a bowe Turkes
Of brent gold was the cas & eke the harnes
And riden forth a pace with sorie chere
Toward the grene, as ye shall after here.
The noblest of the Grekes that there were
Upon her shoulders caried the bere
With flake pace, and eyen redde and white
Thoughout the citee, by the maister strete
That sprad was al with blak, & wonder hie
Right of the same is the strete wrie
Upon the right hand went Egeus
And on the other side duke Theseus
With vessels in her hand of gold full fine
All full of honie, milke, blode, and wine
Eke Palamon with full great companie
And after that came woful Emelie
With fire in hand, as was that time the gise
To doen the office of funerall seruice
Hie labour, and full great apparailyng
Was at seruice, and at fire makyng
That with his grene top the heauen raught
And twentie fadome of bred armes straught
This is to sain, the bowes were so brode
Of strawe first there was laied many a lode.
But how the fire was maken vp on height
And eke the names, how the trees height
As oke, firre, beche, asp, elder, elme, popelere
Willow, Holm, Plane, Bore, Chesten, laure
Maple, thorne, beche, ewe, hasel, Whipultre,
How they were felde, shall not be tolde for me
Ne how the goddes ronne vp and doune
Disherited of her habitation
In which they wonned in rest and pees
Nimphes, Faunte, and Amadriades
Ne how the beastes, ne the birdes all
Fledden for feare when the trees fall
Ne how the ground agast was of the light
That was nat wont to see the sunne bright,
Ne how the fire was couched first with stre
And than with drie stickes clouen a thre
And than with grene wodde, and spicerie
And than with cloth of gold and perrie
And garlonds hanging with many a floure
The mirre, the encence, with swete odoure
Ne how Arcite laie emong all this
Ne what richesse about his bodie is
Ne how that Emelie, as was the gise
Put in the fire of funerall seruice
Ne how she souned, whã maked was the fire
Ne what she spake, ne what was her desire
Ne what iewels men in the fire cast
Whan that the fire was great & brent fast
Ne how some cast her sheld, & some her spere
And of her vestments, which that they were
And cuppes full of wine, milke, and blood
Into the fire, that brent as it were wood
Ne how the Grekes with a huge route
Thrise ridden all the fire aboute
Upon the left hande, with a loude shouting
And thrise with her speres clattering
And thrise how the ladies gan crie
Ne how that ladde was homward Emelie
Ne how that Arcite is brent to ashen cold
Ne how the liche wake was hold
All that night, ne how the Grekes plaie
The wake plaies, kepe I nat to saie
Who wrestled best naked, with oile anoint
Ne who bare him best in euery poinct
I woll not tellen how they gone
Whom to Athenes, whan the plaie is doen
But shortly to the pointe than woll I wend
And make of my long tale an ende.

By processe and by length of yeres
All stinten is the murning and the teres
Of Grekes, by one generall assent
Than semed me there was a Parlement
At Athenes, vpon a certain poinct and caas
Emong the which pointes spoken was
To haue with certain countres aliaunce
And haue of Thebans fully obeisaunce
For which this noble Theseus anon
Let sende after this gentle Palamon
Unwiste of him what was the cause & why:
But in his blacke clothes sorowfully
He came at his commaundement on hie
Tho sent Theseus after Emelie.
Whan they wer set, & husht was the place
And Theseus abidden hath a space
Or any worde came from his wise brest
His eyen sette he there hym lest
And with such a sadde visage, he siked still
And after that, right thus he saied his will
The first mouer of the cause aboue
Whan he first made the faire chaine of loue
Great was the effect, and hie was his entente
Wel wist he why, and what therof he mente
For with that faire chaine of loue he bonde
The fire, the aire, the water, and the londe
In certain bondes, that they may nat flie
The same prince and that mouer, quod he,
hath stablished in this wretched world adon
Certen daies and duracion
To all that are engendred in this place
Ouer the which date they may nat pace
All mowe they yet the daies abredge
There nedeth non auctorite to ledge
For it is proued by experience

But

But that me list declare my sentence
Then maie men by this order discerne
That thilke mouer stable is and eterne
Well may men know, but he be a foole
That euery partie is deriued from his hoole
For nature hath nat taken his beginning
Of one part or cantell of a thing
But of a thing that perfit is and stable
Discending so till it be corrumpable
And therefore of his wise purueiaunce
He hath so well beset his ordinaunce
That spaces of thinges and progressions
Shullen endure by successions
And not eterne, without any lie
This maist thou vnderstand and see at ye
Lo the oke, that hath so long a norishing
Fro the time that it begunneth first to spring,
And hath so long a life, as ye may see
Yet at the last wasted is the tree
Considereth eke, how that the hard stone
Under our feet, on which we tread and gone,
Yet wasteth it, as it lieth in the weie,
The brode ruer sumtime wexeth drie
The great tounes, se we wane and wend
Than ye see that all this thing hath end
And man and woman see shall we also
That endeth in one of the terms two
That is to sain in youth or elis in age
He mote be dedde, a king as well as a page
Some in his bed, some in the deepe see,
Some in the large field as ye may see
It helpeth not, al goeth that ilke weie
Than maie you see that al thing mote deie
What maketh this but Jupiter the king
That is prince and cause of al thing
Conuerting al to his proper will
From which it is deriued soth to tell
And here againe, no creature on liue
Of no degree auaileth for to striue
Than is it wisedome, as thinketh me
To make vertue of necessite
And take it well that we may not eschewe
And namely that to vs all is dewe
And who so grutcheth aught he doth follie
And rebell is to him that all may gie,
And certainly a man hath most honour
To dien in his excellence and flour
When he is siker of his good name
Thā hath he don his frends ne him no shame
And gladder ought his friends be of his death,
When with honour yold is vp the breath
Than when his name apaled is for age
For all forgetten in his vassellage
Than it is best as for a worthie fame
To dien when he is best of name
The contrarie of all this is wilfulnesse
Why grutchen we? why haue we heuinesse
That good Arcite of cheualrie the flour
Departed is with dutie and with honour
Out of this foule prison of this life?
Why grutchen here his cosin and his wife
Of his welfare that loueth him so wele
Can he hem thank? nay god wot neuer a dele
That both his soule and eke hem offende,
And yet they mowe not her lustes amende.
What may conclude of this long sorie
But after sorrow, I rede vs be merie
And thanke Jupiter of all his grace
And er we departen from this place
I rede we maken of sorrowes two
One parfite ioie lasting euer mo
And looke now where most sorrow is herein
There wol I first amend and begin
Suster qd. he this is my full assent
With al the people of my parlement
That gentle Palamon your own knight
That serueth you with wil, hert, and might
And euer hath done, sith ye first him knew
That ye shall of your grace vpon him rew,
And take him for husbonde and for lord
Lene me your hand, for this is our accord.
Let see now of your womanly pite
He is a kings brothers sonne parde
And though he were a poore bachelere,
Sin he hath serued you so many a yere
And had for you so great aduersite
It must been considered, leueth me
For gentle mercie ought to passen right.
Than said he thus to Palamon the knight
I trow there need litle sarmoning
To make you assenten to this thing
Cometh nere, and taketh your lady by the hond
Betwixt hem was maked anon the bond
That hight Matrimonie or mariage
By al the counsail of the baronage
And thus with al blisse and melodie
Hath Palamon ywedded Emelie.
And God that al this world hath wrought
Send him his loue that it hath so dere bought
For now is Palamon in al wele
Liuing in blisse, in riches, and in hele
And Emely him loueth so tenderly
And he her serueth so gentelly
That neuer was there no word hem bitwene
Of ielousie, or of any other tene.
Thus endeth Palamon and Emelie
And God saue al this faire company.

¶ Here endeth the Knights tale,
and here foloweth the Mil-
lers Prologue,

When

WHen that the knight had thus his tale itold
In all the companie nas there yong ne old
That he ne laied, it was a noble storie
And worthie to be drawone in memorie
And namely the gentiles euerichone
Our host loughe and sware, so mote I gone
This goeth aright, vnbokled is the male
Let see now who shall tell another tale
For truly, the game is well begonne
Now telleth sir Wonke if you conne
Sumwhat, to quite with the knightes tale
The miller for dronken was all pale
So that vnnethes vpon his horse he sat
Ne nolde auale neither hood ne hat
Ne abide no man for his curtesie
But in Pilates voice he began to crie
And swore by armes blood and bones
I can a noble tale for the nones (tale
With which I wol now quite the knight his
Our host saw that he was dronken of ale
And saied, abide Robin leue brother
Sum better man shall tell vs first another
Abide, and let vs worche thriftely.
By Gods soule (qd. he) that wol not I
For I wol speake, or else go my waie
Our hoste answered, tell on a diuell waie
Thou art a foole, thy wit is ouercome
Now herketh qd. the Miller, all and some
But first I make protestacion
That I am dronke, I know it by my soun
And therefore if I mispeake or saie
Wite it the ale of Southwarke, I you praie
For I woll tell a Legende and a life
Both of a carpenter and his wife
How that a clerke set a Wrights cap
The reue answered and said stint thy clap
Let be thy leud dronken harlottrie
It is a sinne and eke a great follie
To apaire any man or him defame
And eke to bring wiues in soche blame
Thou maiest inough of other things sain.
This dronken Miller spake full sone againe
And saied, leue brother Oswolde
Who hath no wife is no cockolde
But I saie not therefore that thou art one
There bene full good wiues many one
Why art thou angrie with my tale now
I haue a wife parde as wel as thou
Yet nolde I for all the Oxen in my plough
Take vpon me more than inough
To demen of my selfe that I am one
I woll beleue that I am none
An husband should not been inquisitife
Of Goddes priuete, ne of his wife
For so he find Goddes foison there
Of the remnaunt needeth not to enquere
What should I more saie, but this Millere
He nolde his word for no man forbere
But told his choles tale in this manere
Me forthinketh I shall reherse it here
And therefore, euery gentle wight I praie
Demeth not for Goddes loue, that I saie
Of euill entent, but that I mote reherse
Her tales all, been they better or werse
Or elis falsen some of my matere
And therefore, who so list it not to here
Tourne ouer the lefe, and chose another tale
For ye shall find inow great and smale
Of historial thing that toucheth gentilnesse
And eke moralite, and holinesse
Blame not me, if that ye chose amis
The Miller is a chorle, ye know well this
So was the Reue eke, and other mo
And harlottrie they told eke both two
Auise you, and put me out of blame
And eke men should not make ernest of game.

¶ Here endeth the Millers Prologue: and here after folowe=
weth his Tale.

WHilom there was dwelling in Oxenforde
A rich gnoke, that gestes held to borde
And of his craft he was a Carpenter
With him there was dwelling a poore scholer
Had learned art, but all his fantasie
Was turned to learne Astrologie
And coud certaine of conclusions
To demen by interrogacions
If that men asken him in certain houres
Whē the mē should haue drought or shoures
Or if men asked him what should befall
Of euery thing, I may not reken all
This clerke was cleped Hend Nicholas
Of derne loue he coud and of solas
And therto he was slie and right priuee
And like to a maiden meke to see
A chamber he had in that hostelrie
Alone, withouten any companie
Full fetously dight with herbes sote
And he himselfe as sweete as is the rote
Of Licores, or of any Setewall
His almagiste, and bookes great and small
His

His alterlagour, longing for his art
His augrim stones lying faire apart
On shelues couched at his beddes hedde
His psalte ikouered with a folding redde
And all aboue there lay a gay Sautrie
On which he made on nights melodie
So swetely, that all the chamber rong
And *Angelus ad virginem* he song
And after that he song the kings note
Full oft blessed was his merie throte
And thus the swete clerke his time spent
After his freendes finding and his rent
This Carpenter had wedded new a wife
Which that he loued more than his life
Of eightene yere she was of age
Ielous he was, and kept her strait in cage
For she was wild and yong: and he was old
And demed himselfe to been a cokewold
He knew not Cato: for his wit was rude
That bad men wed her similitude
Men should wedde after her estate
For youth and elde is often at debate
But sith he was fallen in the snare
He must endure as other folke his care
Faire was this yong wife, and therewithall
As any wesele her bodie gentle and small
A seinte she wered, barred all with silke
A barme clothe, as white as morrow milke
Upon her lendes, full of many a gore
Whit was her smock, and embrouded all before
And eke behind on her colere about
Of cole blacke silke, within and eke without
The tapes of her white volupere
Were of the same sute of her colere
Her filet brode of silke, and set full hie
And sikerly, she had a likerous ye
Full small ipulled were her browes two
And tho were bent, and blacke as any sloo
She was moch more blisful for to see
Than is the new perienet tree
And softer than the wolle is of a weather
And by her girdel hong a purse of Leather
Tassed with silke, and perled with Latoun
In all this world, to seken vp and doune
There nis no man so wise, that couth thence
So gay a popelote, or so gay a wench
Full brighter was the shining of her hewe
Than in the toure the Noble forged newe
But of her song, it was loude and yerne
As any Swalow sitting on a berne
Thereto she couth skippe, and make a game
As any kidde or Calfe folowing his dame
Her mouth was swete, as braket or the meth
Or hord of apples, lying in haie or heth
Winsing she was, as is a ioly colt
Long as a maste, and vpright as a bolt
A brooch she bare on her low collere
As brode as the bosse of a bucklere
Her shoes were laced on her legges hie
She was a primrose, and pigges nie
For any lord to liggen in his bedde
Or yet for any good yoman to wedde.
Now sir, and eft sir, so befell the caas
That one day this Hende Nicholas
Fell with this yong wife to rage and play
Whyle that her husbond was at Oseney
As clerkes been full sotell and queint
And priuely he caught her by the queint
And saied: I wis but I haue my will
For derne loue of the lemman I spill
And helde her fast by the haunch bones
And saied: lemman loue me well at ones
Or I woll dien also God me saue
And she sprong as a colt in a traue
And with her hedde she wrieth fast awaie
And saied: I woll not kisse thee by my faie
Why let be quod she, let be Nicholas
Or I woll crie out harrow and alaas
Doe away your bondes for your curtesie.
This Nicholas gan mercy for to crie
And spake so faire, and profered him so fast
That she her loue graunted him at last
And swore her oth, by S. Thomas of Kent
That she would been at his commaundemēt
When that she may her leiser weil aspie
My husband is so full of ielousie
That but ye wait well, and be priue
I wote right well I nam but dedde, quod she
Ye mote be full derne as in this caas
Nay thereof care ye nat quod Nicholas
A clerke had litherly beset his while
But if he couth a Carpenter begile
And thus they were accorded, and iswore
To awaten a time as I haue saied before
And whē Nicholas had doen thus euery dele
And thanked her about the lendes wele
He kissed her swete, than taketh his Sautrie
And playeth fast, and maketh melodie
Than fell it thus, that to the parish cherch
(Christs owne woorkes for to werch)
This good wife went vpon an holy daie
Her forhedde shone as bright as any daie
So was it wash, when she iete her werke.
Now was there of the chirch a parish clerke
The which that was cleped Absolon
Crulle was his heere, and as gold it shon
And strouted as a fanne large and brode
Full straight and euen laie his iolie shode
His rode was redde, his yen graie as Goos
With Poules windowes coruen on his shoos

In

In hosen redde he went fetously
Gird he was ful smal and properly
All in a kirtle of light waget
Ful faire and thicke been the poinets set
And therevpon he had a gaie surplise
As white as the blossome on the rise
A merie child he was, so God me saue
Wel coud he let blood, clippe, and shaue
And make a charter of lond, and a quittaunce
In twēty maner coud he trippe and daunce
After the schole of Oxenforde tho
And with his legges casten to and fro
And plaie songes on a small Ribible
Therto he song sometime a loud quinible
And as wel coud he plaie on a Geterne
In all the toune nas brewhous ne Tauerne
That he ne visited with his solas
There any gay Tapstere was
But sothly to say he was somwhat squaimus
Of farting, and of speach daungerous
This Absolon, that was iolly and gaie
Goeth with a Censer on a Sondaie
Censing the wines of the parish faste
And many a louely looke on hem he caste
And namely on this Carpenters wife
To looke on her him thought a merie life
She was so proprr, and swete as Licorous
I dare wel saine if she had been a Mous
And he a Catte, he would haue her hent anon
This Parish clerke, this iolly Absolon
Hath in his hart such a lone longing
That of no wife he tooke none offering
For curtelie he saied he would none
The moone, when it was night bright shone
And Absolon his Geterne hath itake
For paramours he thought for to wake
And forth he goeth, ielous and amerous
Til he came to the Carpenters hous
A little after the Cocke had icrowe
And dressed him by a shot windowe
That was vpon the Carpenters wall
He singeth in his voice gentle and small
Now dere ladie, if thy will be
I praie you that you will rewe on me
Full well accordyng to his Getering.
This Carpenter awoke, & heard him syng
And spake vnto his wife anon
What Alison, herest thou not Absolon
That chaūteth thus vnder our boures wal.
And she answerd her husbond there withal
Yes God wote, I heare him euery dele
This passeth forth, what wol ye bet thā wele
Fro dai to daie, this iolly Absolon
So woeth her, that him was wo bigon
He waketh all the night, and all the daie
He kēbeth his lockes brode, & made him gaie
He woeth her by meanes and bycage
And swore, he would been her owne page
He singeth brokkyng as a Nightingale
He sent her pinent, methe, and spiced ale
And wafres pypyng hotte out of the glede
And for she was of toun, he profered her mede
For some folke woll be wonne for richesse
And some for strokes, and sum with gētilesse
Sumtime to shewe his lightnes & maistrie
He plaieth Herodes on a scaffolde hie
But what auaileth him, as in this caas?
So loueth she this Hende Nicholas
That Absolon may blow the Buckes horne
He ne had for his labour but a scorne
And thus she maketh Absolon her Ape
And all his request tourneth to a iape
For soth this prouerbe it is no lie
Men say thus alwaie, the nie slie
Maketh the ferre loue to be lothe
For though that Absolon be wood or wrothe
Bicause that he ferre was from her sight
Thus nie Nicholas stood in his light.
But now beare thee wel Hend Nicholas
For Absolon may waile and sing alas
And so befell it on a Saterdaie
This Carpenter was gone to Osnaie
And Hend Nicholas and Alison
Accorded were to this conclusion
That Nicholas should shapen hem a while
This selie ielous Carpenter to begile
And if so be the game went a right
She would slepe in his armes all night
For this was his desire, and hers also
And right anon, without woordes mo
This Nicholas no lenger would tarie
But doeth ful soft vnto his chamber carie
Both meat and drinke, for a day or twey
And her housebond bade her for to say
If that he asked after Nicholas
She should say she nist where he was
Of al that day she saw him not with ye
She trowed he was in some maladie
For no crie that her maid could cal (befal.
He nolde answere, for naught that might
Thus passeth forth al the like Saterdaie
That Nicholas stil in his chamber laie
And ete, dranke and slept, & did what him list
Til Sunday, that the Sunne goeth to rest
This selie Carpenter hath great meruele
Of Nicholas, or what thing might him ele
And saied: I am a drad by saincte Thomas
It stondeth not aright with Nicholas
God shilde that he died sodainly
This worlde is now ful tikel sekerly

I saw to day a corse borne to cherche
That now on monday last I saw him werche
Go vp (qd he vnto his knaue) anone
Cleape at his doze, & knock fast with a stone
Loke how it is, and tel me boldely.
This knaue went vp full sturdely
And at the chambze doze, while that he stode
He cried and knocked as he were woode
What how, what do ye maister Nicholay,
How may ye slepe al this long day.
But all for nought he herde not a worde.
An hole he found ful low vpon a borde
There as the catte was wont in to crepe
And at that hole he loked in ful depe
And at the last he had of him a sight.
This Nicholas sate euer gaping vpright
As he had keyked on the newe mone
Adowne he goeth, & tolde his maister sone
In what aray he saw this ylke man.
This carpenter to blissen him began
And said: now helpe vs seynt Frideswide
A man wot lytle what shal him betide
This man is fallen with his Astronomie
In some woodnesse, or in some agonie
I thought ayc well how it should be
Men shoulden not know of Gods priuete
Ye blessed be alway the leude man
That naught but onely his byleue can.
Right so ferde another clerk with astronomy
He walked into the feldes for to pry
Upon the sterre, to wete what should befall
Til he was in a marlpit yfall
He saw not that, yet by saint Thomas
Me reweth sore on Hinde Nicholas
He shal be arated out of his studying
If that I may, by Jesus heuen king.
Get me a staffe, that I maie vnderspore
While that thou Robyn heuest vp the doze
He shal out of his studieng, as I gesse
And to the chamber doze he gan him dresse
His knaue was a strong carle for the nones
And by the halse bare vp the doze at ones
Into the floze the doze fell anone.
This Nicholas sate as stil as any stone
And euer gaped vpward into the eyre.
This carpenter wend he were in dispeyre
And hent him by the shoulders mightily
And shoke him harde, and cried spitously
What Nicholas, what how loke a doun
Awake, and thinke on Christes passion
I crouch the from elues, & fro wicked wights
Therwith the nightspel he said anon rights
On four halues of the house about
And on the drefsholde of the doze without
Jesu Christ, and sainte Bendight
Blisse this house from euery wicked wight
Fro the nights mare the wite Pater noster
Where wonnest thou saint Peters suster.
And at the last this Hende Nicholas
Gan for to sike sore, and sain alas
Shal al this worlde be lost eftsones now.
This carpenter answerd: what saist thou.
What thinke on god, as we do men ỳ swinke
This Nicholas answerd fetch me drinke
And after wol I speke in priuete
Of certaine things, that toucheth the & me
I wol tellen it none other man certaine.
This carpenter goth doun, & cometh again
And brought of mighty ale a large quarte
And whã ỳ eche of hem had dronkẽ his parte
This Nicholas his doze fast shette
And doun the carpenter by him sette
And said: Johan hoste myn lefe and dere
Thou shalt vpon thy trouthe swere me here
That to no wight thou shalt my counsell wrey
For it is Christes counsaile that I say
And if thou tel it any man, thou art forlore
For this vengeance thou shalt haue therfore
That if thou wray me, thou shalt be woode.
Nay Christ it forbid for his holy bloode
Md tho this sely man, I am no blabbe
Ne though I say it, I am not lefe to gabbe
Say what thou wolte, I shal it neuer tell
To child ne wife, by him that harowed hell.
Now John (qd Nicholas) I wol not lye
I haue yfounden in mine astrologie
As I haue loked in the moone bright
That now on monday next at quarter night
Shal fall a rayne, & that so wild and woode
That halfe so great was neuer Noes floode
This worlde (he said) in lesse than in an hour
Shal al be drenyt, so hidous is the shoure
Thus shal mankind drenche, & lese her life.
This carpẽter answerd & said: alas mi wif,
And shal she drenche? Alas myn Alisoun
For sorow of this he fel almost adoun
And said: is there no remedy in this caas.
Yes yes ful good (qd Hende Nicholas)
If thou wolt werche after lore and rede
Thou maist not werchẽ after thin owen hede
For thus saith Salomon, that was ful trew
Worke al by counsayle, & thou shalt not rew.
And if thou wilt worken by good counsaile
I vndertake, without maste or saile
Yet shal I saue her, and the and me.
Hast thou not herd how saued was Noe
Whan ỳ our lord had warned him before
That al ỳ worlde with water shuld be lore
Yes (qd the carpenter) ful yore a go.
Hast thou not herde (qd Nicholas) also.

The sorow of Noe with his felesshippe
Or that he might gete his wife to shippe
Him had leuer, I dare wel vndertake
At thilke time, than all his wethers blake
That she had a ship her selfe alone
And therfore wost thou what is best to done
This asketh hast, and of any hasty thing
Men may not preche ne make tarying
Anon go get vs fast into this inne
A kneding trow or els a kemelyn
For ech of vs, but loke that they ben large
In which men mow swimmen as in a barge
And haue therein vitailes sufficiant
But for a day, fye on the remenant
The water shall aslake and gon away
Aboute prime vpon the next day
But Robyn may not wete of this thy knaue
Ne eke thy maid Gille, I may not saue
Aske not why: for though thou aske me
I woll not tell goddes priuete
Sufficeth the, but if thy wittes be madde
To haue as great a grace as Noe hadde
Thy wife shall I well saue out of doute
Go now thy way, and spede thee here aboute
But whan thou hast for her, & thee, and me
Ygetten vs these kneding tubbes three
Than shalt thou hang hem in ỹ rofe full hie
That no man of our purueyaunce espie
And whan thou hast don thus as I haue said
And hast our vitaile faire in hem ylaid
And eke an axe to smithe the cord a two
Whan ỹ the water cometh, that we may go
And breake an hole on hie vpon the gable
Vnto the garden ward, ouer the stable
That we may freely passen forth our way
Whan that the great shoure is gon away
Thã shal thou swim as mery I vndertake
As doeth the white ducke after her drake
Than wol I clepe, how Alison, how John
Be mery: for the flood woll passe anon
And thou wolt sain, haile maister Nicholay
Good morow for I se well that it is day
And than we shall be lordes all our life
Of all the world, as was Noe and his wife
But of one thing I warne the full right
Be well auised on that ylke night
That we ben entred into the shippes bord
That none of vs ne speke not a word
Ne clepe ne cry, but ben in his prayere
For it is goddes owen heste dere.
Thy wife & thou mote hang fer a twynne
For that bytwixt you shall be no sinne
No more in looking than there shall in dede
This ordinaunce is said, go god the spede
To morow at night, whã men ben all a slepe
Into our kneding tubbe woll we crepe
And sitten there, abiding goddes grace
Go now thy way, I haue no lenger space
To make of this no lenger sermoning
Men say thus: send the wise, & say nothing
Thou art so wise, it nedeth the not to teche
Go saue our lyues, and that I the beseche.
This sely carpenter goth forth his way
Ful ofte he said alas, and welaway
And to his wife he tolde his priuete
And she was ware, and knewe it bet than he
What al this queinte cast was for to sey
But natheles, she ferde as she would dey
And said: alas, go forth thy way anone
Helpe vs to skape, or we be dede echone
I am thy trewe verey wedded wife
Go dere spouse, and helpe to saue our life.
Lo, which a great thing is affection
Men may dye of ymagination
So depe may impression be take.
This sely carpenter beginneth to quake
Him thinketh verily that he may se
Noes flodde come walting as the see
To drenchen Alison, his hony dere
He weepeth, waileth, and maketh sory chere
He siketh, with many a sory thought
He goth, and getteth him a kneding trough
And after a tubbe, and a kemelin
And priuely he sent hem to his in
And hinge hem in the rofe ful priuely
His owne hand, he made him ladders three
To climben by the ronges, and by the stalkes
Into the tubbes hongyng by the balkes
And hem vitailed, both trough and tubbe
With breed and chese, & good ale in a tubbe
Suffising right ynowe, as for a day
But er that he had made all this array
He sent his knaue, and eke his wenche also
Vpon his nede to London for to go
And on the monday whan it drowe to night
He shette his doore, without candel light
And dresseth al thing, as it should be
And shortly clomben vp al thre
They seten stil not fully a forlong way
Now pater noster clum, said Nicholay
And clum qd Iohan, and clum said Alison
This carpenter said his deuocion
And stil he sitte, and biddeth his prayere
Awayting on the rayne, if he it here.
The deed sleepe, for wery besinesse
Fel on this carpenter, right as I gesse
About curfewe time, or litell more
For trauaile of his goste he groneth sore
And eft he routeth, for his heed misslay
And doun of ỹ ladder than stalketh Nicholay

And

And Alison ful softe after the spedde
Without words mo they went to bedde
There as the carpenter was woned to lye
There was the reuel, and the melody
And thus lyeth Alison and Nicholas
In bisinesse of mirthe and solas
Til that the bel of laudes gan to ring
And freres in the chaunsell gon to sing.
This parish clerke, this amarous Absolon
That is for loue alway so wo begon
Upon the monday was at Oseney
With company, him to disporte and play
And asked vpon a case a cloistere
Ful priuely, after John the carpentere
And he drew him a parte out of the chirche
And said, I not: I saw him not here wirche
Sith saturday, I trow that he be went
For timbre, there our Abbot hath him sent
For he is wont for timbre for to go
And dwellen at the graunge a day or two
Or els he is at his house certame
Wher that he be, I can not sothly saine.
This Absolon, ful wly was and light
And thought, now is my time to walk al night
For sekerly, I saw him nat sterring
About his doze, sith day began to spring
So mote I thriue, I shal at cockes crowe
Ful priuily knocke at his windowe
That stant full lowe vpon his boures wall
To Alison wol I now tellen all
My loue longing: for yet I shall nat misse
That at the leest way I shall her kisse
Some manor comfort shal I haue parfaye
My mouth hath itched al this long daie
That is a signe of kissing at the leest
Al night me mette eke, that I was at a feest
Therfore I wol go slepe an hour or twey
And al the night than wol I walke and pley.
Whan that the first cocke hath crow anon
Up rist this wly louer Absolon
And him arayeth gay, and in queint deuice
But first he cheweth greyns and licorice
To smellen sote, or he had kempte his here
Under his tonge a trucloue he bere
For therby he wende to ben gracious
He roineth to the carpenters house
And stil he stante vnder the shotwindow
Unto his brest it raught, it was so low
And soft he knocked with a semly soun,
What do ye honycombe, swete Alisoun.
My faire birde, my swete sinamome
Awaketh lemman myn, and speketh to me
Ful litel thinken ye vpon my wo
That for your loue I swelt there as I go
No wonder is though I swelt and swete
I morne as doth the lambe after the tete
I wys lemman, I haue such loue longing
That like a turtle trew is my morning
I may not eaten no more than may a maide.
Go fro the window iacke foole, she saide
As helpe me god and swete saint Jame
I loue another, or els I were to blame
Wel bet than the (by Jesu) Absolon
Go forthe thy way, or I wol caste a stone
And let me slepe, a twenty diuelway
Alas qd Absolon, and welaway
That true loue was euer so yuel bystette
Than kisse me, sin it may be no bette
For Jesus loue, and for the loue of me.
Wilt thou thā go thy way therwith qd she
Ye certes lemman, qd this Absolon
Than make the redy qd she) I come anon
And vnto Nicholas she said stil
Now peace, and thou shalt laugh thy fill
This Absolon doun set him vpō his knees
And said: I am a lord at all degrees
For after this, I hope there cometh more
Lemman thy grace, & swete birde thy more.
The window she vndoth, and that in haste
Haue do (qd she) and spede the faste
Let not our neighbours thee espy.
This Absolō gan wipe his mouth ful drie
Derke was the night, as pitche or cole
And at the windowe she put out her ers hole
And Absolon him felte, neither bet ne wers,
But with his mouthe he kist her bare ers
Ful sauorly, or he were ware of this.
A backe he sterte, and thought it was amis
For wel he wist, a woman had no berde
He felte a thing al rowe, and long herde
And said: fye, alas what haue I do.
Te he qd she, and clapt the windowe to
And Absolon goeth forth a sory paas
A berde a berde, said hende Nicholas
By gods corpus, this goeth faire and wele.
This sely Absolon herde it euery dele
And on his lippe he gan for angre bite
And to him selfe he said, I shall the quite
Who rubbeth now, who froteth now his lips
With dust, with sond, with straw, with chips
But Absolon, that saith ful often alas
My soule betake I to Sathanas
But me were leuer than al this toun, qd he
Of this dispite auenged for to be.
Alas (qd he) alas that I ne had ybleynt
His hotte loue is colde, and all yqueint
For fro the time that he had kiste her ers
Of paramours he set not a kers
For he was healed of his maladye
Ful ofte paramours he gan defie

And wepe as dothe a childe that is ybete
A softe pace he wente ouer the strete
Unto a smith men callen dan Gerueys
That in his forge smiteth plow harneys
He sharpeth shares, and coulters bothe
This Absolon knocketh all easily
And said vndo Gerueys, and that anon
What who art thou? It am I Absolon
What Absolon, what for Christes swete tre
Why rise ye so rathe? ey benedicite
What eyleth you? sum gay gyrle god it wote
Hath brought you thus on the berytote
By saint note, ye wote wel what I mene.
This Absolon ne raught not a bene
Of al his play, no word againe he gaffe
He had more towe on his distaffe
Than Gerueys knew, and said frend so dere
The hote coltre, in the chymeney here
As lene it me, I haue therewith to done
I woll bring it thee againe ful sone.
Gerueys answered: certes were it golde
Or in a poke nobles al vntolde
Thou shouldest it haue, as I am true smith
Eye Christs fote, what wol ye don therwith?
Therof (qd Absolon) be as be may
I shall wel tellen thee to morow day
And caught the coulter by the colde stele
Ful softe out at the dore gan he stele
And went vnto the carpenters wal
He coughed first, and knocked therewithal
Upon the window, right as he did ere.
This Alison answerd: who is there
That knocketh so? I warrante he is a thefe.
Why nay (qd he) god wot my swete lefe
I am thyn Absolon, thyn owne derling
Of gold (qd he) I haue the brought a ring
My mother paue it me, so god me saue
Ful fine it is, and therto wel ygraue
This wol I yeue thee, if thou me kisse.
This Nicholas was risen for to pisse
And thought he would amenden all the iape
He should kisse his ers ere that he schape
And vp the window did he hastely
And out his ers he put ful priuely
And ouer the buttocke, to the haunche boone
And therwith spake this clerk, this Absolon
Speke swete birde, I not where thou arte.
This Nicholas anon let fleen a farte
As great as it had ben a thunder dent
That with the stroke he was well nygh blent
And he was redy with his yron hote
And Nicholas in the arse he smote.
Of goeth the skin an hondbrede about
The hotte coltor brende so his toute
And for the smert he wende for to die
As he were wood, he gan for to crye
Helpe, water, water, for goddes herte.
This carpenter out of his slomber sterte
And herd one cry water, as he were wood
And thought, alas now cometh Noes flood
And sette him vp without wordes mo
And with an axe he smote the cord a two
And doun goth all, he found neither to sell
Breed ne ale, but doun shortly he fell
Upon the flore, and there a swowne he lay
Up stert than Alison and Hend Nicholay
And cried out, and harrow in the strete
The neighbours, both small and grete
In rome, for to gauren on this man
That a swoune lay, palish and wan
For with that fall brosten hath he his arme
But stonden he must vnto his owne harme
For whan he spake, he was ybore adoun
With Hend Nicholas, and Alisoun
They told euery man, that he was wood
He was agast so of Noyes flood
Through fantasie, that of his vanite
He had getten him kneding tubbes three
And had hem honged in the rofe aboue
And that he prayed hem for goddes loue
To sitten in the roofe par compayny
The folke gan laughen at his fantasy
And into the rooke they loken and they gape
And turned all his crafte into a iape
For what so this carpenter answerde
It was for nought, no man his reason herde
With othes grete, he was ysworne adoun
That he was holden wood in all that toun
For euerich clerke can helde with other
They said y man was wood, my leue brother
And euery wight gan laughen at this strife
Thus swined with the carpenters wife
For all his keping, and his ielousie
And Absolon hath kist her nether eye
And Nicholas is scalded in the toute
This tale is don, and god saue all the route.

¶ Here endeth the Millers tale:
and hereafter folowth the
Reues Prologue.

When folke had laughed at this nyce caas
Of Absalon and Hynd Nicholas
Diuers folke diuersly they said
But for the more part they lough and playd
Ne at this tale I saw no man him greue
But it were only Oswold the Reue

Bicause,

Bycause he was of carpenters craſte
A lutell ryze in his herte plaſte
He gan to grutchen and blamen it a lits
Sothly (qd he) ful wel couth I the quite
With blering of a proude millers eye
If that me liſt to ſpeke of ribaudrye
But eke I am old, me luſt not play for age
Graſſe time is done, my fodder is forage
This white toppe writeth myn olde yeres
For ſõtime yolow was, now whyte ben myn
But yet I fare as doth an open ers (heres
That ylke frute is euer lenger the wers
Tyl it be rotten in mollokę, or in ſtre
We olde men, I dreden ſo fare we
Till we be rotten can we not be ripe
We hoppen alway, whyle ỹ world wol pype
For in our wyl there ſtiketh euer a naile
To haue an hoze heed and a grene taile
As hath a leke, for though our might be gone
Our wil deſireth foly euer in one.
For whã we may not don, thã wol we ſpekẽ
Yet in our aſhen olde, is fyze ryzken
Four gledes han we, which I ſhall deuiſe
Auaunting, lieng, angre, and couetiſe
Theſe four ſparkles longen on to elde
Our olde limmes mowe wel ben vnwelde
But will ne ſhall not faile, that is ſothe
And yet haue I alway a coltes tothe
As many a yere as it is paſſed henne
Syn that my tappe of life began to renne
For ſikerly, whan I was borne anone
Dethe drowe the tappe of life, and let it gone
And euer ſins hath the tappe ryonne
Till that almoſt al emptie is the tonne
The ſtreme of life now droppeth on ỹ chimbe
The ſely tonge may wel ringe and climbe
Of wretchednes, that paſſed is full yore
With olde folke ſaue dotage is no more.
Whan ỹ our hoſt had herde this ſermoning
He gan to ſpeke as lordly as a king
And ſaid: what amounteth al this witte?
What ſhall we ſpeke all daie of holy writte?
The duell made a Reue to preche
Or a ſouter a ſhipman, or a leche.
Say forth thy tale, and tary nat the time
Lo Depford, and it is halfe way prime
Lo Grenewiche, that many a ſhrewe is in
It were time thy tale for to begin
Now ſirs qd this Oſwolde the Reue
I pray you al, that ye not you greue
That I anſwere, and ſomdele ſet his houſe
For leſull it is with force, force of houſe.
This dronken Miller hath ytolde vs here
How that begiled was a carpentere
Parauenture in ſkorne, for I am one
And by your leaue, I ſhall him quite anon
Right in his churles termes woll I ſpeke
I pray to God his necke mote breke
He can well in mine eye ſene a ſtalke
But in his owne he can not ſene a balke.

Here endeth the Reues
Prologue.

¶ Here begynneth the
Reues tale.

AT Trompyngton, not far
fro Cambridge
There goth a broke, and
ouer that a bridge
Upon the which broke
ther ſtant a mell
And this is very ſoth, as
I you tell
A Miller was there dwelling many a day
As any pecocke he was proude and gay
Pypen he couthe, and fiſſhen, and nettes bete
And turne cuppes, and wel wraſtle and ſhete
Aye by his belte he bare a long pauade
And of a ſworde ful trenchaũt was the blade
A ioly popere bare he in his pouche
Ther was no man for peril durſt him touche
A Sheffelde thwitel bare he in his hoſe
Round was his face, & camiſed was his noſe
As pilled as an ape was his ſkull
He was a market beater at the full
There durſt no wight honde on him ledge
But he ne ſwore he ſhulde abedge
A theefe he was forſothe, of corne and mele
And that a ſlie, and vſaunt for to ſtele
His name was hoten Deynous Simkyn
A wife he had, comen of noble kyn
The perſon of the toune her father was
With her he yafe ful many a panne of bras
For that Simkyn ſhould in his bloode alye
She was yfoſtred in a nonnerye
For Simkyn wolde no wife, as he ſaide
But ſhe were well ynouriſhed, and a maide
To ſaue his eſtate of yomanrie
And ſhe was proude, and pert as a pie
A full fayre ſight was it vpon hem two
On holy daies byfore her would he go
With his tipet wounden about his heed
And ſhe came after in a gyte of reed
And Simkyn had hoſen of the ſame
Ther durſt no wight clepen her but dame
Was none ſo hardy, that went by the way
That with her oncs durſt rage or play
But if he woulde be ſlaine of Simkin

With pauade, or with knife, or bodkyn
For ielous folkes ben perillous euermo
Algates they would her wiues wende so
And eke for she was somdele smoterliche
She was as digne as water in a diche
And as full of hoker, and of besmare
As though that a lady should her spare
What for her kinred, and her norteiry
That she had lerned in the nonnery.
A doughter had they betwixt hem two
Of twenty yere, withouten any mo
Sauing a child that was of halfe yere of age
In cradell it lay, and was a proper page
This wenche thicke and wel ygrowen was
With camesed nose, and eyen gray as glas
With buttockes brode, & brestes round & hye
But right faire was her heare I wol nat lye
The parson of the toun, for she was so faire
In purpose was to maken her his heyre
Both of his catell, and of his mesuage;
And strange he made it of her mariage
His purpose was to bestowen her hie
Into some worthy blode of auncetrie
For holy churches good mote ben dispended
On holy churches blode that is descended
Therfore he would his holy blode honour
Though that he holy church should deuour.
Great soken hath this Miller out of dout
With whete and malte, of all the land about
And namely there was a great college
Men clepen it the Soler hall of Cantbrege
Ther was her whete & eke her malt iground
And on a day it happed in a stound
Sicke lay the Manciple, on a malady
Men wenden wisely that he should dy
For which this miller stale both whete & corn
An hundred time more than before
For ther before, he stale but curteisly
But he now was a theefe outrageously
For which the warden chidde and made fare
But therof set the Miller nat a tare
He craked, bosted, and swore it nas not so
Than were ther ponge poore scholers two
That dwelten in the hall, of which I say
Testlike they were, and lusty for to play
And onely for her mirthe, and her reuelry
Upon the Warden busily they cry
To yeue hem leaue, but a lytel stounde
To gon to mill, to sene her corne ygrounde
And hardely they durst lay her necke
The Miller should not stealc hem half a pecke
Of corne by sleight, ne by force hem reue
And at the last the warden yaue hem leue
Johan hight that one, & Aleyn hight ỹ other
Of a town they wer both, ỹ hight Strother
Farre in the North, can I nat tell where
This Aleyn maketh all redy his gere
And on a horse, the sacke he cast anon
Forth goth Aleyn the clerke, and also John
With good sworde & buckeler by her side
Johan knew the way, him nedeth no gide
And at the mil dore the sacke down he layth
Aleyn spake first: alhayle Simkē in fayth
How fares thy faire doughter, and thy wife?
Aleyn welcom (qd Simken) by my life
And John also: how now? what do ye here?
By god Simond (qd John) nede has no pere
Him behoueth serue himself ỹ has no swayn
Or els he is a fole, as clerkes sayn
Our Mancipie I hope he will be deed
Swo werkes aye the wanges in his heed
And therfore is I come, and eke Aleyn
To grinde our corne & cary it home agayn
We pray you spede vs heme in that ye may
It shalbe done, qd Simken, be my fay
What woll you don, while it is in hande
By god, right by the hopper wol I stande
Qd John: & sen how gates the corn goth in
Yet saw I neuer by my father kyn
How that the hopper wagges to and fra
Aleyn answerede: Johan wilt thou sa
Than woll I beneth by my croune
And se how the mele falles adoune
Into the troughe, that shalbe my disporte
Qd John, in fay I may ben one of your sorte
I is as yll a Miller as is ye.
This Miller smyleth at her nyeite
And thought al nys don but for a wyle
They wene that no man may hem begile
But by my thrift, yet shall I blere her eye
For all the sleight in her philosofie
The more queint clerkes that they make
The more woll I steale whan I take
In stede of flour yet wol I geue hem branne
The gretest clerkes ben not the wisest menne
As whilom to the Wolfe spake the Mare
Of all her art counte I not a tare
Out at the dore he goeth full pryuely
Whan that he saw his time, subtelly
He loked vp and doun, til he had yfounde
The clerkes horse, ther as he stode ybounde
Behind the Mill, vnder a lessell
And to the horse he goth him faire and well
He strip th of the bridel right anon.
And when ỹ horse was lose, he gan to gon
Towarde the fen, there wilde mares runne
And forth, with wehe, through thick & thinne
The Miller goeth again no word he said
But doth his note, & with these clerkes plaid
Til that her corne was faire & wel igrounde

And

And when the meale was sacked and ibound
This John goth out, & found her horse away
And gan to crie, harowe and welaway
Our horse is loste Alein for Goddes banes
Step on thy feete man, come forth al atanes
Alas our Warden has his palfrey lorne.
This Alein al forgate both meie and corne
All was out of mynde his husbondrie
What, whilke waie is he gone, he gan to crie
The wife came leping inward at a renne
She saied alas, he goeth to the fenne
With wilde Mares, as fast as he may go
Unthanke come on his hond ỹ bond him so
And he that better should haue knit the rein
Alas (qd John) Alein for Christes pein
Laie doune thy swerde, & I shal mine alswa
I is full swift God wote as is a raa
By Goddes sale he shall not skape vs bathe:
Why ne hadest thou put the capel in ỹ lathe:
Ill heile Alein by God thou is a sonne
These selie clerkes han full fast ironne
Toward the fenne Alein and eke John
And whã the Miller saw that they wer agon
He halfe a bushell of her floure hath take
And bad his wife knede it in a kake
He saied, I trowe the clerkes were aferde
Yet can a Miller make a clerkes berde
For al her art, yet let hem gon her waie
Lo where they gon, let the children plaie
They get him not so lightly by my croune.
These selie clerkes rennen vp and doune
With kepe kepe, iossa, wartherere
Go whistle thou, and I shall kepe him here
But shortly, till it was very night
They couth not, thogh they did al her might
Her capell catche, he ranne awaie so fast
Till in a diche they caught him at the last.
Werie and wete as beestes in the rain
Cometh sely John, & with him cometh Alein
Alas (qd John) the daie that I was borne
Now are we driuen to hethen and to skorne
Our corne is stole, men woll vs fooles call
Bothe the Warden, and our felowes all
And namely the Miller, wailawaie
Thus plaineth John, as he goth by the waie
Toward the Mill, and bayarde in his honde
The Miller sitting by the fire he fonde
For it was night, & further might they nost
But for the loue of God they him beseught
Of herbrough and eale, as for her peny.
The Miller saied ayen, if there been any
Soche as it is, yet shall ye haue your part
My house is straite, but ye haue lerned art
Ye can by argument make a place
A mile brode, of twentie foote of space
Let see now if this place maie suffice
Or make it romer with speche, as is your gise
Now Simond (saied John) by S. Cutberde
Aye is thou mery, and that is faire answerde
I haue herd say, men should take of twa things
Swilke as he findes, or swilke as he brings
But specially I praie thee host dere
Get vs some meat & drinke, & make vs chere
And we will paie truely at the full
With emptie hond man may no hawkes tull
Lo here our siluer redie for to spende.
The Miller to the toune his doughter send
For ale and bread and rosted hem a goos
And bound her hors he should no more go loos
And in his owne chamber he made a bedde
With sheetes and with chalons faire ispredde
Not from his owne bedde, ten fote or twelue
His doughter had a bedde all by her selue
Right in the same chamber, by and by
It might be no bette, and the cause why
There was no roumer herbrough in ỹ place
They soupen, & they speken of mirth & solace
And dronken euer strong ale at best
About midnight went they to rest
Wel hath this Miller vernished his hedde
Full pale he was for dronken, & nothing redde
He galpeth, and he speketh thrugh his nose
As he were in the quacke, or in the pose
To bedde he goeth, and with him his wife
As any Jaie was she light and iolife
So was her iolie whistell well iwette
The cradell at the beddes feete was sette
To rocken, and to yeue the childe to souke
And whan that dronken was all in the crouke
To bedde went the doughter right anon
To bedde goeth Alein and eke John
There nas no more, hem neded no dwale
This Miller hath so wisely bibbed ale
That as an hors he snorteth in his slepe
Ne of his taile behinde he tooke no kepe
His wife bare to him a bordon ful strong
Men might hem heare route a furlong
The wenche routeth eke par compaignie.
Alein the clerke, that heard this melodie
He poked on Iohan, and saied: slepest thou
Herdest thou euer swilk a sang er now:
Lo swilke a coupling is itwixt hem all
A wilde fire on her bodies fall,
Who heard euer swilke a ferly thing
Ye, they shall haue the floure of euill ending
All this lang night tides me no rest
But yet na force, all shall be for the best
For John (saied he) as euer mote I thriue
If that I maie, yon wenche woll I swiue
Some element hath lawe ybapen vs

For Johan, there is a lawe that saieth thus
That if a man in one poinct been a greued
That in an other he shall be releued
Our corne is stollen, sothly it is no nate
And we haue had an euill fit to daie
And sin I shall haue none amendement
Again my losse I will haue myne element
By Goddes sale, it shall none other be.
This Johan answered: Alein, auise thee
The Miller is a perilous man, he saied
And if that he out of his slepe abraied
He might doen vs bathe a vilonie
Alein answered: I coũt hym not worth a flie
And vp he rist, and by the wenche he crept.
This wenche laie vpright, and fast slept
Till he so nye was, er she might aspie
That it had been to late for to crie
And shortly for to sain, they were at one
Now plaie Alein, for I woll speake of John.
This John laie still a forlong waie or two
And to hymselfe he maketh routh and wo
Alas (qd he) this is a wicked iape
Now maie I saie, I is but an Ape
Yet hath my felowe somwhat for his harme
He hath the Millers doughter in his arme
He auntreth hym, and hath his nede ispedde
And I lie as a draffe sacke in my bedde
And whan this iape is tolde an other deie
I shall be holde a daffe, or a cokenecie
I woll arise, and auntre me it by my faie
Unhardie is unsely, thus men saie.
And vp he rose, and softely he went
Unto the cradell, and in his arme it hent
And bare it softly to his beddes fete
Sone after the wife her routyng lete
And gan awake, and went her out to pisse
And came again, and gan the cradell misse
And groped here & there, but she found none
Alas (qd she) I had almoste misgone
I had almoste gone to the clerkes bedde
Eye benedicite, than had I foule ispedde
And forth she goeth, till she the cradell fonde
She groped alwaie further with her honde
And found the bedd, & thought nat but good
Bicause that the cradell by it stoode
And nist where she was, for it was derke
But faire and well she crept in by the clerke
And lieth full stil, & wold haue caught a slepe
Within a while this John the clerke vp lepe
And on this good wife he laied full sore
So merie a fit had she nought full yore
And pricked hard and depe, as he were madd
This wolie life haue these two clerkes laddc
Till that the thirde cocke began to sing
Alein waxe merie in the dawning
For he had swonken all the long night
And saied, fare well Malin sweete wight
The daie is comen, I mate no lenger bide
But euermo, where so I go or ride
I am thine owne clerke, so haue I hele.
Now dere lemman (qd she) go, farewele
But er thou go, one thyng I woll thee tel
When thou wendest homward by the Mell
Right at the entre of the dooze behinde
Thou shalt a cake of halfe a bushell finde
That was imaked of thyne owne meale
Which that I holpe my sire to steale
And good lemman God thee saue and kepe
And with that worde she gan almost to wepe
Alein vprist and thought er it dawe
He would go crepe in by his felawe
And found the cradell with his hande anon
By God thought he, all wrong haue I gon
My hedde is tottie of my swinke to night
That maketh me that I go not aright
I wot wel that by the cradel I haue misse go
Here lieth the Miller and his wife also
And forth he goeth on twentie deuill waie
Unto the bedde, there as the Miller laie
He wende haue cropen by his feiowe John
And by the Miller he crept in anon
And caught hym by the necke, a soft he spake
And saied: John, thou swinshed awake
For Christes soule, and here a noble game
For by that lorde, that called is sainct Jame
As I haue thrise in this short night
Swined the Millers doughter bolt vpright
Whilest thou hast, as a coward been agaste.
Ye false harlot (qd the Miller) haste?
A false traitour, false clerke (qd he)
Thou shalt be dedde by Goddes dignite
Who durst be so bolde to disparage
My doughter, that is come of soche linage
And by the throte bolle he caught Alein
And he hym hent dispitously again
And on the nose he smote hym with his fest
Doune ran the blood streme vpon his breste
And in the flore, with mouth and nose ibroke
Thei walowen, as doeth pigges in a poke
And vp thei gon, and doune ayene anon
Till that the Miller spurned on a stone
And doune he fell backward vpon his wife
That wist nothyng of this nice strife
For she was fall a slepe a litell wight
With John ỹ clerke, that waked had al night
And with the fall out of her slepe she braied
Helpe holie crosse of Bromholme she saied
In manus tuas, lorde to thee I call
Awake Symonde, the fende is on me fall
My harte is broken, helpe I am but dedde

There

There lieth one on my wombe & on my hedde
Helpe Stinkin, for these false clerkes fight
This John stert vp, as fast as euer he might
And gralpeth by the walles to and fro
To finde a staffe, and she stert vp also
And knew the estres bet than did this John
And by the wall she founde a staffe anon
And sawe a litell shemeryng of a light
For at an hole in shone the Moone bright
And by that light she sawe hem both two
But sikerlie she nist who was who
But as she sey a white thing in her tye
And when she gan this white thing aspie
She wende the clerke had wered a voluper
And with ỳ staffe she drowe alwaie ner & ner
And wende haue hit this Alein at full
And smote the Miller on the pilled skull
That doun he goth, and cried harrowe I die
These clerkes bete him well, and let him lie
And araieth hem, and tooke her hors anon
And eke her meale, and on her waie they gon
And at the Mille doore they tooke her cake
Of haise a bushell floure, well bake.

Thus is the proud Miller well ibete
And hath lost the grindyng of the whete
And paied for the supper euerydele
Of Alein and of John that bete him wele
His wife is swined, and his doughter als
Lo such it is a Miller to be fals
And therefore this prouerbe is full soth
Hym dare not well worne that well doth
A gilour shall himselfe begiled be
And God that sitte in hie Maieste
Saue all this companie, great and smale
Thus haue I quite the Miller in his tale.

¶ Here endeth the Reues tale,
And here followeth the
Cokes Prologe.

THE Coke of Londō while the Reue spake
For ioie he thought he clawde him on the backe
A ha (qd he) for Christes Passion
This Miller hath a sharp conclusion
Upon his argument of herbigage
Well saied Salamon in his langage
Ne bryng not euery man into thine hous
For herbrowing by night is perelous
Well ought a man auised for to be
Whom that he brought into his priuete
I praie to God so yeue me sorowe and care
If euer sithen I hight Hodge of Ware
Herd I Miller bette iserre a werke
He had a tape of malice in the derke.
But God forbid that we stinten here
And therefore if ye vouchsafe to heare
A tale of me, that am a poore man
I woll tell you as well as I can
A litell iape that fell in our citee
Our hoste saied, I graunt it thee
Now tell on Rodger, looke that it be good
For many a pastie hast thou letten blood
And many a iacke of Douer hast thou sold
That hath been twise hotte and twise cold
Of many a pilgrim hast thou Christes curse
For of thy perrie yet fare they the worse
That they haue eaten with thy stoble Gees
For in thy shoppe is many a Flie loos
Now tell on gentle Rogere by thy name
But yet I pray thee be not wroth with game
A man may saie full soth in game and plaie.
Thou saiest full soth (qd Roger) by my faie
But soth play, quade play, as ỳ Flemig saith
And therefore Henry Bailly by thy faith
Be thou not wroth, or we departen here
Though that my tale been of an hostelere
But netheless, I woll not tellen it yet
But er we part, iwis thou shalt be quit
And therewithall he lough and made chere
And saied his tale, as ye shullen after here.

¶ Here endeth the Cokes Pro-
logue, and here follo-
weth his tale.

VPpentile whilom dweite in our cite
And of the craft of Vitaillers was he
Gaillard he was, as goldefinch in the shawe
Broune as a berie, a prop-
per short felawe
With lockes blacke, kempt full fetously
Daunce he couth full well and iolily
He was called Perken Reuelour
He was as full of loue and paramour
As is the hiue full of honie swete
Well was the wenche with him might mete
At euery Bridall would he sing and hoppe
He loued bette the Tauernes than the shoppe
For when any ridyng was in Chepe
Out of the shoppe thither would he lepe
Till that he had of all the fight isein
And daunced well, he would not come agein
And gather him a meiny of his sort

To

To hop and ſyng, and make ſoch diſport
And there they ſette ſteuin for to mete
To plaien at the dice in ſoch a ſtrete
For in the cite nas there no prentiſe
That fairer couth caſten a paire of diſe
Then Perkin couth, and therto he was fre
Of his diſpence, in place of priuite
That found his maſter well in his chafare
For oftimes he found his bore full bare
For likerly, a prentiſe reuelour
That haunteth diſe, riot, or paramour
His maiſter ſhall it in his ſhoppe abie
All haue he no part of the Minſtralcie
For theft and riot, they been conuertible
All can he play on Gettron or on Rebible
Reuell and truth as in low degree
They been full wroth all day, as men may ſee
This ioly prentiſe, with his maſter abode
Till he were nie out of his prentiſhode
All were he ſtubbed both early and late
And ſomtyme ledde with reuell to Newgate
But at the laſt, his maiſter him bethought
Upon a day, whan he his paper ſought
Of a prouerbe, that ſaieth this ſame word
Well bette is rotten apple out of hord
Than that it rote all the remnaunt
So fareth it by a riotous ſeruaunt
It is moch leſſe harme to let him paſſe
Than he ſhend al the ſeruauntes in the place
Therfore his maiſter gaue hym a quitaunce
And bad him go, with ſorow and miſchaunce
And thus this ioly prentiſe had his leue
Now let hym riot all the night or leue
And for there is no theſe without a louke
That helpeth him to waſte or to ſouke
Of that he bribe can, or borow may
Anon he ſent his bedde and his aray
Unto a compere of his owne ſort
That loued diſe, reuell and diſport
And had a wife, that held for countenaunce
A ſhoppe, and ſwiued for her ſuſtenaunce.

¶ Here endeth the Cokes Tale, and here followeth the man of lawes Prologue.

OUR hoſte ſaw well that the bright Sonne
The arke of his artificiall day hath ronne
The fourth part, and halfe an houre more
And though he were not depe expert in lore
He wiſte it was the eightene day
Of Aprill, that is the meſſanger to May
And ſaw well, that the ſhadow of euery tre
Was in length the ſame quantite
As was the body erect that cauſed it
And therefore by the ſhadow he toke his wit
That Phebus, which ꝑ ſhone clere ⁊ bright
Degrees was fourty clomben of hight
And for that day, as in latitude
It was ten of the clocke, he gan conclude
And ſodenly he plight his hors about.
Lordings (qd. he) I warne you all the rout
The fourth part of this day is gon
Now for the loue of God and of ſainct John
Leſeth no time, as ferforth as ye may
Lordinges ꝑ time waſteth both night ⁊ day
And ſtealeth from vs, what priuely ſlepyng
And what through negligẽce in our waking
As doth the ſtreme, that turneth neuer again
Diſcendyng fro the mountain ouer the plain
Well can Seneke, and many a Philoſofre
Bewaile tyme, more than gold in cofre
For loſſe of catteil may recouered be
But loſſe of time ſhendeth vs (qd. he)
It would not come ayen withouten drede
No more than woll Walkins maiden hede
When ſhe hath loſt it in her wantonneſſe
Let vs not mowlen thus in idelneſſe.
Sir man of Law (qd. he) ſo haue I blis
Tel vs a tale anon as forward is
Ye been ſubmitted through your fre aſſent
To ſtonden in this caſe at my iudgement
Acquiteth you now of your beheſt
Than haue you doen your deuer at the leſt.
Hoſt (qd. he) de pardeux ieo aſſent
To breake forward is not mine entent
Biheſte is dette, and I woll hold faine
All my beheſte, I can no better ſaine
For ſoch law as a mã yeueth an other wight
He ſhould himſelfe vſen it by right
Thus woll our text: but nathleſſe certain
I can right now no thrifty tale ſain
That Chaucer (though he can but leudly
On Metres and in rymyng craftely)
Hath ſaied hem, in ſoch Engliſh as he can
Of old tyme, as knoweth many a man
And if he haue not ſaied hem leue brother
In one booke, he hath ſay hem in an other
For he hath told of louers vp and doun
More than Ouide made of mencion
In his Epiſtles, that been full old
What ſhuld I tellen hem, ſithẽ they ben told?
In youth he made of fire all alone
And ſithen he hath ſpoken of euerichone
Theſe noble wiues, and theſe louers eke
Who ſo that woll his large volume ſeke
Cleped the ſainctes liues of Cupide

There

There may he see the large wounds wide
Of Lucresse, and of Babilon Thisbe
The sword of Dido for the false Ence
The tree of Phillis for her Demophoon
The plaint of Dicanire, and of Hermion
Of Ariadna, and of Hipsiphilee
The barain yle stonding in the see
That dreint Liandre for Hero
The teares of Helen, and eke the wo
Of Briseis, and of Laodomia
The cruelty of Quene Media
The little children hongyng by the hals
For the Jason, that was of loue so fals
Of Hipermistra, Penelope, and Alceste
Your wifehod he commendeth for the beste
But certenly no word ne writeth he
Of thilke wicked ensample of Canace
That loued her owne brother sinfully
Of soch cursed stories I say fie
Or els of Tyro Appoloneus
How that cursed kyng Antiocus
Biraft his doughter of her maidenhede
That is so horrible a tale for to rede
When he her drew vpon the pament
And therefore he of full auisement
Nold neuer write in non of his sermons
Of soch vnkind abhominacions
Ne I ne woll non reherce, yef that I may
But of my tale how shall I doen this day
Me were loth be likened doutles
To Muses that men clepeth Piriades
Methamorphoseos wotte what I mene
But natheles I recche not a Bene
Though I come after hym with Haubake
I speake in prose, and let hym rimes make
And with that word, he with a sober chere
Began his tale, as ye shullen after here.

¶ Here endeth the man of Lawes Prologue, and here folowyth his tale.

Hateful harme, condicion of pouert (with
With thurst, with cold, hunger so confounded
To asken helpe thee shameth in thyn hert
If thou non ask, with nede thou art so wounded
that very nede vnwrappeth al thy woūds hid
Maugry thyn hed, thou must for indigence
Or steale, or begge, or borow thy dispence.

Thou blamest Christ, and saiest ful bitterly
He mildeparteth richesse temporall
Thy neighbour thou witest sinfully
And saiest, thou hast to litell, and he hath all
Parfay (saiest thou) sumtime he reken shall
Whan that his tale shall brenne in glede
For he nought helpeth nedefull in her nede.

Herken what is the sentence of the wise
Better is to dien, than to haue indigence
Thyn self neighbour woll thee dispise
If thou be poore, farwell thy reuerence
Yet of the wisemans take this sentence
All the daies, poore men been wicke
Beware therefore or thou cum to the pricke.

If thou be poore, thy brother hateth thee
And all thy friends fleeth fro thee, alas
O rich marchaunts full of wele be ye
O noble prudent folke, as in this caas
Your bagges been not filde with ambes aas
But with ese sinke, ỹ rēneth for your chaunce
At Christenmasse, mery may ye daunce.

Ye seken lond and see, for your winninges
As wise folke ye knowen all the state
Of reignes, ye been fathers of tidynges
And tales, both of peace and debate
I was right now of tales desolate
Here that a marchant, gone is many a yere
Me taught a tale, which ye shullen here.

In Surrey whilom dwelt a companie
Of Chapmen rich, and there to sadde and true
That wide where senten her spicerie
Clothes of gold, and Satten rich of hew
Her chafare was so thrifty and so new
That euery wight hath deinty to chafare
With hem, and eke to sellen hem her ware.

Now fell it, that the maisters of that sort
Han shapen hem, to Rome for to wend
Were it for chapmanhode, or for disport
Non other messenger would they thither send
But comen hem self to Rome, this is the end
And in soch place as thought hem auauntage
For her entent, they taken her herbigage.

Sojourned han these marchantes in ỹ toun
Certain tyme, as fell to her pleasance
But so bifell, that the excellent renoune
Of the emperours doughter dame Custance
Reported was, with euery circumstance
Unto these Surrein marchants, in soch wise
Fro day to day, as I shall you deuise.

This

This was the comen voice of euery man
Our Emperour of Rome, God hym se
A doughter hath, that sithen the world began
To reken as well her goodnes as her beaute
Nas neuer soche an other as is she
I pray to God in honour her susteine
And would she were of all Europe the quene.

In her is hie beautie, without pride
Youth, without grenhed or folie
To all her workes vertue is her guide
Humbles hath slain in her all tyrannie
She is a mirrour of all curtesie
Her hert is very chamber of holines
Her honde minister of fredome and almes.

And all this voice was soth, as God is true
But now to our purpose let vs tourne ayen
These marchātes han don fret her ships new
And whan they han this blisful maiden sein
Home to Surrey been they went agein
And doen her nedes, as they han doen yore
And liuen in welth, I can say no more.

Now fell it, ỹ these marchātes stoden in grace
Of hym that was the Soudan of Surrie
For whan they came frō any straunge place
He would of his benigne curtesie
Waken hem good chere, and besily aspie
Tidynges of sondry realmes for to lere
The wonders that they might seen or here.

Emong other thynges specially (stalice
These marchātes haue him told of dame Cu=
So greate noblesse, in ernest seriously
That this Soudā hath cauzt so great plesāce
To han her figure in his remembraunce
And all his lust, and all his delie cure
Was for to loue her, while his life may dure.

Paraucnture in that like large booke
Which that cleped is the heuen, twritten was
With sterres, whan that he his birth tooke
That he for loue should han his death, alas
For in the sterres clerer than nis the glas
Is witten God wot, who so could it rede,
The death of euery man withouten drede.

In sterres many a Winter there bifore
Was writtē the death of Hector of Achilles
Of Pompey and Julius or they were bore
The strif of Thebes, and of Hercules
Of Sampson, Turnus, and of Socrates
The death: but that mens wittes been so dul
That no wight can well rede it at the full.

This Soudon for his priuy counsail sent
And shortly of his matter for to pace
He hath to hem declard all his entent
& said hem certain, but if he might haue grace
To haue Custance, within a litell space
He nas but dedde, and charged hem to hie
To shapen for his life some remedie.

Diuers men diuersly they saiden
The argument they casten vp and doun
Many a subtell reason forth they laiden
They speken of Magike, and abusioun
But finally, as in conclusioun
They cannot seen in that non auauntage
Ne in non other way, saue in mariage.

Then saw they therein soch difficulte
By way of reason, to speake all plain
Bicause that there was soch diuersite
Bitwene her both lawes, that they sain
They trow that no christē prince would fain
Wedden his child vnder our lawes swete
That vs was tauzt by Mahoūd our prophet

And he answerd: rather than I lese
Custance, I would be christen doutles
I mote been hers, I may non other chese
I pray you hold your arguments in pees
Saueth my life, and be not recheles
To geten her, that hath my life in cure
For in this wo I may not long endure.

What nedeth greater dilatation?
I say, by treaty and ambassadry
And by the Popes mediacion
And all the chirch, and all the chevalry
That in destruction of Maumetry
And in encrease of Christs law dere
They been accorded, as ye shal here

How that the Soudan and his baronage
And all his lieges, should ichristened be
And he shall han Custance in mariage
And certain gold, I not what quantite
And her to finde sufficient surete
The same accord was sworne on either side
Now faire Custance, almighty god thee gide

Now woulden sum men waiten, as I gesse
That I should tellen all the purueiance,
That the Emperour of his noblesse
Hath shapen for his doughter dame Custance
Well maie men knowen, ỹ so great ordinance
May no man tellen in a little clause
As was araied for so high a cause.

Bishoppes

Bishops ben shapen with her for to wende
Lordes and ladies, and knightes of renoume
And other folke ynowe, this is the ende
And notified is throughout the toun
That euery wight, with great deuotioun
Shoulde pray Christ, that he this mariage
Receiue in gree, and spede this voiage.

The day is come of her departing
I say the wofull day natural is come
That ther may be no lenger tarying
But forwarde they hem dresse al and some
Custance, that with sorowe is all ouercome
Full pale arist, and dressed her to wende
For well she sey, there is none other ende.

Alas, what wondre is it though she wept?
That shal be sent to a strange nation
Fro frendes, that so tenderly her kept
And to be bounden vnder subiection
Of one, she knoweth not his condicion
Husbondes ben all good and han ben yore
That knowen wiues, I dare say no more.

Father (she said) thy wretched child Custãce
Thy yong daughter, fostred vp so softe
And ye my mother, my soueraigne plesance
Ouer al thing (out take Christ on lofte)
Custance your childe her commaundeth oft
Vnto your grace: for I shall to Surrye
Ne shal I neuer more see you with eye

Alas, vnto the Barbary nation
I must anon, sithen it is your will
But Christ that starke for our redemption
So yeue me grace, his hestes to fulfill
I wretched woman no force though I spill
Women arn borne to thraldom & penaunce
And to ben vnder mannes gouernaunce.

I trow at Troy, whã Thurus brake ỳ wall
Of Ilyon, ne whan brent was Thebes cyte
Ne Rome for the harme of Hanybal
That Romans hath wenqueshed times thre
Nas herd, such tendre weping for pite
As was in the chambre for her departing
But forth she mote, wheder she wepe or sing.

O first moving cruel firmament
With thy diurnal sweigh, that croudest aye
And hurtlest all fro Est to Occident
That naturally would hold another way
Thy crouding set the heuen in such array
At the beginning of this feirs voiage
That cruel Mars hath slaine this mariage.

O infortunate ascendent tortuous
Of which the lorde is helpeless fal, alas
Out of his angle into his derkest house
O Mars, O occiser, as in this caas
O feble Mone, vnhappy ben thy paas
Thou knittest ỳ there thou nart not receiued
Ther thou wer wel, fro thẽce art thou waiued.

Imprudent Emperour of Rome, alas
Was there no philosofer in thy toun?
Is no time bette than other in such cas?
Of voiage is there non electioune?
Namely to folke of hie condicioun
Nat whan a rote is of a birthe iknowe
Alas we ben to leude, or to slowe.

To ship is brought this wofull faire mayd
Solempnely, with euery circumstance
Now Iesus Christ be with you all (she sayd)
Ther nis no more, but farewel faire Custãce
She paineth her to make good countenance
And forth I let her saile in this manere
And tourne I woll againe to my matere.

Explicit prima pars: & sequitur pars secunda.

The mother of the Soudon, wel of vices
Aspied hath her sonnes playne entent
How he woll lete his olde sacrifices
And right anon, she for her counsaile sent
And they ben comen, to know what she ment
And whan assembled was this folke in fere
She set her doun, and said as ye shal here.

Lordes (qd she) ye know̄ n euerychone
Howe that my sonne is in point to lete
The holy lawes of our Alkaron
Yeuen by goddes messenger Machomete
But one auowe to grete god I hete
The life shal rather out of my body sterte
Or Machometes lawe go out of my herte.

What should vs tiden of this newe lawe
But thraldome to our bodies and penaunce
And afterwarde in hel to ben drawe?
For we reneyed Mahounde our creaunce
But lordes, wol ye make assuraunce
As I shal say, assenting to my lore
And I shall make vs safe for euermore.

They sworen, and assenten euery man

To liue with her and dye, and by her fonde
And cucriche in the best wise that he can
To strengthen her, shall his frendes fonde
And she hath this empryse take in honde
Which ye shall heare, that I shall deuise
And to hem all she spake in this wise.

We shull vs first faine, christendome to take
Cold water shall not greue vs but a lite
And I shall soch a reuell and a feast make
That as I trowe, I shall the Soudon quite
For tho his wife be christined neuer so white
She shall haue nede to washe awaie the rede
Though she a font full of water with her lede

O Soudenelle, roote of iniquitie
Virago, thou Symyram the second
O serpent vnder femenincte
Like to the serpent depe in hell ybound
O fained woman, all that may confound
Vertue and innocence, through thy malice
Is bredde in thee, a nest of euery vice.

O Sathan enuious, sin thilke daie
That thou were chased from our heritage
Well knewest thou to women the old waie
Thou madest Eue to bring vs in seruage
Thou wolt fordoen this christen marriage
Thine instrument, so welawaie the while
Makest thou of womē, whā thou wolt begile

This Soudonnelle, whō I blame & werie
Let priuely her counsaile gon her waie
What should I in this tale lenger tarie?
She rideth to the Soudon on a daie
And saied him, that she would reny her laie
And christendome of prestes hondes fong
Repenting her, the Hethen was so long.

Beseching him, to doen her that honour
That she might haue the christen folke to fest
To plesen hem, I woll doen my labour
The Soudon saieth, I woll doen at your hest
And kneling, thanked her of that request
So glad he was, he nist not what to say
She kist her sonne, & home she goth her way

Arriued been these christen folke to lond
In Surre, with a great solempne route
And hastely this Soudon sent his sond
First to his mother, and all the reigne about
And saied, his wife was comen out of dout
And praiden hem for to riden against ỳ quene
The honour of his reigne for to sustene.

Great was the presse, and rich was ỳ ray
Of Surreyens, and Romaines imette ifere
The mother of the Soudon rich and gay
Receiueth her with all glad chere
As any mother might her doughter dere
Vnto the next cite there beside
A soft paas solempnely they ride.

Nought trow I, the triumph of Julius
Of which that Lucan maketh soch a bost
Was rotaller, and more curious
Than was thassemblyng of this blisfull host
But this Scorpion, this wicked goste
The Soudonnesse, for all her flattering
Cast vnder all this, full mortally to sting

The Soudō cometh him self sone after this
So rially, that wonder is to tell
He welcometh her with moche ioie and blis
And thus in mirth and ioie I let hem dwell
The fruict of euerie tale is for to tell
Whan time come, men thought it for the best
That reuell stint, and men gon to rest.

The time come, this old Soudonnesse
Ordained hath the feast, of whiche I told
And to the feast, christen folke hem dresse
In generall, both yong and old
Ther maie men feast & ryalte behold
And deintes mo than I can deuise
But all to dere thei boughten it or they rise.

O Soudon, woe ỳ euer thou art successour
To worldly blisse, springed with bitternesse
The end of ioy, of our worldly labour
Woe occupieth the end of our gladnesse
Herken this counsaile, for thy sikernesse
Vpon thy glad day haue thou in mynd
The vnware wo or harm, ỳ cometh behind.

For shortly to tellen at a word
The Soudon, and the christen euerichone
Been all to hewe, and slicked at the bord
But it were onely dame Custance alone
This old Soudonnesse, curled crone
Hath with her frendes doen this cursed dede
For she her selfe would all the countre lede

Ne there was Surreien non ỳ was cōuerted
That of the counsaile of the Soudon wot
That he nas all to hewe, er he asserted
And Custance han they taken anon fotehot
And in a shippe all sterneles (God wot)
They han her set, and bidden her lerne to saile
Out of Surrey ayenward to Italie.

A certayn treſour, that ſhe thider ladde
And ſoth to ſayne, vitaile great plente
They han her yeuen, and clothes eke ſhe had
And forth ſhe ſaileth in the ſalt ſe
O my Cuſtaunce, full of benignite
O Emperours yong doughter dere
He that is lord of fortune, be thy ſtere.

She bleſſeth her, & with full pitous voice
Unto the croſſe of Chriſt, tho ſaid ſhe.
O clere, O welfull auter, holy croice
Reed of the lambes blood, full of pite
That weſſhe the world fro the old iniquite
Me fro the fende, and fro his clawe kepe
That day that I ſhall drenchen in the depe.

Victorious tree, protection of trewe
That onely worthy were for to bere
The king of heuen, with his woundes newe
The whit lambe, that hurt was with a ſpere
Flemere of feendes, out of him and here
On which thy limmes, faithfully extenden
Me kepe, & yeue me might my life to amēden

Yeres and daies fleteth this creature
Thyroughout the ſee of Grece, vnto the ſtraite
Of Marocke, as it was her auenture
O, many a ſory meale may ſhe baite
After her deth full oft may ſhe waite
Or that the wilde waues would her driue
Unto the place there ſhe ſhould ariue.

Men mighte aſken, why ſhe was not ſlayn
Eke at the feeſt, who might her body ſaue?
I anſwere to that demaunde again
Who ſaued Daniel in that horrible caue
Ther euery wight, wer he maiſter or knaue
Was with the Lion frette or he aſterte?
No wight but God, that he bare in his hert.

God liſt to ſhew his wonderfull miracle
In her for ſhe ſhould ſene his mighty werkes
Chriſt that is to euery harme triacle
By certain meanes often, as knowen clerkes
Doth thing for certayn end, that full derke is
To mans witte, that for our ignoraunce
Ne can nat know his prudent puruepaunce.

Now ſith ỳ ſhe was not at the feeſt yllawe
Who kepeth her fro the drenching in the ſee?
Who kept Jonas in the fiſhes mawe
Till he was ſpouted out at Ninive?
Well may men know, it was no wight but he
That kept the people Ebrak from drenching
With drie fete, thyrough the ſee paſſing

Who hath the four ſpirites of the tempeſte
That power had, both to anoy londe and ſee
Both north and ſouth, and alſo weſt and eſte
Anoyeth neyther ſee, ne londe, ne tre
Sothly the commaunder therof was he
That fro the tempeſt aye this woman kept
As well whan ſhe woke as whan ſhe ſlept.

Wher might this wom̄ mete & drink haue?
Thre yere and more, how laſteth her vitaile?
Who fed the Egipcian Mary in the caue
Or in deſert (none but Chriſt ſans faile)
Fiue thouſand folke it was as gret marualle
With loues fiue and fiſſhes two to fede
God ſent his foyſon at her great nede.

She driueth forth into our Occian
Thyroughout the wilde ſee, till at the laſt
Under han holde, that nempne I ne can
Fer in Northumberlond, the wawe her caſt
And in the ſande her ſhippe ſticked ſo faſt
That thence nolde it not of all a tide
The wil of Chriſt was ỳ ſhe ſhuld ther abide.

The conſtable of the caſtel doun is fare
To ſene this wrecke, & all the ſhip he ſought
And found this weary woman full of care
He found alſo the treſoure that ſhe brought
In her language, mercy ſhe beſought
The life of her body for to twin
Her to deliuer of wo that ſhe was in.

A maner latin corrupt was her ſpeche
But algates therby was ſhe vnderſtond
The conſtable, whan him liſt no lenger ſeche
This wofull woman brought he to londe
She kneleth doun, and thanketh gods ſonde
But what ſhe was, ſhe would no man ſey
For foule ne fayre, though ſhe ſhould dey.

She ſaid ſhe was ſo maſed in the ſee
That ſhe forgate her mind, by her trouth
The conſtable of her hath ſo great pite
And eke his wife, that they wepen for routh
She was ſo diligent withouten slouth
To ſerue and pleſe euerich in that place
That all her louen, that loken in her face.

The conſtable, & dame Hermegild his wife
Were painems, and that contre euery where
But Hermegild loued her right as her life
And Cuſtaunce hath ſo long ſoiourned there
In oriſons, with many a bitter tere
Til Jeſu hath conuerted through his grace
Dame Hermegilde, cōſtable of that place.

In all that londe durst no chriſten route
All chriſten folke been fled from the countre
Through painems, that conquered all about
The plages of the North, by lond and ſee
To Wales fledde the chriſtianite
Of old Bretons, dwelling in that Ile
There was her refute, for the meane while.

But yet nas ther neuer chriſtē Bretō ſo exiled
That there nas ſome in her priuete
Honoured Chriſt, and Hethen folke begiled
And nie the caſtell ſoche there dwellen thre
That one of them was blind, & might not ſe
But it were with thilke yen of his mynde
With which men ſeen, after they been blinde.

Bright was the Sōne, as in Somers day
For whiche the conſtable, and his wife alſo
And Cuſtance, han taken the right way
Toward the ſea, a furlong way or two
To plaien, and to romen to and fro
And in her walke thre blinde men they met
Croked and old, with yen faſt ibet.

In the name of Chriſt, cried this blind Bretō
Dame Hermegilde, yeue me ſight again
This lady waxe a fraied of the ſoun
Leſt that her huſbonde, ſhortly for to ſain
Would her for Jeſus Chriſtes lore haue ſlain
Till Cuſtance made her bold, & bad her werch
The wil of Chriſt, as doughter of his cherch

The conſtable wore abaſhed of that ſight
And ſaied: what amounteth all this farce?
Cuſtance anſwered: ſir it is Chriſtes might
That helpeth folke out of the fendes snare
And ſo ferforth ſhe gan our lawe declare
That ſhe the conſtable, er that it was eue
Cōuerted hath, & on Chriſt made him bileue.

This Cōſtable was nothing lord of this place
Of whiche I ſpeake, there he Cuſtance fonde
But kept it ſtrongly, many a Winter ſpace
Under Alla, kyng of Northumberlonde
That was full wiſe, and worthy of his hond
Again the Scottes, as men may well here
But tourne I woll again to my matere.

Sathan, that euer vs waiteth to begile
Saw of Cuſtance all her perfectioun
And caſt anon how he might quite her wile
And made a yong knight, ý dwelt in the toun
Loue her ſo hot, of foule affectioun
That verely, him thought that he ſhould ſpil
But he of her ones might haue his will,

He woeth her, but it auelled nought
She would doe no ſynne by no wey
And for diſpite he compaſſed in his thought
To maken her on ſhamfull death to deie
He waiteth whan the Conſtable is awaie
And priuely on a night he crept
In to Hermegildes chamber whyle ſhe ſlept.

Wery forwaked in her oriſons
Slepeth Cuſtance and Hermegilde alſo
This knight, through Sathans temptaciōs
All ſoftly is to the bedde igo
And cut the throte of Hermegilde a two
And laied the blody knife by dame Cuſtance
And wēt his way, ther god yeue hī miſchance

Sone after cometh the cōſtable home again
And eke Alla, that kyng was of that londe
And ſawe his wife diſpitouſly ſlain
For which he wept and wrong his honde
And in the bedde the bloody knife he fonde
By dame Cuſtance, alas what might ſhe ſay?
For wery wo her witte was all away.

To kyng Alla was told all this miſchance
And eke ý time, and where, and in what wiſe
That in a ſhippe was founden this Cuſtance
As here before ye han heard me deuiſe
The kynges hart, for pite gan agriſe
Whan he ſawe ſo benigne a creature
Fall in miſeaſe and in miſaduenture.

For as the lābe toward his death is brought
So ſtant this innocent biforen the kyng
This falſe knight, ý hath this treſō wrought
Bereth her in hond, ý ſhe hath don this thing
But natheleſſe there was great mornyng
Emong the people, and ſaid they cannot geſſe
That ſhe had doen ſo greate a wickednеſſe.

For they han ſeen her euer ſo vertuous
And louyng Hermegilde, right as her life
Of this bare witneſſe eueriche in the hous
Saue he that Hermegild ſlow with his knife
This gentle king hath caught a great motife
Of this witnes, & thought he would enquere
Deper in this cauſe, the trouth to lere.

Alas Cuſtance, thou haſt no champion
Ne fight canſt thou not, ſo welawaie
But he that ſtarfte for our redempcion
And bond Sathan, and yet lith there he lay
So be thy ſtrong champion this day
For but if Chriſt on the miracle kythe
Without gilt thou ſhalt been ſlain alwythe.

She set her doun on her knees, & thus she said
Immortall God, that sauedest Sulanne
Fro fals blame, and thou mercifull maid
Marie I meane, doughter to sainct Anne
Byfore whose child angels syng Osanne
If I be giltelesse of this felonie
My socour be, or els shall I die.

Haue ye not seen sometyme a pale face
(Emong a prees) of hem that hath been lad
Toward his deth, wher as him get no grace
And soch a colour in his face hath had
That men might know his face ỹ was bistad
Emonges all the faces in that rout
So standeth Custance, and loketh her about

O Quenes liuyng in prosperite
Duchesses, and ye ladies euerichone
Haue some routh on her aduersite
An Emperours doughter stant alone
She hath no wiȝt, to whō to make her mone
O blood roiall, that stondeth in this dȝede
Ferre ben thy frendes at thy great nede.

This Alla kyng, hath soch compassioun
As gentle hart is full of pite
That fro his yen ran the water doun.
Now hastely doe fet a boke (qd. he)
And if this knight woll swere, how that she
This woman slow, yet woll we vs auise
Whom that she woll shall bene our iustice

A Bȝeton boke, wȝitten with Euangeles
Was fet, and thereon he swoze anone
She giltie was, and in the meane whiles
An honde hym smote on the necke bone
That doune he fill atones, as a stone
And both his yen bȝast out of his face
In sight of euery body in that place.

A voice was heard, in generall audience
That saied: Thou hast disclandȝed giltles
The doughter of holy chirche, in hie presence
Thus hast thou don, and yet I hold my pees
Of this marueile, agast was all the prees
As dismaide folke they stonden euerichone
For dȝede of wȝech, saue Custance alone.

Great was the dȝede, & eke the repentance
Of hem that hadden wȝought suspection
Upon this sely innocent Custance
And for this miracle, in conclusion
And by Custances mediacion
The kyng, and many an other in that place
Conuerted was, thanked be goddes grace.

This fals knight, was slain for his untroth
By iudgement of Alla hastely
And yet Custance had of his deth great roth
And after this, Iesus of his mercy
Made Alla wedden full solempnely
This holy maid, that is so bright and shene
And thus hath christ made Custance a quene

But who was wofull, if I should not lye
Of this weddyng, but Donegelde and no mo
The kynges mother, full of tyrannie
Her thought her cursed hart bȝast a two
She would not her sonne had doe so
Her thought a dispite, that he should take
So strange a creature vnto his make.

Me list not of the chaffe ne of the stree
Make so long a tale, as of the corne
What should I tell of the royalte
Of ỹ mariage, or which course goth beforne
Who bloweth in a trompe or in an horne
The frute of euery tale is for to saie
They eaten and dȝinken, daunce and plaie.

They gon to bed, as it was skill and right
For though that wiues ben full holy thinges
They must take in pacience a night
Soch maner necessaries, as ben pleasynges
To folke that han wedded hem with ringes
And lay a litell her holinesse aside
As for the tyme, it may none other betide.

On her he gatte a man child anone
And to a bishop, and to his constable eke
He toke his wife to kepe, whan he is gon
To Scotlond ward, his fomen for to seke
Now faire Custãce, ỹ is so humble and meke
So long is gon with child till that still
She holt her chamber, abiding Christes wil.

The time is come, a man child she bare
Mauricius at fontstone thei hym call
This constable doth forth come a messanger
And wrote to his king that cleped was All
How that this blissful tiding is byfall
And other tidinges nedefull for to saie
He taketh the letter, & forth he goth his waie

This messanger to done his auauntage
Unto the kynges mother rideth swithe
And saluteth her full faire in his langage
Madame (qd. he) ye maie be glad and blithe
And thanketh God an hundȝed thousand sith
My lady quene hath child, withouten dout
To ioie and blisse of all this reigne about.

Lo here the letters sealed of this thing
That I mote beare, in all the haste I maie
Beue ye woll ought vnto your sonne the king
I am your seruaunt both night and daie
Donegilde answerde, as at this tyme naie
But here I woll all night thou take thy rest
To morow woll I say thee what my lest.

This messanger dronke sadly both ale & wine
And stolien were his letters priuely
Out of his boxe, while he slept as a swine
And counterfeted was full subtelly
In other letter, wrought full sinfully
Unto the kyng directe of this mattere
Fro his Constable, as ye shall after here.

The letter spake, the quene deliuered was
Of so horrible a fendlych creature
That in the castell none so hardy was
That any while durst therein endure
The mother was an Elfe by aucinture
I come, by charmes or by sorcerie
And euery wight hateth her companie.

Who was this king, whã he the letter had sein
But to no wight he told his sorowes sore
But with his owne hand he wrote agein
Welcome the sonde of Christ for euermore
To me, that am new learned in his lore
Lorde, welcome be thy lust and thy plesaunce
My lust I put all in thyne ordinaunce.

Kepeth this child, all be it foule or faire
And eke my wife, vnto my home commyng
Christ whan hym lest, may send me an heire
More agreable than this, to my liking
This letter he sealed, priuely wepyng
Which to the messanger was taken sone
And forth he goth, there is no more to done.

O messanger fulfilled of dronkennesse
Strong is thy breth, thy limmes faltren aie
And thou bewraiest all secretnesse
Thy mynde is lorne, thou ianglist as a Jaie
Thy face is tourned in a newe araie
There dronkennesse reigneth in any rout
There nis no counsaile hid withouten dout.

O Donegild, I ne haue non English digne
Unto thy malice, and thy tiranne
And therefore to the fende I thee resigne
Let hym endite of thy traitrie
Fie manhilde fie: O naie by God I lie
Fie fendilde spirit for I dare well tell
Though thou here walke, thy spirit is in hell.

This messanger cometh fro the king again
And at the kynges mothers hous he light
And she was of this messanger full fain
And pleased hym in all that euer she might
He dronke, and well his girdle vnder pight
He slepeth, and he snorteth in his guise
All night, till the Sonne gan arise.

Eft were his letters stollen euerichon
And counterfeted letters in this wise
The king commaundeth his constable anon
Upon pain of hangyng on an hie iewise
That he ne should suffren in no wise
Custance within his realme for to abide
Three daies, and a quarter of a tide.

But in the same shippe, as he her fonde
Her and her yong sonne, and all her gere
He shuld croude, and put fro the londe
And charge her, that she neuer eft come there
O Custance, well maie thy ghost haue fere
And slepyng in thy dreame, ben in penance
When Donegilde cast all this ordinance.

This messanger on the morow whã he woke
Unto the castell halt the next waie
And to the Constable he the letter tooke
And whan that he this pitous letter sey
Full oft he saied (alas) and welawaie
Lord christ (quod he) how may this world endure
So full of sinne is many a creature.

O mighty God, if that it be thy will
Syn thou art rightfull iudge, how may it be
That thou wolt suffer innocence to spill
And wicked folke to reigne in prosperite
O, good Custance (alas) so wo is me
That I mote be thy turmentour, or els deie
On shames death, there nis non other weie.

Wepen both yong and old in that place
When that the kyng this cursed letter sent
And Custance with a dedly pale face
The fourth day, toward her shippe she went
But natheless, she taketh in good entent
The will of Christ, and kneling in that strõd
She saied Lord, aie welcome be thy sond.

He that me kept fro that false blame
Whiles I was on the lond emonges you
He can me kepe fro harme, and eke fro shame
In the salt sea, although I se not how
As strong as euer he was, he is now
In him trust I, and in his mother dere
That is to me, my saile end eke my stere.

Her

Her litel childe lay weping in her arme
And knéeling pitously, to him she saide
Peace lytell sonne, I wol do the none harme
With that her kercher of her hed she braide
And ouer his litell eyen she it laide
And in her arme, she lulleth it full faste
And into heauen her eyen vp she caste.

Mother (qd. she) and mayde bright Mary
Sothe is, that through womans eggement
Mankinde was lorne, & dampned aye to dye
For which thy child was on crosse ynent
Thy bliſfull eyen saw all his turment
Than is there no comparison betwene
Thy wo, and any wo that man may sustene

Thou se thy child yslaine before thyn eyen
And yet now liueth my litell childe parfay
Now lady bright, to whom all wofull cryen
Thou glory of womanhed, thou fayre may
Thou hauen of refute, bright sterre of day
Rewe on my childe, of thy gentilnesse
That rewest on euery rufull in distresse

O litell childe (alas) what is thy gilte
That neuer wroughteſt sinne, as yet parde
Why will thine hard father haue the spilte
O mercy, dere constable (qd. she)
As let my litle childe dwell here with the
And if thou darst not sauen him fro blame
So kisse him ones, in his fathers name

Therwith she loketh backward to ỹ londe
And said: farewell husbande routheleſſe
And vp she rist, & walketh doune the stronde
Toward the shippe, her foloweth al the prees
& euer she prayeth her child to holden his pees
And taketh her leue, and with an holy entent
She bleſſeth her, and into the shippe she went

Victayled was the shippe, it is no drede
Habundantly, for her a full longe space
And other necessaries that should nede
She had inowe, hereid by Goddes grace
For wind & weder, almighty God purchace
And bring her home, I can no better say
But in the see she driueth forth her way

Alla the king cometh home sone after this
Unto his castell, of which I tolde
And asketh where his wife and his childe is
The constable gan about his hert to colde
And playnly all the maner him tolde
As ye han herde, I can tell it no better
And shewed the king his seale and his letter

And said: lorde as ye commaunded me
Upon paine of death, so haue I done certayn
This messanger turmented was, till he
Must beknowen, and tell plat and playn
Fro night to night, in what place he had layn
And thus by witte subtell enquiring
Imagined was, by whome this harme gan (spring

The hond was knowtn, ỹ the letter wrote
And all the venim of this cursed dede
But in what wise, certaincly I note
The effecte is this, that Alla out of drede
His mother slow, that may men plainly rede
For that she traytour was to her alegaunce
Thus endeth old Donegild with mischaunce

The sorow that this Alla night and day
Maketh for his childe, and for his wife allo
There is no tonge that it tell may
But now will I to Custaunce go
That fleteth in the see, in paine and wo
Fyue yere and more, as liked Christes sonde
Or that her shippe approched vnto londe

Under an hethen castell, at the last
Of whiche the name in my text I not finde
Custaunce and eke her childe the see vp cast
Almighty god, that saueth all mankinde
Haue on Custaūce, & on her child some minde
That fallen is in hethen hond eftsone
In point to spill, as I shall tell you sone

Doun fro ỹ castel cometh there many a wight
To gauren on this shippe, and on Custaunce
But shortly fro the castell on a night
The lordes steward, god yeue him mischaunce
A theſe, that hath renied our creaunce
Came into the shippe alone, & saide he sholde
Her lemman be, whether she would or nolde.

Wo was the wretched woman tho bygon
Her child, and she cried pitously
But bliſful Mary halpe her anon
For with her strogling, well and mightily
The theſe fell ouer the borde all sodaynly
And in the see he drenched for vengeaunce
And thus hath Christ vnwēmed kept creatūre

O foule lust of luxure, lo thine ende
Not onely that thou faintest mans minde
But verely thou wolt his body shende
The end of thy werke, or of thy lustes blind
Is cōplaining: how many one may men find
That not for werke somtime, but for thentent
To don this sinne, bene either slaine or shent

How may this weke woman haue ỹ strẽgth
Her to defende against this renegate?
O Golias, vnmeasurable of length
How might Dauid make thee so mate?
So yong, and of armure so desolate
How durst he looke on thy dredfull face?
Well may men sene, it is but Goddes grace.

Who yaue Judith courage or hardinesse
To sleen hym Holofernes in his tent
And to deliuer out of wretchednesse
The people of God? I say, for this entent
That right as God spirit and vigor sent
To hem, and saued hem out of mischance
So sent he might and vigor to Custance.

Forth goth her ship through ỹ narow mouth
Of Subalter and sept, fletyng aie
Somtyme West, & somtime North & South
And sometyme East, full many a werie daie
Till Cristes mother, iblessed be she aie
Hath shapen, through her endlesse goodnesse
To make an ende of all her heuinesse.

Explicit secunda pars, &
sequitur pars tertia.

NOw let vs stint of Custance but a throw
And speak we of the Romaine Emperour
That out of Surrey hath by letters know
The slaughter of Christen folke, & dishonour
Done to his doughter, by a fals traitour
I meane the cursed wicked Soudomesse
That at the feast, let slean both more & lesse.

For which this Emperour hath sent anon
His senatour, with roiall ordinaunce
And other lordes, God wote many one
On Surreions to done hie vengeaunce
They ben̄en, slean, & brinḡ hem to mischāce
Full many a day: but shortly this is the end
Homward to Rome, they shapen hem to wend.

This senatour repaireth with victorie
To Rome ward, sailyng full roially
And met the ship driuyng, as saith the storie
In which Custance, sat full petously
Nothyng knew he what she was, ne why
She was in soch araie, ne she nolde sey
Of her estate, though she should dey.

He bringeth her to Rome, and to his wife
He yaue her, and her yong sonne also
And with the senatour she ladde her life
Thus can our lady bring out of wo
Wofull Custaunce, and many an other mo
And long time dwelled she in that place
In holy werkes euer, as was her grace.

The senatours wife her aunt was
But for all that, she knew her neuer the more
I woll no lenger tary in this caas
But to king Alla, the which I spake of yore
That for his wife wepeth, and siketh sore
I woll retourne, and let I will Custaunce
Under the senatours gouernaunce.

King Alla, which ỹ had his mother slayn
Upon a day fell in such repentaunce
That if I shortly tellen all shall, and playn
To Rome he cometh, to receiue his penaunce
And putten him in the popes ordinaunce
In hye & in low, and Jesu Christ be sought
Forgeue his wicked werkes, that he wrought

The fame anon through Rome town is born
How Alla king, shall come on pilgrimage
By herbegers that wenten him beforn
For which the senatour, as was vsage
Rode him againe, and many of his linage
As well to shewen his hye magnificence
As to done any king reuerence.

Great chere doth this noble senatour
To king Alla, and he to him also
Euerich of hem doth other great honour
And so befell, that on a day or two
This senatour is to king Alla go
To feste, and shortly if I shall not lye
Custaunces sonne went in his companye.

Sum mē wold sayn, at ỹ request of custaunce
This senatour had ladde this childe to fest
I may not tellen euery circumstaunce
Be as be may, there was he at lest
But soth it is, right as his mothers hest
Byforn Alla, during the meate space
The childe stode, loking in the kinges face.

This Alla king, hath of this child gret wōder
And to the senatour he said anon
Whose is ỹ fayre child, that stondeth yonder?
I not (qd. he) by god and by saint John
A mother he hath, but father hath he non
That I of wote, but shortly in a stound
He told Alla, how the child was found,

But

But God wote(qd.the Senatour also)
So vertuous a liuer in my life
Ne saw I neuer,as she,ne heard of mo
Of worldly woman, maiden,ne of wife
I dare well say,she had leuer a knife
Through her brest, than been a woman wick
There is no man couth bring her to the prick

Now was the child as like Custance
As possible is a creature for to be
This Alla hath the face in remembraunce
Of dame Custance,and theron mused he
Neue that the childes mother were aught she
That is his wife, and priuely he sight
And spedde hym fro the table, that he might.

Parfai he thought, ỳ fantome is in min hed
I ought deme of skilfull iudgement
That in the salt sea my wife is ded
And afterward he made his argument
What wote I, if Christ hath hither sent
My wife by sea,as well as he her sent
To my contry, fro thens that she was went.

And after anon, home with the Senatour
Goth Alla, for to see this wonder chaunce
This Senatour doeth Alla great honour
And hastely he sent after Custaunce
But trusteth well,her lust not to daunce
When she wiste wherefore was that sonde
Unneth vpon her fete might she stonde.

When Alla saw his wife,faire he her gret
And wept,that it was routh for to see
For at the first looke he on her set
He knew well verely,that it was she
And for sorowe as domb stant as a tree
So was her hart shet in distresse
When she remembred his vnkindnesse.

Twise she swouned in his owne sight
He wepeth and hem excuseth petously
Now God(qd.he)and his hallowes bright
So wisly on my soule haue mercie
That of your harme as giltlesse am I
As is Maurice my sonne,so like your face
Els the fende me fetche out of this place.

Lõg was the sobbyng, and the bitter pain
Or that her wofull hart might cease
Great was the pite to heare hem complain
Through which plaintes gan her wo encrese
I pray you all my labour to release
I may not tell her wo,till to morow
I am so wery to speake of her sorow.

But finally,whan that the sothe is wiste
That Alla giltlesse was of her wo
I trowe an hondred tymes been they kiste
And sich a blesse is there betwixt hem two
That saue the ioy that lasteth euermo
There is no like,that any creature
Hath sein or shall, while the world may dure.

Tho praied she her husbonde meekely
In relesyng of her pytous paine
That he would pray her father specially
That of his Magestie he would encline
To vouchafe some day with hym to dine
She praied hym eke,he should by no way
Unto her father no word of her to say.

Sum men would say, ỳ the child Maurice
Doeth this message vntill this Emperour
But as I gesse,Alla was not so nice
To hym that was of so soueraigne honour
As he that is of christen folk the flour
Sent any child, but it is bette to deme
He went hymself,and so it may well seme.

This Emperour graunted gentelly
To come to diner, as he hym besought
That all was redy he loked besily
Upon this child,& on his doughter thought
Alla goeth to his inne,and as he him ought
Arraied for this feast in euery wise
As ferforth as his conyng may suffice

The morow came,and Alla gan him dresse
And eke his wife,the Emperour for to mete
And forth they ride in ioy and in gladnesse
And whan she saw her father in the strete
She light doune and fall eth him to fete
Father(quod she)your yong child Custance
Is now full clene out of your remembrance.

I am your doughter Custance(qd.she)
That whilom ye han sent into Surrie
I am I father, that in the salt see
Was put alone,and dampned for to die
Now good father I you mercy crie
Sende me no more into Hethennesse
But thanken my lorde here of his kindnesse.

Who can the pitous ioy tellen all
Betwixt hem three,sin they been thus imette
But of my tale make an ende I shall
The day goeth fast, I will no longer lette
This glad folke to dinner been sette
In ioy and blisse,at meate I let hem dwell
A thousande folde well more than I can tell.

This

This child Maurice was sithen Emperour
Made by the Pope, and lived christenly
To Christes church he did great honour
But I lette all this story passen by
Of Custance is my tale specially
In old Romain gestes men may find
Maurice life, I beare it not in mynd.

This king Alla, when his tyme sey
With this Custance, his holy wife so swete
To England been they come the right wey
Where as they live in ioy and in quiete
But litell while it lasteth I you hete
Joy of this world, for tyme will not abide
Fro day to night, it chaungeth as the tide.

Who lived ever in soch delite a day
That he ne meved either in conscience
Or ire, or talent of some kin affray
Envy or pride, or passion, or offence?
I ne say, but for this end, and this sentence
That litell while in ioy or in pleasance
Lasteth the blisse of Alla with Custance.

For death, that taketh of hie & low his rent
When passed was a yere, euin as I gesse
Out of this world kyng Alla hent
For whom Custance hath full great heuinesse
Now let vs praien God his soule blesse
And dame Custance, finally to say
Toward the toune of Rome goth her way.

To Rome is come this holy creature
And findeth her father hole and sound
Now is she scaped all her auenture
And when that she her father hath ifound
Doune on her knees gothe she to ground
Wepyng with tendernesse in hart blithe
She herieth God, an hundred thousand sythe

In vertue and holy almesdede
They liven all, and never a sonder wend
Till death departen hem, this life they lede
And fareth now well, my tale is at an end
Now Jesu Christ, ỹ of his might may send
Joy after wo, govern vs in his grace
And kepe vs all, that been in this place.

Thus endeth the man
of Lawes Tale.

¶ Here followeth the
Squiers Pro-
logue.

Our hoste on his stirops stode anon
And said: good men herkeneth everichon
This was a thrifty tale for the nones
Sir parish preest (qd. he) for Goddes bones
Tell vs a tale, as was thy forward yore
I see well that ye learned men in lore
Can moch good, by Goddes dignite.
The Parson him answerd, benedicite
What eileth the man, so sinfully to swere?
Our host answerd, O Jenkyn, be ye there
Now good men (qd. our host) herkeneth to me
I smell a loller in the wind (qd. he)
Abideth for Goddes digne passion
For we shall haue a predication
This loller here, will prechen vs somwhat.
Nay by my fathers soule, that shall he nat
Saied the Squier, here shall he nat preach
Here shall he no Gospell glose ne teach
We leveth all in the great God (qd. he)
He would sowen some difficulte
Or sping cockell in our cleane corne
And therefore hoste, I warne thee beforne
My ioly body, shall a tale tell
And I shall ringen you so mery a bell
That I shall waken all this companie
But it shall not been of Philosofie
Ne Philike, ne termes queinte of lawe
There is but litell Latin in my mawe.

¶ Here endeth the Squiers
Prologue, and here after
foloweth his tale.

At Sarra, in the lond of
Tartarie
There dwelt a king that
warred Surrie
Throghwhich therdied
many a doughty mā
This noble kyng was
called Cambuscan
Which in his tyme was of so great renoun
That there was no where, in no region
So excellent a lord in all thyng
Him lacked nought, that longed to a kyng
As of the sect of which he was borne
He kept his lay to which he was sworne
And therto he was hardie, wise, and rich
And pitous and iust alway ylich
True of his word, benigne and honourable
Of his corage, as any centre stable
Yong, fresh, and strong, in armes desirous

As

As any bachelor of all his hous
A faire person he was, and fortunate
And kept alway so royall a state
That there nas no where soche an other mã.
This noble king, this Tartre, this Cãbuscã
Had two sonnes by Eltheta his wife
Of which the eldest hight Algarsife
That other was cleped Camballo.
A doughter had this worthie king also
That yongest was, and hight Canace
But for to tell you all her beaute
It lithe not in my tong, ne in my conning
I dare not undertake so hie a thing
Myn English eke is unsufficient
It must been a Rethor excellent
That couth his colours longing for the art
If he should descriue here euery part
I am none soche, I mote speake as I can
And so befell, that this Cambuscan
Hath twentie Winter borne his diademe
As he was wont, fro yere to yere I deme
He let the feast of his natiuite
Doen crien, throughout Sarra his cite
The last Idus of Marche, after the yere.
Phebus the Sunne, full iolie was & clere
For he was nie his exaltacion
In Marces face, and in his mancion
In Aries, the collerike, the hote signe
Full lustie was the weather and benigne
For which the foules, ayenst the sunne shene
What for the season, and the yong grene
Full loude song her affections
Hem semed han getten hem protections
Ayen the swerde of Winter kene and cold.
This Cãbuscan, of which I haue you told
In royall vestementes, sitte on his deis
With diademe, full hie in his paleis
And helde his feast so royall and so riche
That in this worlde nas there non it liche
Of which, if I shall tell of all the arraie
Than would it occupie a Sommers daie
And eke it nedeth not to deuise
At euery course, the order of her seruice
I woll not tell of her strange sewes
Ne of her Swannes, ne of her Heronsewes
Eke in that londe, as tellen knightes old
There is some meate, that is full dainte hold
That in this londe men retche of it but small
There is no man that may reporten all.
I will not tarie you, for it is prime
And for it is no fruict, but losse of time
Unto my first purpose I woll haue recourse.
And so befell that after the third course
While that this king sitte thus in his noblai
Herkening his minstralles her things plaie
Biforne him at his borde deliciously
In at the hale doore all sodainly
There came a knight on a stede of brasse
And in his honde a brode mirrour of glasse
Upon his thombe he had of golde a ring
And by his side a naked swerde hanging
And vp he rydeth to the hie borde
In all the hall ne was there spoke a worde
For marueile of the knight, him to behold
Full besily they waiten yong and old
This strange knight ꝑ came thus sodenly
All armed saue his hedde, full royally
Salued kyng and quene, and lordes all
By order, as they sitten in the hall
With so hie reuerence and obeisaunce
As well in speeche as in countenaunce
That Gawaine with his old curtesie
Though he come ayen out of fairie
Ne could him not amende of no worde
And after this, before the hie borde
He with a manly voice saied his message
After the forme vsed in his language
Without vice of sillable or of letter
And for his tale should seme the better
Accordant to his wordes was his chere
As teacheth art of speach hem that it lere
All be that I can not sowne his stile
Ne I ne can not climben so hie a stile
Yet saue I thus as to my comen entent
Thus much amounteth all that euer he ment
If it so be, that I haue it in my mynde
He saied: The king of Araby and of Inde
My liege lorde, on this solempne daie
Salueth you, as he best can and may
And sendeth you in honour of your feest
By me that am redy at your heest
This stede of brasse that easily and well
Can in the space of a daie naturell
This is to saie, in foure and twentie houres
Where so ye list, in drought or in shoures
Beren your bodie into euery place
Into which your hart willeth to pace
Without weme of you, through foull or faire
Or if ye liste to fleen in the eire
As doeth an Egle, when hym list to sore
This same stede shall beare you euermore
Withouten harme till you ben there you list
Though that ye slepen on his backe and rest
And turne again with the writhyng of a pin
He that it wrought could full many a gin
He waited full many a constellacion
Or he had doen this operation
And knew full many a seale & many a bond.
This mirrour eke ꝑ I haue in myn hond
Hath such a might, that men may in it see

When

Whan there shall fallen any aduersitee
Unto your reigne or to your self also
And openly see, who is your friend and foe
And ouer all this, if any ladie bright
Hath set her hart on any maner wight
If he be false, she shall the treason see
His newe loue, and all his subteltee
So openly, that there shall nothing hide.
Wherfore again this lustie Sommer tide
This mirrour and this ring, that ye maie se
He hath sent to my ladie Canace
Your excellent doughter that is here.
The vertue of this ring, if ye woll here
Is this, that if she list it for to were
Upon her thombe, or in her purse it bere
There is no foule, that fleeth vnder heuen
That she ne shall vnderstonde his steuen
And knowe his meaning openly and plain
And answere him in his langage again
And euery grasse that groweth vpon rote
She shal wel knowe, & whom it wol do bote
All be his woundes neuer so depe and wide.
This naked swerde, ỹ hangeth by my side
Soche vertue hath, ỹ what man so ye smite
Throughout his armure it woll kerue & bite
Were it as thicke as is a vraunched oke
And what man ỹ is wounded with the stroke
Shall neuer be hole, till that you list of grace
To stroken him with the platte in thilk place
There he is hurt, this is as much to sain
Ye mote with the platte swerde again
Stroken him in the woumd, and it wol close
This is very sothe withouten glose
It faileth not, whiles it is in your hold.
And whā this knizt hath thus his tale told
He rideth out of the halle, and doun he light
His stede, which that shone as sunne bright
Stante in the court still as any stone
The knight is in to chamber ladde anone
He is vnarmed, and to the meate isette
And all that harneis biforne hym fette
This is to saine, the swerd & eke the mirrour
All borne was in to the hye tour
With certain officers ordeined therefore
And to Canace the ring is bore
Solempnely, there she sate at the table
But sikerly without any fable
The horse of brasse, that may not be remeued
It stant, as it were to the ground iglewed
There may no man out of the place it driue
For none engine or windlas, or polliue
And cause why, for they can not the craft
And therefore in the place they han it laft
Til ỹ the knight hath taught hem ỹ maner
To voiden hem, as ye shall after here.

Great was ỹ prees, that swarmed to & fro
To gauren on the hors, that stondeth so
For it so hye was, and so brode and long
So well proporcioned for to ben strong
Right as it were a stede of Lumbardie
Therewith so horsly, and so quicke of ije
As it a gentle courser of Poile were
For certes, fro his taile to his ere
Nature ne art coud him not amende
In no degree, as all the people wende
But euermore her moste wonder was
How that he couth gon, and was of bras
It was of fairie, as the people semed
Diuers folke diuersly they demed
As many heddes, as many wittes there been
They murmure, as doeth a swarme of Been
And maden skilles after her fantasies
Rehersing of the old Poetries
And saied it was like the Pegase
The hors that had winges for to flee
Or els it was the Grekes hors Simon
That brought Troie to destruction
As men in this old bookes rede.
Wyn hart (qd one) is euermore in drede
I trowe some men of armes been therein
That shapen hem this citee for to win
It wer right good, ỹ such things wer know
An other rowned to his felawe lowe
And saied he lied, for it is rather like
An apparance made by some Magike
As Iogglours plaien at these feastes greate
Of sundry thoughts thus they iangle & treat
As leude people demeth comenly
Of things that ben made more subtelly
Than they can in her leudnesse comprehende
They demen gladly to the badder ende
And some of hem wondren on the mirrour
That borne was vp to the maister tour
How men might in it such things se.
An other answerd, certes it might well be
Naturally by compositions
Of angles and of slie reflections
And saiden, in Rome was such on
They speken of Alocen and Vitillion
And Aristote, that writeth in her liues
Of queint mirrours, and of prospectiues
As knowen they that han her bookes heard.
And other folke han wondred on ỹ sweard
That would perce through euery thyng
And fell in speche of Telephus the kyng
And of Achilles for his queinte spere
For he couth with it heale and dere
Right in such wise as mē may with ỹ swerd
Of which right now ye haue your selue herd
They speken of sondrie harding of metall

And

And speken of medicins ek withall
And how, and whan it should hardened be
Which is vnknow algate to me.
Tho speke they of Canaces ring
And sayden all, that such a wonder thing
Of craft of ringes herd they neuer non
Sauc that Moses, and king Salomon
Had a name of conning of such art
Thus saien the people, & drawen hem apart
But natheless, some sayden that it was
Wonder to maken of ferne asben, glas
And yet is glas not like asshen of ferne
But for they han knowen it so ferne
Therfore they sesen her iangling & her wõder
As fore wondren some on cause of thunder
On ebbe and flud, on gossomer, and on mist
And on all thing, till the cause is wist.
Thus ianglen they, and demen and deuise
Till that the king gan fro his bord arise.
Phebus hath left the angle meridionall
And yet ascending was the bests royall
The gentle Lion with his Adrian
Whan that this Cartre king Cambuscan
Rose from his bord there as he sate full hye
Byforne him goth the loud minstralcye
Till he came to his chambre of paramentes
There as they sownen diuers instrumentes
That is like an heuen for to here.
Now dauncen lusty Venus children dere
For in the fish her lady sat full hye
And loketh on hem with a frendly eye.
This noble king is set vpon his trone
This straunge knight is set to him full sone
And in the daunce he goeth with Canace
Here is the reuell and the iolyte
That is not able a dull man to deuise
He must han know loue and her seruise
And ben a festlich man, as fresh as May
That should you deuise such array.
Who couth tellen you ŷ forme of daunces
So vncouth and so fresh countenances:
Such subtill lokings, and dissimulinges
For dred of ialouse mens apperceiuinges
No man but Launcelot, and he is deed
Therfore I passe ouer all this lustyheed
I say no more, but in this iolynesse
I lete hem, till men to supper dresse.
The steward biddeth spices for to hye
And eke the wine, in all this melodye
The vshers and the squiers ben ygone
The spices to the wine is comen anone
They eten & dronken, & whan this had an end
Unto the temple, as reason was, they wend
The seruice is done, they soupen all by day
What needeth it to rehersen her array:
Ech man wot well, that at a kinges feest
Is plenty, to the most and to the leest
And deintes mo, than ben in my knowing
And after supper goeth this noble king
To sen this horse of brasse, with all his rout
Of lordes and of ladies him about
Such wõdring there was on this hors of bras
That sithen the great siege of Troy was
There as men wondred on an horse also
Ne was there such a wondring, as was tho
But finally, the king asketh the knight
The vertue of this horse and the might
And praid him to tellen of his gouernaunce.
The horse anon gan to trippe and daunce
Whan ŷ this knight laid hond on his raine
And said, sir there is no more to saine
But whan you list to riden any where
Ye mote tell a pyn, stant in his ere
Which I shall tell you betwene vs two
Ye mote nempne him to what place also
Or to what countre you list to ride
And whan ye come there you list abide
Bid him descend, and tell another pyn
For therin lieth the effect of all the gyn
And he woll downe descend, & don your will
And in that place he woll abide still
Though all ŷ world had the contrary swore
He shall not thens be ythrow ne yborne
Or if you list bid him thens gon
Tryl this pyn, and he woll vanish anon
Out of the sight of euery maner wight
And come ayen, be it day or night
Whan that you list to clepen him againe
In such a gyse, as I shall to you saine
Betwixt you and me, and that full sone
Ride whan you list, there nys no more to done
Enformed whan ŷ king was of ŷ knight
And hath conceiued in his witt aright
The maner and the forme of all this thing
Full glad and full blith, the noble king
Repayreth to his reuel, as byforne
The bridle is into the toure yborne
And kept among his iewels lefe and dere
The horse vanished, I not in what manere
Out of her sight, ye get no more of me
But thus I lete in lust and iolyte
This Cambuscan, his lordes festing
Till well nye the day began to spring.

Explicit prima pars:
& sequitur pars
secunda.

THe noyce of digestion, the slepe
Gan on hem winke, and bad hem take kepe
That mirth, I zinke, and labour woll haue reste
And with a galping mouth hem all he keste
And said, it was time to lye adoun
For blod was in his dominacioun
Therfore eth blod, natures frend (qd. he)
They thanken him galping, by two by thre
And euery wight gan drawen hym to his rest
As slepe hem bade, they toke it for the best.
Her dremes shull not now ben itold for me
Full were her heedes of fumosite
That causeth dreames, of which there is no charge
They slepen, till it was prime large
The most part, but it were Canace
Shye was full measurable, as women be
For of her father had she take her leue
To gon to rest, sone after it was eue
Her list not apalled for to be
Nor on the morow, vnfeslich for to se
And slept her first slepe, and awoke
For such a ioy she in her hert toke
Both of her queynt ring, and of her mirrour
That twenty times she chaunged her colour
And in her slepe, right for impression
Of her mirrour, she ha[d] a vision
Wherfore, or the sonne vp gan glide
She cleped her maistresses her beside
And said, her list for to arise.
These old women, that ben gladly wise
As is her maistres, answered her anon
And said: madame, whider woll ye gon
Thus erly? for folke ben all in rest.
I woll qd. she arise) for me list
No lenger for to slepe, but walken about.
Her maistresse cleped women a great rout
And vp they rise, well ten or twelue
Up riseth fresh Canace her selue
As ioly and bright, as the yong sonne
That in the Ram is four degrees vp ronne
No higher was he, whan she redy was
And forth she walketh an easie paas
Arrayed after the lusty season sote
Lightly for to playen, and to walken on fote
Nought but fiue or sixe of her meyne
And in a trench, fer in the parke goeth she.
The vapour, which that fro the erth glode
Maketh the sunne to seme ruddy and brode
But nathelesse, it was so fayre a sight
That it made all her hertes for to light
What for the season, and for the morowning
And for the foules that she herd sing
For right anon, she wist what they ment
Right by her song, and knew all her entent.
The knot why, that euery tale is told
If it be taried till lust be cold
Of hem that han it herkened after yore
The sauour palleth, euer lenger the more
For fulsomnes of prolixite
And by the same reason thinketh me
I should vnto the same knot condiscend
And make of her walking sone an end.
Amidde a tree, for drye as white as chalke
As Canace was playing in her walke
There sat a falcon ouer her heed full hye
That with a pitous voyce gan to crye
That all the wodde resounted of her cry
And beaten had her selfe so pitously
With both her winges, till the red blode
Ran endlong the tre, there as she stode
And euer in one, she cried and shright
And with her becke, her seluen so she pight
That there nas Tigre ne cruell best
That dwelleth in wodde, either in forest
That nold han wept, if that they wepe could
For sorow of her, she shright alway so loud
For there was neuer yet man on liue
If that he couth a faucon well discriue
That herd of such another of fayrenesse
As well of plumage, as of gentilnesse
Of shappe, of all that might reckened be
A faucon peregryn than semed she
Of ferrne lond, and euermore as she stoode
She swounded now & now, for lacke of blode
Till wofully as she fall fro the tree.
This fayre kinges doughter, this Canace
That on her finger bare the queint ring
Thrugh which she vnderstode wel euery thing
That any foule may in his leden sayne
And coud answere him in his leden againe
Hath vnderstand, what this faucon seyd
And wofully for routh almost she deyd
And to the tree she goeth full hastely
And on this faucon loketh full pitously
And held her lappe abrode, for well she wist
The faucon must fallen from the twist
Whan ỹ she swouned next, for lacke of blood
A long while to waiten there she stood
Till at the last she spake in this manere
Unto the hauke, as ye shalen here.
What is the cause, if it be for to tell
That ye ben in this furiall paine of helle
Qd. Canace, vnto this hauke aboue
Is this for sorow of death, or losse of loue?
For as I trow, these ben causes two
That causen most a gentill hert wo
Of other harme it needeth not to speke

For

For ye vpon your selfe you wrecke
Which proueth wel, that either ire or drede
Mote ben enchelon of your cruel dede
Syn that I se none other wight you chace
For the loue of god, so doth your selfe grace
Or what may be your help, for west or Est
Ne sawe I neuer er now, no birde ne best
That farde with him selfe so pitously
Ye slee me with your sorow verily
I haue of you so great compassioun
For goddes loue come fro the tre adoun
And as I am a kings doughter trewe
If that I verely the cause knewe
Of your disease, if it lay in my might
I would amende it, certes or it be night
As wisely helpe me great god of kinde
And herbes shall I right nowe finde
To hele with your hurtes hastely.
Tho thrught this faucon yet more spitously
Than euer she did, and fel to grounde anone
And lieth a swoune deed as is a stone
Till Canace hath in her lappe itake
Unto the time she gan of swoune awake
And after that she of swoune gan abreyde
Right in her haukes leden thus she seyde
That pite renneth soone in gentyl hert
(Feling his semilitude in paines smert)
Is proued al day, as men may se
As wel by werke as by authorite
For gentle hert kepeth gentilnesse
I se wel, that ye haue of my distresse
Compassion, my faire Canace
Of very womanly benignite
That nature in your principles hath sette
But for non hope for to fare the bette
But for to obey vnto your hert free
And for to make other beware by me
As by the whelpe chastised is the Lion
Right for that cause, and for that conclusion
While that I haue a leyser and a space
Myne harme I wol confessen or I pace
And euer while that one her sorowe tolde
That other wepte, as she to water wolde
Till that the Faucon badde her to be still
And with a sike, thus she said her till.
There I was bredde, alas that ike day
And fostred in a roche of marble gray
So tenderly, that nothing eyleth me
I ne wist what was aduersite
Til I coulde flie, ful hye vnder the skie
There dwelt a Tercelet me fast by
That semed wel of all gentilnesse
All were he ful of trayson and of falsnesse
It was so wrapped vnder humble chere
And vnder hewe of trouth, & in such manere
Under pleasaunce, and vnder busy payn
That no wight coud haue wende he coud fayn
So depe in greyne he died his colours
Right as a serpent hideth him vnder flours
Til he may se his time for to bite
Right so, this god of loues ipocrite
Doth so his serymones and obeysance
With his dissimuling, and faire assemblance
That souneth vnto gentilnesse of loue
As in a tombe is all the faire aboue
And vnder the cors, such as ye wote
Suche was this ipocrite colde and hote
And in this wise he serued his entent
That saue the fende, non wist what he ment
Til he so long had weped and complained
And many a yere his seruice to me yfained
Til that myn hert, to pitous and to nice
All innocent of his cruel malice
For ferde of his deth, as thought me
Upon his othes and his surete
Graunted him loue, vpon this condition
That euermore mine honour & my renoun
Were saued, both preuy and apert
This is to say, that after his desert
I yaue him all myn hert and al my thought
God wote, and in other wise nought
And toke his hert in change of myn for aye
But soothe is said, gone sithen many a day
A trewe wight and a theke thinketh not one
And whan he sawe the thing so fer igone
That I graunted him fully my loue
In such a gise, as I haue said aboue
And yeuen him my true herte as free
As he swore he yaf his hert to me
Anon this tigre full of doublenesse
Fyl on his knees with so deuout humblesse
With hie reuerence, and eke by his chere
So like a gentill louer, as of manere
So rauished, as it semed for ioye
That neuer Troylus, ne Paris of Troy
Jason certes, ne non other man
Sin Lamech was, that alder first began
To louen two, as writen folke beforne
Ne neuer sithen Adam was borne
Ne couthe man by twenty thousande parte
Counterfete the sophimes of his arte
Ne were worthy to vnbocle his galoche
Ther doublenesse or fayning should approche
Ne so couth thanke a wight, as he did me
His maner was an heuen for to se
Til any woman, were she neuer so wise
So paynteth he his chere point deuise
As well his wordes, as his countenaunce
And I so loued him for his obeysaunce
And for the trouthe that I demed in his hert

That if so were that any thing him smert
Al were it neuer so lite, and I it wist
Me thought I felt deth at my hert twist
And shortly, so ferforth this thing went
That my will was his willes instrument
That is to saye, my will obeied his will
In all thing, as ferre as reason fill
Keping the boundes of my worship euer
Ne neuer had I thing so lefe ne so leuer
As him god wote, ne neuer shal no mo
This last lenger than a yere or two
That I supposed of him nothing but good.
But finally, thus at the last it stode
That fortune would that he must twin
Out of that place, which that I was in
Where me was wo, it is no question
I can not make of it discription
For o thing dare I tell boldely
I knowe what the paine of deth is therby
Such harm I felte, that he ne might beleue
So on a day of me he toke his leue
So sorowfully eke, that I wende verely
That he had felte as much harme as I
Whan that I herd him speke, & sawe his hewe
But natheles, I thought he was so trewe
And eke that he repaire should againe
Within a litteli while sothe to saine
And reason wold eke, that he must go
For his honour, as oft happeth so
That I made vertue of necessite
And toke it well, sithe it must nedes be
As I best might, I hidde fro him my sorow
And toke him by the hond, S. John to borow
And said thus: lo I am yours all
Both such as I haue ben to you and shall
What he answerd, it nedeth not reherce
Who can sayn bet than he, who can do werse
Whan he hath al wel said, than hath he don
Therfore behoueth him a long spone
That shal eten with a fend, thus herd I say
So at the last he mote forth his way
And forth he fleeth til he come there him lest
Whan it come him to purpose for to rest
I trowe he had thilke text in minde
That al thing repairing to his kinde
Gladeth hem selue, thus sain men as I gesse
Men louen of kinde newefangelnesse
As briddes don, that men in cages fede
For though thou night & day take of hem hede
And strawe her cage faire and soft as silke
And gine hem sugre, hony, breed and milke
Yet right anon as his doze is vp
He with his fete wold spurne adoun his cup
And to the wood he wold, and wormes eate
So newefangle ben they of her meate
And louen nouelries of proper kinde
No gentilnesse of blode may hem binde
So ferde this Tercelet, alas the day
Tho he were gentel borne, fresh and gay
And goodly for to se, and humble and free
He saw vpon a time a kite flee
And sodainly he loued this kite so
That al his loue is clene fro me go
And hath his trouth failed in this wise
Thus hath the kite my loue in her seruice
And I am lorne without remedy.
And with ꝑ worde this faucon gan to cry
And swouned ofte in Canaces barme
Gret was the sorow for that haukes harme
That Canace, and al her women made
They nist how they might her faucon glade
But Canace home bereth here in her lappe
And softely in plasters gan her wrappe
Ther as she with her beek had hurt her selue
Now can not Canace but herbes delue
Out of the ground and make salues newe
Of herbes precious and fine of hewe
To helen with the hauke fro day to night
She doeth her busines, and all her might
And by her beddes heed she made a mewe
And couered it with veluettes blewe
In signe of trouthe, that is in women sene
And al withouten ꝑ Mewe is painted grene
In which were painted al these false foules
As ben these tidifes, tercelettes, and owles
Right for dispite were painted hem beside
Pyes on hem for to cry and chyde.
This leue I Canace her hauke keping
I wol no more, as now spoke of her ring
Til it come efte to purpos for to sain
How that this faucon gate her loue again
Repentaunt, as the storye telleth vs
By mediation of Cambalus
The kings sonne, of which I of tolde
But henforth I wol my proces holde
To speken of auentures, and of batails
That yet was neuer herd of so gret marueils
First wol I tel you of Cambuscan
That in his time many a cite wan
Powre that he wan Theodora to his wife
And after wol I speake of Algarsife
For whom full oft in great perill he was
Ne had he ben holpen by the horse of brass
And after woll I speake of Camballo
That fought in listes with the brethren two
For Canace, er that he might her won
And there I left, I woll again begin.

Explicit secunda pars.

Appollo

Appollo whirleth vp his chare so hie
Till that the god Mercurius house he flie.

¶ There can be found no more of this forsaid tale, which hath ben sought in diuers places.

¶ Here foloweth the wordes of the Marchaunt to the Squier, and the wordes of the Host to the Marchaunt.

IN faith Squier thou hast the well tquit
And gentelly, I prayse wel thy wit
Md. the Marchaunt, considering thine youth
So felingly thou spekest, I the alouth
As to my dome, there is non that is here
Of eloquence, that shalbe thy pere
Yf ỹ thou liue, god geue the right good chance
And in vertue send the perseueraunce
For of thy speking I haue great deute
I haue a sonne, and by the Trinite
I had leuer than twenty pound worth lond
(Though it now were fallen in my hond)
He were a man of such discrecion
As that ye ben: fye on possession
But if a man be vertuous with all
I haue my sonne snibbed, and yet shall
For he to vertue listeth nat to entend
But for to play at dise, and to spend
And lese all that he hath, is his vsage
And he had leuer talke with a page
Than to commen with any gentill wight
Where he might lerne gentelnesse aright
Straw for your gentilnesse (qd. our host)
What Marchant, pardy well thou wost
That ech of you mote tellen at the lest
A tale or two, or breken your behest
That know I wel (qd. the Marchant) certain
I pray you haue me nat in disdain
Though I to this man speke a word or two
Tell on thy tale withouten wordes mo
Gladly sir host (qd. he) I woll obey
Unto your will, now herkeneth what I sey
I woll you not contrary in no wise
As farre as my wittes may suffice
I pray to god that it may plesen you,
Than wote I well, it is good inow.

¶ Thus endeth the wordes of the host and the Marchant, and here foloweth the Marchaunts prologue.

WEping and wailling, care and other sorow
I haue ynow, both euyn and eke a morow
Md. the Marchant, & so haue other mo
That wedded be, I trow that it be so
For well I wote it fareth so by me
I haue a wife, the worst that may be
For though the fend coupled to her were
She wold him ouermatch I dare well swere
What should I reherse in speciall
Her high malice: she is a shrew at all
There is a long and a large difference
Betwixt Grisyldes great patience
And of my wife the passing cruelte
Were I vnbound, also mote I the
I would neuer eft come in the snare
We wedded men liue in sorow and care
Assay who so woll, and he shall finde
That I say soth, by saint Thomas of Inde
As for the more part, I say nat all
God shold that it should so befall
Ah good sir host, I haue wedded be
These monethes two and more nat parde
And yet I trow he that all his life
Hath wedded be, though men him rife
In to the hert, ne couth in no manere
Tell so much sorow, as I now here
Could tell of my wiues cursednesse
Now qd. our host Marchãt so god the blesse
Syn ye ben so much know of that art
Full hertely I pray you tell vs part
Gladly qd. he, but of myn owne sore
For sory hert I tell may no more.

¶ Here endeth the Marchaunts prologue, and here foloweth his tale.

WHilõ there was dwelling in Lumbardy
A worthy knight, that borne was at Pauy
In wlyych he lyued in great prosperite
And sixty yere a wifeles man was he
And folowed aye his bodely delite
On women, there as was his appetite
As don these foles that ben seculeres
And when that he was past sixty yeres
Were it for holinesse or dotage
I can nat sain, but such a great corage
Had this knight to ben wedded man

That day and night he doth all that he can
To espy, where that he wedded might be
Praying our lord to graunten him that he
Might ones knowen of that blissfull life
That is betwixt an husbond and his wife
And for to liuen vnder that holy bond
With which God first man and woman bond
Non other life (said he) is worth a bean
For wedlocke is so easy and so clean
That in this world it is a paradise
Thus sayth this old knight that is so wise.
And certainly, as sothly as god is king
To take a wife, it is a glorious thing
And namely whan a man is old and hore
Than is a wife the fruit of his tresore
Than should he take a yong wife and a faire
On which he might engendren him an heire
And lede his life in ioy and in solace
Where as these bachelers singen alas
When that they finden any aduersite
In loue, which nis but childes vanite
And trewly it sitte well to be so
That bachelers han oft pane and wo
On hrotell e round they bilden hrotelnesse
They find freelte, whan they wenen sekernesse
They liue but as birdes or bestes
In liberty, and vnder nice arestes
There as a wedded man in his estate
Liueth a life blissfully and ordinate
Vnder the yoke of mariage ybound
Well may his hert in ioy and blisse habound
For who can be so burome as a wife?
Who is so trew and eke so tentife
To kepe him sicke and hole? as is his make
For well ne wo she nill him nat forsake
She nis nat wery him to loue and serue
Though that he lye bedrede till he sterue
And yet some clerkes sain, that it is nat so
Of which Theophrast is one of tho
What force though Theophrast list to lie
Ne take no wife (qd. he) for husbondrie
As for to spare in houshold thy dispence
A trew seruaunt doeth more diligence
Thy good to kepe, than thin owne wife
For she woll claime halfe part all her life
And if that thou be sicke, so god me saue
Thy very frendes or a trew knaue
Wol kepe the better, thā she that waiteth aye
After thy good, and hath don many a daye
And if thou take a wife to thee vntrew
Full oft time it shall thee sore rew
This sentence, and an hundred sithes worse
Writeth this man there, God his bones curse
But take no kepe of such vanite
Defieth Theophrast, and herkeneth me.

A wife is Goddes yeft verely
All other maner yeftes hardely
As landes, rentes, pasture, or commune
Or mouables, all ben yeftes of fortune
That passen, as a shadow on a wall
But drede nat, if plainly speke I shall
A wife woll last and in thin house endure
Well lenger than thee list parauenture
Mariage is a full great sacrament
He which hath no wife I hold him shent
He liueth helpeles, and all desolate
I speke of folke, in seculer estate.
And herkeneth why, I say not this for nought
A woman is for mannes helpe ywrought
The hye God, when he had Adam maked
And saw him alone bely naked
God of his great goodnesse said than
Lette vs maken an helpe to this man
Like to him selfe, and than he made Eue
Here may ye se, and hereby may ye preue
That a wife is mans helpe and confort
His paradise terrestre and his disport
So buxome and so vertuous is she
They must nedes liue in vnite
One flesh they ben, & two soules as I gesse
Nat but one hart in wele and in distresse
A wife, ah saint Mary, benedicite
How might a man haue any aduersite
That hath a wife? certes I can nat say
The blisse that is betwixt hem twey
There may no tonge tellen or hert thinke
If he be pore, she helpeth him to swinke
She kepeth his good, & wasteth neuer a dell
All that her husbond lust, her liketh well
She saith nat ones nay, when he sayth ye
Do this (saith he) al redy sir (saith she)
O blissfull order of wedlocke precious
Thou art so mery, and eke so vertuous
And so commended, and so approued eke
That euery man, that halt him worth a leke
Upon his bare knees ought all his life
Thanken God, that him hath sent a wife
Or pray to God him for to send
A wife, to last vnto his liues end
For than his life is sette in sekernesse
He may nat be deceiued, as I gesse
So that he werch after his wiues rede
Than may he boldely bearen vp his hede
They ben so trew and also wise
For which, if thou wilt werchen as the wise
Do alway so, as women woll the rede
Lo how that Jacob, as these clerkes rede
By good counsaile of his mother Rebecke
Bound the kiddes skin about his necke
For which his fathers benelon he wan

Lo Judith as the storȝ tell can
By wise counsaill Goddes people kept
And slue him Holofernes while he slept
Lo Abigail by counsaill, how she
Saued her husbond Naball, whan that he
Should haue ben slain. And looke Hester also
By good counsaill deliuered out of wo
The people of God, & made him Mardochee
Of Assuere enhaunsed foȝ to be.
Ther nis nothing in gree superlatiue
(As saieth Senec) aboue an humble wife
Suffre thy wiues tongue, as Caton bit
She shall command, and thou shalt suffre it
And yet she woll obey of curtesie
A wife is keper of thine husbondȝie
Well may the sicke man waile and wepe
There as there nis no wife the house to kepe
I warne thee, if wisely thou wilt werch
Loue wel thy wife, as Christ loueth his cherch
If thou loue thy self, thou louest thy wife
No, no man hateth his flesh: but in his life
He fostreth it, and therefoȝe bid I thee
Cherish thy wife, oȝ thou shalt neuer ithee
Husbond and wife, what so men iape oȝ play
Of woȝldly folke hold the seker way
They be so knit, there may non harme betide
And namely vpon the wiues side
Foȝ which this January, of which I told
Considȝed hath in his daies old
The lusty life, the vertuous quiete
That is in mariage hony swete
And foȝ his frendes on a day he sent
To tellen hem the effect of his entent.
With face sadde, his tale hath he hem told
He saied friendes, I am hooȝe and old
And almost (God wot) on the pittes brinke
Upon my soule somwhat must I thinke
I haue my body folily dispended
Blessed be God, it shall been amended
Foȝ I woll been certain a wedded man
And that anon in all the hast I can
Unto some maid, faire and tender of age
I pray you shapeth foȝ my mariage
All sodainly, foȝ I woll nat abide
And I woll fonden to espie on my side
To whom I may be wedded hastely
But foȝ as moch as ye been moȝe than I
Ye shullen rather soch a thing espien
Than I, and there me lust best to alien
But one thing warne I you my frends dere
I woll non old wife haue in no mancre
She shall not passe fiftene yere certain
Old fish and yong flesh woll I haue fain
Better is (qd he) a Pike then a Pikerell
And better than old Beefe is the tender Veell
I woll no woman of thirty Winter age
It nis but Beanstraw and great foȝage
And eke these old widowes (God it wote)
They connen so moch craft in Wades bote
So moch broken harme whan hem list
That with hem should I neuer liue in rest
Foȝ sondȝy scholes maketh subtell clerkes
A woman of many scholes halfe a clerke is
But certainly, a yong thing may men gie
Right as men may warm Waxe with handis
Wherefoȝe I say you plainly in a clause (plus
I will non old wife haue foȝ this cause.
Foȝ if so were that I had mischaunce
And in her couth haue no pleasaunce
Than should I lede my life in aduoutrie
And to streight to the deuill whan I die
Ne children should I none vpon her geten
Yet had I leuer hounds had me eaten
Than that mine heritage should fall
In straunge hondes: and thus I tell you all
I dote nat, I wotte the cause why
Men should wedden, and furthermoȝe wot I
There speaketh many a man of mariage
That wot no moȝe of this than doth my page
Foȝ which causes men should take a wife
If he may nat liuen chast his life
Take him a wife with great deuotion
Bicause of lefull procreacion
Of childȝen, to the honour of God aboue
And nat onely foȝ paramour oȝ foȝ loue
And foȝ they shoulden Lecherie eschue
And yeld her dettes whan that it is due
Oȝ foȝ that ech man should helpen other
In mischief, as a suster should the brother
And liue in chastite full heauenly.
But sirs (by your leaue) that am nat I
Foȝ God be thanked, I dare make auaunt
I fele my limmes hole and sufficiaunt
To doen all that a man belongeth to
I wotte my selue best what I may do
Though I be hoȝe, I fare as doeth a tree
That blossometh er that fruict iwoxe be
The blossomed tree is neither dȝie ne dedde
I fele no where hoȝe but on my hedde
Mine hart and my limmes been as greene
As Laurell is thȝough the yere to seene
And sithen that ye han heard all mine entent
I pray you to my will ye woll assent.
Diuers men diuersly him told
Of mariage, many ensamples old
Some blameth it, some praiseth it certain
But at the last, shortly foȝ to sain
(As all day falleth altercacion
Betwixt frendes in disputacion)
There fell a strife betwixt his bȝethren two

Of which that one was cleped Placebo
Iustinus soothly called was that other
Placebo saied: O January brother
Full litell nede han ye my Lord so dere
Counsaill to axe of any that is here
But that ye been so full of sapience
That you ne liketh for your hie prudence
To vaine fro the word of Salomon
This word saieth he vnto euerichone
Worke all thyng by counsaill, thus saied he
And than shalt thou nat repent thee
But tho that Salomon spake soch a word
Mine owne dere brother and my Lord
So wisely God my soule bring to ease & rest
I hold your owne counsaill for the best.
For brother mine, take of me this motife
I haue been now a court man all my life
And God wote, though I now vnworthy be
I haue stonden in full great degree
Aboue Lords in full great estate
Yet had I neuer with non of hem debate
I neuer hem contraried truely
I wote well that my lord can more than I
That he saieth, I hold it ferme and stable
I say the same or els thing semblable
A full great foole is any counsailour
That serueth any Lord of hie honour
That dare presume, or ones thinke it
That his counsaill should passe his lords wit
Nay, Lords be no fooles be my fay
Ye haue your self spoken here to day
So hie sentence, so holy, and so well
That I consent, and confirme euery dell
Your wordes all, and your opinion
By God there nis no man in all this toun
Ne in Italy, cond bette haue saied
Thrist holdeth hym of this full well a paied
And truly it is an hie corage
Of any man that is stopen in age
To taken a yong wife, by my father kin
Your hart hongeth on a ioly pin
Doeth now in this matere right as you lest
For finally I hold it for the best.
Iustinus that aie sat and herde
Right in this wise to Placebo he answerde
Now brother mine be patient I you pray
Sith ye haue said, now herkeneth what I say
Seneck emong other wordes wise
Saieth, that a man ought hym well auise
To whom he yeueth his lond or his catell
And sithens I ought auise me right well
To whom I giue my goods away fro me
Well more och more I ought auised be
To whom I giue my body: for alway
I warne you well it is no childs play
To take a wife without auisement
Men must enquire (this is mine assent)
Whether she be sober, wise, or dronkelew
Or proud, or other waies a shrew
A chider, or a waster of thy good
Other rich or poore, or els a man is wood
All be it so, that no man find shall
Non in this world, that trotteth hole in all
Ne man, ne beast, soch as men can deuise
But natheles, it ought inough suffice
With any wife, if so were that she had
More good thewes, than her vices bad
And all this asketh laiser to enquere
For God wot I haue wept many a tere
Full prively, sith I had a wife
Praise who so woll a wedded mannes life
Certain I find in it but cost and care
And obseruaunces of all blisses bare
And yet God wotte, my neighbours about
And namely of women many a rout
Sain that I haue the most stedfast wife
And eke the mekest one that beareth life
But I wot best, where wringeth me my shoe
Ye may for me, right as you list doe
Auise you, ye been a man of age
How that ye entren into mariage
And namely with a yong wife and a faire
By him that made water, yearth, and aire
The yongest man that is in all this rout
Is besie inow to bring it about
To haue his wife alone, trusteth me
Ye shall not plesen her yeres thre
This is to sain, to doen her plesaunce
A wife asketh full moch obseruaunce
I pray you that ye be not euill apaied.
Wel (qd this January) and hast thou all said
Straw for thy Senec, and for thy prouerbes
I count it not worth a pannier of herbes
Of schoole termes, wiser men than thou
As thou hast heard, assenteth it right now
To my purpose, Placebo, what say ye
I say it is a cursed man (qd. he)
That letteth Matrimony sekerly
And with that word they risen sodainly
And been assented fully, that he should
Be wedded whan him list, & where he would
High fantastic and curiousnesse
Fro day to day, gan in the soule empresse
Of January, about his mariage
Many faire shappe, and many faire visage
Ther passeth through his hart night by night
As who so toke a mirrour polished bright
And set it in a comen market place
Than should he se many a figure pace
By his mirrour, and in the same wise

Gan

Gan Januarie within his thought deuise
Of maidens, which that dwellen beside
He wist not where he might abide
For if that one had beautie in her face
An other stont so in the peoples grace
For her sadnesse and her benignite
That of the people greatest voice had she
And some were riche and had bad name
But natheles, betwixt earnest and game
He at last appointed him on one
And let all other from his hart gone
And chese her of his owne auctoritee
For loue is blinde all daie, and may not see
And whan that he was in his bedd ibrought
He purtreide in his hart and in his thought
Her fresh beaute, and her age tender
Her mdie small, her armes long and slender
Her wise gouernance, and her gentilnesse
Her womanly bearing, and her sadnesse
And whan ỳ he was on her condiscended
Him thowt his choise might nat ben amẽded
For whan that he himself concluded had
Him thought eche other mannes wit so bad
That impossible it were to replie
Ayenst his choice, this was his fantasie
His frendes sent he to, at his instaunce
And praieth hem to don him that pleasaunce
That hastely they would to him come
He would abredgen her labour all and some
Nedeth no more for him to go ne ride
He was appointed there he would abide
Placebo came, and eke his frendes sone
And alderfirst he bad hem all a bone
That non of hem non arguments make
Ayenst his purpose that he hath itake
Which purpose was pleasant to god (said he)
And very ground of his prosperite.
He said there was a maiden in the toune
Which of beautie hath great renoune
All were it so, she were of small degre
Suffiseth him her youth and her beautie
Which maide he said, he would haue to wife
To leden in ease & in holines his life
And thanketh God, ỳ he might hauen her all
That no wight his blisse parten shall
And praieth hem to labour in this nede
And shapeth that he faile nat to spede
For than he said, his spirite was at ease
Than is (qd he) nothing may me displease
Saue o thing pricketh in my conscience
The which I wol rehearse in your presence
I haue (qd he) heard saie full yore ago
There may no man haue parfite blisses two
This is to saie, in yearth and eke in heauen
For though he kept him fro the sinnes seuen
And eke from euery braunche of thilke tree
Yet is there so parfite prosperitee
And so great ease and lust in mariage
That euer I am agast now in mine age.
That I shall lede now so merie a life
So delicate without wo or strife
That I shal haue mine heuen in yearth here
For sithen very heauen is bought so dere
With tribulation and great penaunce
How should I than liuing in such plesaunce
As all wedded men doen with her wines
Com to the blisse, ther Christ eterne on liue is
This is my drede, and ye my brethren tweie
Assoileth me this question I you prie.
Justinus, which that hated his folie
Answerd anon right in his iaperie
And for he would his long tale abriege
He would non auctorite allege
But said: sir, so there be non obstacle
Other than this, God of his hie miracle
And of his mercie may so for you werche
That er ye han your rightes of holy cherche
Ye may repent of wedded mannes life
In which ye sain is neither wo ne strife
And els God forbede, but if he sent
A wedded man grace him to repent
Well after, rather than a single man
And therefore sir, the best rede that I can
Despeire th you not, but haue in memorie
Paraventure she may be your purgatorie
She may by Goddes mean & Goddes whip
Than shall your soule vp to heauen skip
Swifter than doeth an arowe out of a bowe
I hope to God hereafter ye shall knowe
That there nis non so great felicitee
In mariage, ne neuer non shall bee
That you shall let of your saluacion
So that ye vse it as skill is and reason
The lustes of your wife attemperatly
And that ye plese her nat to amorously
And that ye kepe you eke from other sin
My tale is doen, for my witte is thin
Beth not agast hereof my dere brother
But let vs wade fro this matter to an other
The wife of Bathe, if ye vnderstande
Of mariage, which ye haue in hande
Declareth full well in a little space
Fareth now well, God haue you in his grace.
And with this word, Justine & his brother
Han take her leaue, and eche of hem of other
For whan they sawe it must nedes be
They wrought so by wise and fle treate
That she this maide which Maie hight
As hastely as euer that she might
Shall wedded be to this Januarie

I trowe it were to long to you to tarie
If I you told of euery clerute and bonde
By which he was feoffed in his londe
Or for to herken of her riche arate
But finally ycomen is the daie
That to chirche bothe been they went
For to receiue the holy Sacrament
Forth cometh the priest with stole about his (neck
And bad her be like Sara & Rebec
In wiledome and trueth of mariage
And sained his orisons, as is the vsage
And crouched hem, & bad God shuld hem bles
And made all seker inowe with holines
Thus been they wedded with solempnite
And at feast sitteth he and she
With other worthy folke vpon the deies
All full of ioie and blisse is the paleies
And full of instruments and of vitaile
The moste deintes of all Itaile
Before him stode instruments of such soun
That Orpheus, ne of Thebes Amphion
Ne made neuer such a melodie.
At euery cours came loude minstralcie
That neuer Ioab tromped for to here
Ne yther Theodomas yet halfe so clere
At Thebes, whan the cite was in doubt
Bacchus the wine hem skinketh all about
And Venus laugheth on euery wight
For Januarie was become her knight
And would bothe assain his corage
In liberte, and eke in mariage
And with her fire brond in her hond about
Daunceth before the bride and all the rout
And certainly, I dare well saie right this
Emenus that God of wedding is
Saw neuer in his life, so mery a wedded mã.
Hold thou thy peace thou poet Marcian
That writest vs that ilke wedding merie
Of Philologie and hym Mercurie
And of the songes that the Muses song
To small is both thy penne and eke thy tong
For to discriuen of this mariage
Whã tẽder youth hath wedded stouping age
Ther is such mirth, ỹ it may not be written
Assaieth your self, than maie ye witten
If that I lacke or non in this matere
Maie that sitte with so benigne a chere
Her to behold, it semed fairie
Queene Hester loked neuer with such an ye
On Assuere, so meke a looke hath she
I maie you nat deuise all her beaute
But thus much of her beautie tell I maie
That she was like ỹ bright morow of May
Fulfilde of al beautie, and of pleasaunce
This Januarie is rauished in a traunce
And at euery time he looked in her face
But in his hart, he gan her to manace
That he ỹ night, in his armes wold her strein
Harder, than euer Paris did Helein
Buth natheles, yet had he great pite
That thilke night, offende her must he
And thought alas, O tender creature
Now would God ye might well endure
All my corage, it is so sharpe and kene
I am agast, ye shall it nat sustene
But God forbede, that I did all my might
Now would God that it were waxe night
And that the night would last euer mo
I would that all these peopl were ago
And finally he doeth all his labour
As he best might, sauyng his honour
To hast hem fro the meate in subtill wise
The tyme came, that reason was to rise
And after that men dauncen, and drinke fast
And spices all about the house they cast
And full of ioie and blisse is euery man
All but a squier, that hight Damian
Which carfe before the knight many a daie
He was so rauished on his Lady Maie
That for very pain he was nye wode
Almost he swelt, and swouned ther he stode
So sore hath Venus hurt him with her brãd
So fresh she was, and therto so licande
And to his bedde he went hym hastely
No more of him at this tyme speake I
But there I let him wepe inowe and plain
Till the fresh Maie woll rewen on his pain
O perilous fire, ỹ in the bedstraw bredeth
O familier foe, that his seruice bedeth
O seruaunt traitour, false homely hewe
Like to the Adder slie in bosome vntrue
O Januarie dronken in plesaunce
God shilde vs all from your iniquitaunce
Of mariage, se how this Damian
Thyne owne squier and thy borne man
Entendeth to doen thee villanie
God graunt thee thine homely foe to espie
For in this worlde nis wers pestilence
Than homely foe, all daie in thy presence
Parfor med hath the sunne his arke diurne
No lenger maie the body of him soiourne
On orisont, as in that latitude
Night with his mantill, that is darke & rude
Gan for to shrede, the Hemispherie about
For which departed is the lustie rout
Fro Januarie, with thonke on euery side
Home to her hous lustely they ride
There as they doen her things, as hem lest
And whan they sawe her tyme to go to rest
Sone after this lustie Januarie

Woll

Woll go to bedde, he would no lenger tarie
He drinketh Ipocras, clarcie, and vernage
Of spices hote, to encrease his corage
And many a lectuary had he full fine
Soch as the cursed monke dan Constantine
Hath written in his booke of Coitu
To eten hem all he nold nothyng eschewe
And thus to his priuy frendes saied he
For Goddes loue, as sone as it may be
Let voide all this house in curteis wise sone
When drinken, and the trauers drue anon
So hasted January, it must be doen
The bride was brought to bed as still as ston
And whā the bed was with the priest iblessed
Out of ꝑ chāber hath euery wight hē dressed
And January hath fast in his armes take
His fresh May his paradise, his make
He lulleth her, he killeth her full oft
With thicke brisels of his berd vnsoft
Like the scun of Hoūdfish, as sharp as brere
For he was shaue all new in his manere
He rubbeth her vpon her tender face
And saied thus: Alas, I mote trespace
To you my spouse, and you greatly offend
Or tyme come that I woll doune descend
But natheles, consideryth this (qd. he)
There nis no workeman, what so euer he be
That may both wirch well and hastely
This woll be doen at leiser parfitly
It is no force how long that we play
In true wed locke coupled be we tway
And blessed be the yoke that we been in
For in our actes we mow doe no sin
A man may doe no synne with his wife
Ne hurt hym self with his owne knife
For we haue leaue to play vs by the law
Thus laboureth he till the day gan daw
And than he taketh a soppe of fine clarre
And vpright in his bedde than sitteth he
And after that he singeth full loud and clere
And kist his wife, and maketh wanton chere
He was all coltish, and full of ragerie
And full of gergon, as is a flecked Pie
The slacke skin about his necke shaketh
While that he sang, so chaunteth he & craketh
But God wot what May thought in her hert
When she hym saw, vp sitting in his shert
In his night cappe, with his necke lene
She prayseth not his playing worth a Bene
Than saied he thus: my rest woll I take
Now day is come, I may no lenger wake
And doun he laied his hed, and slept till prime
And afterward, whan that he saw his time
Up riseth January, but the fresh May
Holdeth her chamber to the fourth day
As vsage is of wiues for the best
For euery labour somtyme mote haue rest
Or els long may he not endure
This is to say, no liues creature
Be it fish or beast, bridde or man.
Now woll I speake of wofull Damian
That langureth for loue, as ye shall here
Therefore I speake to hym in this manere.
I say, O sely Damian, alas
Answere to this demaund, as in this caas
How shalt thou to thy lady fresh May
Tell thy wo? She woll alway say nay
Eke if thou speake, she woll thy wo bewray
God be thyn helpe, I can no better say
This sicke Damian in Venus fire
So brenneth, that he dieth for desire
For which he put his life in auenture
No lenger might he in this wise endure
But priuely a penner gan he borow
And in a letter wrote he all his sorow
In maner of a complaint or a lay
Unto this faire and fresh lady May
And in a purse of silke, hongyng on his shert
He hath it put, and laied it at his hert
The Moon at noon tide that like day
(That January hath wedded fresh May)
Out of Taure was in the Cankre glyden
So long hath May in her chamber bidden
As custome is, vnto these nobles all
A bride shall not eaten in the hall
Till daies foure, or three at the least
Ipassed been, than let her gon to feast.
The fourth day complete fro noon to noon
Whan that the hie Masse was idoen
In hall sat this January and May
As fresh as is the bright Somers day
And so bifell, how that this good man
Remembreth hym vpon this Damian
And saied: sainct Mary, how may this be
That Damian entendeth not to me?
Is he aie sicke: or how may this betide?
His squiers, which that stoden hym beside
Excused hym, because of his sickenesse
Which letted him to doen his busines
Non other cause might make hym tarie
That me forthinketh (qd. this Januarie)
He is a gentle squire be my trouth
If that he died, it were harme and routh
He is as wise, discrete, and secre
As any man that I wote of his degre
And thereto manly and seruisable
And for to be a thrifty man right able
But after meat, as sone as euer I may
I woll my self viset hym and eke May
To doen hym all the comfort that I can

And

And for that word, hym blessed euery a man
That of his bounte and of his gentilnesse
He would so comforten in his distresse
His squier, for it was a gentle deed.
Dame (qd. this January) take good heede
That after meat, ye and your women all
(Whan ye haue ben in chāber out of this hal)
That all ye gone to see this Damian
Doeth hym disport, he is a gentill man
And telleu hym that I woll hym visite
Haue I nothyng but rested me a lite
And spede you fast, for I woll abide
Till that ye slepe fast by my side
And with that word he can to hym call
A squier, that was Marshall of his hall
And told hym certain thing that he would.
This fresh May hath streight her way thold
With all her women, vnto this Damian
Doune by his beddes side sat she than
Comforting hym as goodly as she may.
This Damian, whan that he his time say
In secrete wise, his purse and eke his bill
(In which he had written all his will)
Hath put into her hond withouten more
Saue that he sighed wonders depe and sore
And sothly, to her right thus saied he
Mercy, and that ye discouer nat me
For I am dedde, if that this thyng be kid
This purse hath she in her bosome hid
And went her way, ye get no more of me
But vnto January is come is she
And on his beddes side she sit full soft
He taketh her, and kisseth her full oft
And laied hym doun to slepe, and that anon
She fained her, as that she must gon
Ther as ye wote, that euery wight hath nede
And whan she of this bill hath taken hede
She rent it all to cloutes, and at last
Into the priuy sothly she it cast.
Who studieth now but faire fresh May
And adoun by January she lay
That slept, till the cough hath hym awaked
Anon he praied her to strippe her all naked
He would of her (he said) haue some plesance
He saied her clothes did hym encombrance
And she obeieth be she lefe or loth
But lest that precious folk be with me wroth
How that he wrought, I dare nat to you tell
Or whether she thought it paradise or hell
But I let hem worch in her wise
Till euensong ryng, that they must arise.
Were it by destiny or by aduenture
Were it by influence, or by nature
Or constellacion that in soch estate
The heuen stood, that tyme fortunate
(Was for to put a bill of Venus werkes)
For all thyng hath tyme, as saien clerkes
To any woman for to gete her loue
I can not say, but the great God aboue
That knoweth, that non act is causeles
He deme all, for I woll hold my pees.
But soth is this, how that this fresh May
Hath take soch impression that day
Of pite, on this sicke Damian
That fro her hart she driue ne can
The remembraunce for to doen hym ease
Certain (thourt she) whō this thing displease
I recke not, for this I hym allure
I loue hym best of any creature
Though he no more had than his shert.
Lo pite renneth sone in gentle hert
Here may ye se, how excellent franchise
In women is, whan they hem narow auise
Some tyraunt is, as there been many one
That hath an hart as hard as any stone
Which would haue let hym sterue in ỹ place
Wel rather thā haue graunted him her grace
And her reioised in her cruell pride
And not haue retched to been an homicide.
This gentill May, fulfilled of all pite
Right so of her hond a letter made she
In which she graunted hym her very grace
There lacked nought, but onely time & place
Where that she might to hir lust suffice
For it shall be, right as he woll deuise
And whan she saw her tyme vpon a day
To visite this Damian goth this faire May
And suttelly this letter doune she thrust
Under his pillow, rede it if hym lust
She taketh him by the hōd, & hard him twist
So secretly, that no wight of it wist
And bad him ben all hole, and forth she went
To January, whan that he for her sent
Up riseth Damian the next morow
All passed was his sicknes and his sorow
He kēbeth him and proineth him and piketh
And doeth all that his Lady lust and liketh
And eke to January he goeth as low
As euer did a dogge for the bow
He is so pleasaunt to euery man
For craft is all, who that it can
That euery wight is fain to speken him good
And fully in his ladies grace he stood
Thus let I Damian about his nede
And in my tale, forth I woll procede.
Some clerkes holden that felicite
Stont in delite, and therefore certain he
This noble January with all his might
In honest wise as longeth to a knight
Shope him to liue full deliciously

His

His housing, his aray, as honestly
To his degre, was made as a kinges
Among other of his honest thinges
He had a garden walled all with stone
So fayre a garden was there neuer none
For out of dout, I verily suppose
That he that wrote the Romant of the Rose
Ne couth of it the beaute well deuise
Ne Priapus, ne might not suffise
Though he be god of gardens, for to tell
The beaute of the garden, and of the well
That stont vnder a laurer alway grene
Full oft time kyng Pluto and his quene
Proserpina, and all her fayry
Disporten hem, and maken melody
About that well, and daunced as men told
This noble knight, this January the old
Such deynte hath, in it to walke and play
That he woll suffre no wight to bere the kay
Saue he him selfe, for the small wicket
He bare alway of siluer a clicket
With which, when that him list vnlocke
And whan that he wold pay his wife her dett
In somer season, thider would he go
And May his wife, and no wight but they two
And thinges which that were not don a bedde
He in ỳ garden performed hem and spedde
And in this wise, many a mery day
Liued this January and this fresh May
But worldly ioy may nat alway endure
To January, ne to no liuing creature.
O sodaine hap, O thou fortune vnstable
Like to the Scorpion discetuable (sting
That flatrest with thy hed whan thou wolt
Thy taile is deth, through thine enuenoming
O brotell ioy, O swete poison queint
O monster, that so sodainly canst peint
Thy gifts, vnder the hew of stedfastnesse
That thou disceiuest both more and lesse
Why hast thou January thus disceiued?
And haddest him for thy frend receiued
And now thou hast beraft him both his eyen
For sorow of which desireth he to dyen
Alas, this noble January that is so fre
Amidde his lust and his prosperite
Is woxen blind, and all sodainly
His deth therefore desireth he vtterly
And therwithall, the fire of ielousy
(Lest that his wife should fall in some foly)
So brent his hert, that he would faine
That some man, both him and her had slaine
For neuer after his death, ne in his life
Ne would he that she were loue ne wife
But euer liue a widow in clothes blacke
Sole, as the turtle doth ỳ hath lost her make
But at the last, after a moneth or tway
His sorow gan to swage, soth to say
For whan he wist it might non other be
He paciently tooke his aduersite
Saue out of dout may he nat for gone
That he nas ielous euer more in one
Which ielousie, it was so outragious
That neither in hall ne in none other hous
Ne in non other place neuer mo
He nold suffer her, neither ride ne go
But if that he had hond on her alway
For which full often wepeth fresh May
That loued Damian so benignely
That she mote either die sodainly
Or she mote haue him at her lest
She waiteth whan her hart should to brest
Vpon that other side Damian
Become is, the sorowfullest man
That euer was, for neither night ne day
Ne might he speake a word to fresh May
As to his purpose of no such matere
But if that January must it here
That had an hand vpon her euer mo
But natheles, by writing to and fro
And pleuy tignes, wist he what she ment
And she knew all the tignes of his entent.
O January, what might thee it auaile?
Tho thou mightest se, as fer as shippes saile
For as good is a blind man disceiued be
As to be disceiued, whan that a man may se.
Lo Argus, which had an hundred eyen
For all that euer he couth pore and pyen
Yet was he blent, and God wot so ben mo
That weenen wisely that it is not so
Passe ouer is an ease, I say no more.
The fresh May, of which I spake of yore
In warme wax hath pynted this clicket
That January bare of that small wicket
By which vnto his garden oft he went
And Damian that knew her entent
The clicket counterfaited pryuely
There nis no more to say, but hastely
Some wonder by this clicket shall betide
Which ye shall heren, if ye will abide.
O noble Ouid, soth sayest thou God wote
What sligh is it, though it be long and hote
That he will find it out in some manere
By Pyramus and Thisbe, may men lere
Though they were kept ful long streit ouer all
They ben accorded, rowning through a wall
Ther nis no wight couth find such a sleight
But now to purpose, er the daies eight
Were passed, er the moneth Iule befill
That January hath caught so great a will
Through eggyng of his wife him for to play

In his garden, and no wight but they tway
That in a mozow, vnto this May said he
Rise vp my wife, my loue, my lady fre
The turteil voice is herd my lady swete
The winter is gon, with all his raines wete
Come forth now with thin eyen columbine
Now fayrer ben thy brestes than is wine
The garden is enclosed all about
Come forth my white spouse out of dout
Thou hast me wounded in my hert, o, wife
No spotte in the nas in all thy life
Come forth and let vs taken our disport
I chese the for my wife and my confort

Such old lewd wordes vsed he
On Damian a signe made she
That he shuld go before with his clicket
This Damian hath opened this wicket
And in he stert, and that in such manere
That no wight might it se ne here
And still he sat vnder a bush anon.

This January, as blind as is a ston
With May in his hand, and no wight mo
Into his fresh garden is he go
And clapt to the wicket sodainly.

Now wife (qd. he) here nis but thou and I
That art the creature that I best loue
For by that lord that sit vs all aboue
I had leuer dien on a knife
Than the offend, dere true wife
For Goddes sake thinke how I the chees
Nat for couetise, ne other good doutles
But onely for the loue I had to the
And though that I be old and may not se
Be to me true and I woll tell you why
Certes, thre things shall ye win therby
First loue of Christ, & to your self honour
And all mine heritage, toune and tour
I giue it you, maketh charters as ye list
This shall be don to morow er sunne rist
So wisely God my soule bring to blisse
I pray you on couenaunt that ye me kisse
And though that I be ielous wite nought
Ye ben so depe enprented in my thought
That whan I consider your beaute
And therwithall, the vnlikly elde of me
I may not certes, though I should die
Forbere, to ben out of your companie
For very loue, this is withouten dout
Now kisse me wife, and let vs rome about

This fresh May whan she these wordes herd
Benignely to January answerd
But first and forward she began to wepe
I haue (qd. she) a soule for to kepe
As well as ye, and also myn honour
And of wifehode thilke tender flour
Which that I haue enlured in your hond
Whan that the preest to you my body bond
Wherfore I woll answere in this manere
By the leaue of you my lord so dere

I pray God that neuer daw that day
That I ne sterue, as foule as woman may
Yf euer I do to my kinne that shame
Or els that I empayre so my name
That I be falle, and if I do that lacke
Do strippe me, and put me in a lacke
And in the next riuer doo me drench
I am a gentil woman and no wench
Why speke ye thus, but men ben euer vntrew
And women haue reproue of you, aye new
Ye can non other communing, I leue
But speke to vs of vntrust and repreue
And with ꝑ word she saw where Damian
Sate in the bush, and knele he began
And with her finger signes made she
That Damian should clime be vpon a tre
That charged was with fruite, & vp he went
For verily he knew all her entent
And euery signe that she couth make
Well bet than January her owne make
For in a letter she had told him all
Of this mater, how that he worch shall
And thus I let him sitte in the pery
And January and May roming full mery.

Bright was the day, & blew the firmament
Phebus of gold doun hath his stremes sent
To gladen euery flour with his warmenesse
He was that time in Gemini, as I gesse
But litle fro his declinacion
The cause of Iouis exaltacion
And so befil that bright morow tide
That in the garden, on the farther side
Pluto, that is the king of Fayry
And many a lady in his company
Folowing his wife, the quene Proserpine
Ech after other right as a line
Whiles she gadred floures in a mede
In Claudian ye may the story rede
How in his grisely cart he her fette
This king of Fayry doun him sette
Upon a bench of turues fresh and grene
And right anon thus said he to his quene.

My wife (qd. he) that may nat say nay.
The experience so proueth it euery day
The treason, which that women doth to man
Ten hundred thousand tell I can
Notable, of your vntrouth and brotelnesse
O Salomon, richest of all richesse
Fulfilde of sapience, and of worldly glory
Full worthy ben thy wordes in memory
To euery wight, that wit and reason can

Thus

Thus praiseth he the bounte of man
Among a thousand men yet fonde I one
But of all women fonde I neuer none
Thus saith ỳ king, ỳ knoweth your wicked-
And Jesus ffilius Sirach, as I gesse (nesse
Ne speketh of you but selde reuerence
A wilde fire, a corrupt pestilence
So fall vpon your bodies yet to night
Ne see ye not this honorable knight
Because (alas) that he is blind and olde
His owne man shall maken him cokolde
Lo where he sitte, the lechour in the tre
Now wol I graunt of my maiestee
Unto this olde blinde worthy knight
That he shal haue againe his eye sight
Whan that his wife would done him villany
Than shal he know al her harlotry
Both in repreue of her and other mo.
Ye shal (qd Proserpine) and wost ye how
Now be my mothers soule sir I swere
That I shal yeuen her sufficient answere
And al women after for her sake
That though they ben in any gilte itake
With face bolde, they shullen hem selue excuse
And bere hem doun, that wold hem accuse
For lacke of answere, non of hem shull dien
All had he sey a thing with both his eyen
Yet should we women so vilage it hardely
And wepe and swere, and chide subtelly
That ye shal ben as leude as gees
What recketh me of your auctorites.
I wot wel this Jewe, this Salomon
Fonde of vs women foles many one
But though he ne fonde no good woman
Yet there hath ifonde many another man
Women ful trewe, full good, & full vertuous
Witnesse of hem that dwel in Christes hous
With martyrdom, they preued her constaunce
The Romain gestes eke make remembraunce
Of many a very true wife also
But sir, be not wroth that it be so
Though that he said he fond no good woma
I pray you take the sentence of the man
He ment thus, that in souerayn bounte
Nys non but God, that sitteth in trinite.
Eye, for very God that nis but one
What make ye so much of Salomon
What though he made a tẽple goddes hous
What though he were riche and glorious
So made he a temple of false goddes
How might he don a thing, ỳ more forbod is
Parde as faire as ye his name enplaster
He was a lechour, and an idolastre
And in his elde, very God forsoke
And if that God nadde (as saith the boke)
Yspared him for his fathers sake, he should
Haue lost his reigne soner than he wolde
I set nat of all the villany
That ye of women write, a butterflie
I am a woman, nedes mote I speke
Or els swel, til mine herte breke
For sith he said, that we ben tanglerelles
As euer mote I hole brooke my tresses
I shall nat spare for no curtely
To speke hem harme, that wolde vs villany.
Dame (qd this Pluto) be no lenger wrothe
I giue it vp: but sith I swore myn othe
That I would graunt him his sight ayen
My word shal stand, ỳ warne I you certeyn
I am a king, it set me not to lye.
And I (qd she) a queene of Fayrie
Her answere she shall haue I vndertake
Let vs no mo wordes hereof make
For soth I wol no lenger you contrary.
Now let vs turne againe to January
That in the garden with this faire May
Singeth merier than the Popingay
You loue I best, and shall, and other non
So long about the alleyes is he gon
Till he was comen ayenst thilke pery
Where as this Damian sitteth full mery
On hye, among these fresh leues grene
This fresh May, that is so bright & shene
Gan for to sike, and said: alas my side
Now sir (qd she) for ought that may betide
I must haue of these peeres that I here se
Or I mote die, so sore longeth me
To eten of the small peeres grene
Helpe for her loue that is heuen quene
I tel you wel a woman in my plite
May haue to frute so great an appetite
That she may dyen, but she it haue.
Alas (qd he) that I ne had here a knaue
That couth climbe, alas, alas (qd he)
For I am blinde, ye sir no force (qd she)
But would ye vouchsafe for Goddes sake
The pery in your armes for to take
For wel I wotte that ye mistrust me
Than should I climbe well ynough (qd she)
So I my foote might sett vpon your backe
Forsoth said he, in me shall be no lacke
Might I you helpe with myn herte blode
He stoupeth doun, & on his backe she stode
And caught her by a twist, and vp she goth
Ladies I pray you be not wroth
I can nat glose, I am a rude man
And sodainly anon this Damian
Gan pullen vp the smocke, & in the throng
A great tent, a thrifty and a long
She said it was the meriest fit

That euer in her life she was at yet
My lordes rent serueth me nothing thus
It soldeth twifolde by swete Jesus
He may nat swynk worth a leke
And yet he is full gentil and ful meke
This is leuer to me than an euenlong
And whan that Pluto saw this wrong
To January he gaue again his sight
And made him se alwell as euer he might
And whan he had caught his sight again
Ne was there neuer man of thing so fain
But on his wife his thought was euer mo
Up to the tree he cast his eyen two
And saw how Damian his wife had dressed
In such manere, it may not be expressed
But if I would speke vncurtesly
And vp he yaf a rosing and a cry
As doth the mother whan the childe shall dye
Out helpe, alas (harowe) he gan to crye
For sorow almost he gan to dye
That his wife was swiued in the pery
O stronge lady store what dost thou
And she answered: sir what ayleth you
Haue pacience and reason in your minde
I haue you holpen of both your eyen blinde
Up peril of my soule, I shall nat lien
As me was taught to helpe with your eyen
Was nothing bette for to make you see
Than strogle with a man vpon a tree
God wot I did it in ful good entent
Strogle (qd he) ye algate in it went
Stiffe and rounde as any bell
It is no wonder though thy bely swell
The smocke on his brest lay so thecke
And euer me thought he pointed on ꝑ brecke
God giue you both on shames deth to dien
He swiued the, I sawe it with mine eyen
And els I be honged by the halse
Than is (qd she) my medicin false
For certaine, if that ye might se
Ye would nat say thekе wordes to me
Ye haue some glimsing, and no parfite sight
I se (qd he) as well as euer I might
Thanked be god, with bothe mine eyen two
And by my trouth me thought he did so
Ye mase ye mase, good sir (qd she)
This thanke haue I for that I made you se
Alas (qd she) that euer I was so kinde
Now dame (qd he) let all passe out of minde
Come doun my lefe, and if I haue missaide
God helpe me so, as I am yuel apaide
But by my fathers soule, I wende haue seyn
How that this Damian had by the leyn
And that thy smocke had lien vpon his brest
Ye sir (qd she) ye may wene as ye lest
But sir, a man that waketh out of his slepe
He may not sodainly wel taken kepe
Upon a thing, ne se it parfitely
Til that he be adawed verily
Right so a man that long hath blinde be
Ne may not sodainly so wel yse
First whan the sight is newe comen again
As he that hath a day or two ygain
Til that your sight stablished be a while
There may full many a sight you begile
Beware I pray you, for by heuen king
Ful many a man weneth to se a thing
And it is al another than it semeth
He that misconceiueth oft misdemeth
And with that worde she lept doun fro the tre
This January, who is gladde but he
He kisseth her, he clippeth her full ofte
And on her wombe he stroketh her ful softe
And to his paleis home he hath her lad
Now good men I pray you, beth ye al glad.
Thus endeth here my tale of January
God blesse vs al, and his mother Mary.

Thus endeth the Marchaunts tale,
and here folowеth the wife of
Bathes Prologue.

EXperience, though none authoritie
Were in this worlde, is right ynow for mee
To speake of wo that is in mariage
For lordings, sith I twelue yeres was of age
Thanked be God, that is eterne on line
Husbondes at church dore haue I had fiue
If I so ofte might haue wedded be
And all were worthy men in her degre.
But me was tolde not long ago twis
That sithen Christ went neuer but onis
To wedding, in the Cane of Galilee
That by thilke ensample taught he me
That I ne should wedded be but ones.
Lo here, which a sharpe word for ꝑ nones
Beside a well, Jesu God and man
Spake in repreef of the Samaritan
Thou hast had fiue husbandes (qd he)
And that ilke man that now hath the
Is not thine husbonde: thus said he certain
What he ment therby I can not sain
But that I aske a pointe, why the fifte man
Was nat husbende to the Samaritan
How many might she haue in mariage?
Yet herde I neuer tellen in mine age
Upon this numbre trew definicion

Men

Men may deuine, and gloſen vp and doun
But well I wotte expreſſe without lie
God badde vs for to wexe and multiplie
That gentill text can I well vnderſtond
Eke well I wote (he ſaid) myn huſbond
Should leaue father & mother, & take to me
But of numbre no mencion made he
Of bigamy or of octogamy
Why ſhould men ſpeake of it villany
Lo he the wiſe king Salamon
I trow had wiues mo than on
As would God it leſull were to me
To be refreſhed halfe ſo oft as he
Which a gift of God had he, for all his wyues
No mã hath ſuch, that in this world a liue is
God wote this noble king, as to my witte
The firſt night had many a merry fitte
With ech of hem, ſo well was him alme
Bleſſed be God, I haue had fiue
Welcome the firſt when euer he ſhall
For ſoth I will not kepe me chaſt in all
When myn huſbond is fro the world ygon
Some chriſten man ſhall wedde me anon
For than the apoſtel ſaith, that I am fre
To wedde a godes halfe, where it liketh me
He ſaith, that to be wedded is no ſinne
Better is to be wedded than to brinne
What recketh me though folke ſay villany
Of ſhrewd Lameth, and of his bigamy
I wote well Abraham was an holy man
And Jacob eke, as fer as euer I here can
And ech of hem had wiues mo than two
And many another holy man alſo
Where can you ſay in any maner age
That euer God defended marriage
By expreſſe wordes? I pray you tell me
Or where commaunded he virginite?
I wote as well as ye, it is no drede
The Apoſtell when he ſpake of maidenhede
He ſaid, therof precept had he none
Men may counſaile a woman to be one
But counſailing is no commaundement
He put it in our owne iudgement
For had God commaunded maidenhede
Than had he dampned wedding out of drede
And certes, if there were no ſede ſlow
Virginity than wherof ſhould it growe?
Poule durſt not commaund at the leſt
A thing, of which his maiſter yafe none heſt
The dart is ſet vp for virginite
Catch who ſo may, who renneth beſt let ſe.
But this word is not take of euery wight
But there as God liſt yeue it of his might
I wotte well that the apoſtel was a maid
But natheles, though that he wrote & ſaid
He would that euery wight were ſuch as he
All nis but counſaile to virginite
And for to ben a wife, he yaue me leue
Of indulgence, ſo it be not to repreue
To wedde me, if that my make die
Without exception of bigamie
All were it good no woman for to touch
He ment as in his bedde or in his couch
For perill is, both fire and tow to aſſemble
Ye know what this enſample may reſemble
This is all and ſome, he held virginite
More parfit than wedding in freelte.
Freelte clepe I, but if þ he or ſhe
Would lede her life all in chaſtite
I graunte it well, I haue non enuye
Though maidenhede preferre bigamye
It liketh hem to be clene in body & goſt
Of mine eſtate I will make no boſte
For well ye knowe, a lorde in his houſhold
Hath nat euery veſſell all of gold
Some ben of tre, and don hem lordes ſeruice
God clepeth folke to him in ſondry wiſe
And euerich hath of God a proper gift
Some this, ſome that, as him liketh ſhift
Virginite is great perfection
And continence eke with deuocion
But Chriſt, that of perfection is well
Badde not euery wight he ſhould goſell
All that he had, and gyue it to the poore
And in ſuch wiſe folow him and his lore
He ſpake to hem, that would lyue parfitly
And lordings (by your leaue) that am nat I
I will beſtow the floure of all myn age
In the actes and fruit of mariage
Tell me alſo, to what conclusion
Were membres made of generation?
And of ſo parfite wiſe a wight wrought
Truſteth wel, they were nat made for nought
Gloſe who ſo will, and ſay vp and doun
That they were made for purgacioun
Of vrine, and other things ſmale
And eke to know a female from a male
And for non other cauſe, what ſay ye no?
The experience wotte well it is not ſo
So that the clerkes be not with me wroth
I ſay that they were maked for both
This is to ſayn for office and for eaſe
Of engendrure ther we not God diſpleaſe
Why ſhould men elſ in her bokes ſette
That man ſhould yeld to his wife her dette
Now wherwith ſhuld he pay his paiment?
If he ne vſed his ſely inſtrument
Than were they made vpon a creature
To purge vrine, and eke for engendrure
But I ſay not, that euery wight is hold

That hath such harnesse, as I to you tolde
To gon and ben hem in engendrure
Than should men take of chastite no cure
Crist was a mayde, and shapen as a man
And many a saint, sithen the worlde began
Yet lived they ever in parfite chastite
I nill envy no virginite
Let hem with brede of pure whete be fedde
And let bs wives eate barly bredde
And yet with barly bred, Marke tell can
Our lord Jesu refreshed many a man
In such a state as God hath cleped bs
I wol persever, I nam not precious
In wifehode wol I vse myn instrument
As freely as my maker hath it sent
If I be daungerous, god give me sorow
Myn husbond shal it have both even & morow
When that him list come forth & pay his det
An husbonde wol I have I wol not let
Which shalbe both my dettour & my thrall
And have his tribulacion with all
Upon his flesh, while that I am his wife
I have the power during all my life
Upon his proper body, and nat he
Right thus the apostle tolde to me
And bad our husbonds for to love bs well
All this sentence me liketh every dell.
Up stert the Pardoner, and that anon
Now dame qd he, by God & by seint John
Ye ben a noble prechour in this caas
I was about to wedde a wife, alas
What, should I bye it on my flesh so dere?
Yet had I lever wedde no wife to yere
Abide qd she, my tale is not begon
Nay, thou shalt drinke of another ton
Er that I go, shal savor worse then ale
And when that I have told forth my tale
Of tribulacion that is in mariage
Of which I am expert in all myn age
This is to say, myself hath ben the whippe
Than maist thou chese whider thou wolt sippe
Of thilke tonne, that I shal sette abroche
Beware of it, er thou to nere approche
For I shall tell ensamples mo than ten
Who so wol not be ware by other men
By him shal other men corrected be
These same wordes writeth Ptolome
Rede in his almagest, and take it there.
Dame I wol pray you, if your will were
Said this Pardoner, as ye began
Tel forth your tale, spareth for no man
And teche bs yong men of your practike
Gladly (qd she) if it may you like
But that I pray to all this company
If that I speke after my fantasy
As taketh not a grefe of that I say
For mine entent is not but to play
Now sirs, than shal I tel forth my tale
As ever mote I drinke wine or ale
I shal say soth. Tho husbonds that I had
Three of hem were good, and two were bad
The three good men were riche and olde
Unnethes might they the statute holde
In which they were bounden vnto me
Ye wot well what I meane of this parde
As God me helpe, I laugh whan I thinke
How pitously a night I made hem to swinke
But by my fay, I tolde of it no store
They had me yeve her londe and her tresore
Me neded no lenger to do diligence
To winne her love, and do hem reverence
They loved me so well by god above
That I ne tolde no deinte of her love
A wise woman will besy her ever in one
To get her love, there as she hath none
But sithen I had hem holly in mine honde
And that they had give me all her londe
What, should I take kepe hem for to please:
But if it were for my profite and myn ease
I set hem so a worke by my fate
That many a night they songen wel alwate
The bacon was not fet for hem I trowe
That some men have in Essex at Dunmowe
I governed hem so well after my lawe
That ech of hem full blisfull was and fawe
To bring me gay things fro the fayre
They were ful fain whan I spake hem faire
For god it wot, I chidde hem spitously
Now herkeneth how I bere me properly.
Ye wise wives that can vnderstonde
Thus shul ye speke, and bere hem on honde
For half so boldly there can no man
Swere and lye, as a woman can
I say not this by wives that ben wise
But if it be, whan they hem misse anise
A wise wife shall, if that she can her goode
Bere hem in honde the cowe is woode
And take witnesse of her owne mayde
Of her assent: but herkeneth how I sayde.
Sir olde kevnarde, is this thyn aray
Why is mine neighbours wife so gay?
She is honoured over all where she gothe
I sitte at home, and have no thrifty clothe
What dost thou at myn neighbours hous?
Is she so fayre? art thou so amorous?
What rownest thou with our maide? benedi-
Sir olde lechour, let thy japes be (cite
And if I have a gossip or a frende
(Without gilte) thou chidest as a fende
If that I walke or play vnto his house

Thou

Thou comest home as dronken as a Mouse
And preachest on thy bench with yuel prese
Thou saiest to me, it is a great mischete
To wedde a poore woman for costage
And if that she be rich of high parage
Than saiest thou, it is a very tourmentry
To suffer her pride and her Melancoly
And if that she be faire, thou very knaue
Thou saiest that euery holour woll her haue
She may no while in chastite abide
That is assailed on euery side
Thou saiest some folke desiren vs for richesse
Some for our shape, & some for our fairnesse
And some, for she can either sing or daunce
And some for gentilnesse or for daliaunce
Some for her hondes and her armes smale
Thus goeth all to the deuill by thy tale.
Thou saiest men may not kepe a castel wal
It may so long assailed be ouer al
And if that she be foule, thou saiest that she
Coueteth euery man that she may se
For as a spaniell, she woll on him lepe
Til that she find some mã that woll her chepe
Ne non so gray Gose goth there in the lake
(As saiest thou) woll been without her make
And saiest, it is a hard thing for to weld
A wight, that no man woll his thonke held
Thus saist thou lorell, whã thou goest to bed
That no wise man nedeth for to wed
Ne no man that entendeth vnto heuin
With wild thunder dint and fire ieuin
Mote thy wicked necke be to broke.
Thou saist, dropping houses, and eke smoke
And chiding wiues, maken men to flie
Out of her owne hous, ah, Benedicite
What aileth soch an old man for to chide.
Thou saiest, we wiues woll our vices hide
Till we be fast, and than we woll hem shew
Well may this be a prouerbe of a shrew.
Thou saist, ꝑ oxen, hors, asses, and hounds
They been assaied at diuers stounds
Basins, lauers, er that men hem bie
Spones, stooles, and all such husbondrie
And so be pottes, clothes, and araies
But folke of wiues maken non assaies
Till they been wedded, old dotard shrew
And saiest, how we woll than our vices shew
Thou saiest also, that it displeaseth me
But if that thou wilt praise my beautie
And but thou poke alway on my face
And clepe me faire dame in euery place
And but thou make a feast on that ilke day
That I was borne, & make me freesh and gay
And but thou doen to my norice honour
And to my chamberer within my bour
And to my fathers folke, and his allies
Thus saiest thou old barell full of lies.
And yet of our prentise Jenkin
For his crispe heer, shining as gold fine
And for he squeketh me both vp and doune
Hast thou caught a false suspection
I woll him nat, tho thou wer ded to morow.
But tell me this, why hidest thou with sorow
The keies of thy chest away fro me?
It is my good as well as thine parde
what, wenest thou make an idiot of our dame?
Now by that lord that called is sainct Jame
Thou shalt nat both though thou were wood
Be maister of my body and of my good
That one thou shalt forgon maugre thin yen
What helpeth it of me to enquere and spien?
I trow thou wouldest locke me in thy chist?
Thou shouldest say: wife, go where you list
Take your disport, I woll leue no tales
I know you for a true wife dame Ales
We loue no mã, that taketh kepe or charge
Where that we go, we woll be at our large.
Of all men iblessed mote he be
The wise Astrologien Dan Ptholome
That saieth this prouerbe in his almagest
Of all men his wisedome is the best
That recketh not who hath the world in hõd
By this prouerbe thou shalt vnderstond
Haue thou inow, what dare the recke or care
How merely that other folke fare
For certes, old dotard by your leue
Ye shall haue queint inow at eue
He is to great a nigard that woll werne
A man, to light a candle at his Lanterne
He shall haue neuer the lesse light parde
Haue thou inow, thou darst not plain thee:
Thou saiest also, that if we make vs gay
With clothes, or with precious array
That it is perill of our chastite
And yet with sorow, thou must enforce thee
And say these words in the Apostles name
In habite made with chastite and shame
Ye women should apparell you (qd. he)
And nat in tressed heer, and gay perre
As perill, ne with gold, ne clothes rich.
After the text, ne after thy rubrich
I will not worch as moch as a Gnatte
Thou saiest also. I was like a Catte
But who so would senge the Cattes skinne
Than would the Catte dwellen in his Inne
And if the Cattes skinne be slicke and gay
She will nat dwell in hous halfe a day
But forth she woll, or any day be dawed
To shew her skin and gon a Catte wawed
Thus thou saiest, if I be gay sir shrew

I woll ren out, my bozell foz to shew
Sir old foole, what helpeth thee to spien
Foz though thou play Argus with his c. yen
To be my wardeozs, as he can best
In faith he shall not kepe me but my lest
Yet cond I make his berd, so mot I thee
Thou saiest eke, ỳ there ben things three
The which troubleth all this yearth
And that no wight may endure the ferth
O, lefe sir shrew, iesu shozt thy life
Yet preachest thou, & saist an hatefull wife
Ireckned is foz one of these mischaunces,
Ben there none other resemblaunces e
That ye make liken your parables to
But if a sely wife be one of tho.
Thou likenest eke, womans lou to hell
To barain londe, there water may not dwell,
Thou likenest it also to wild fire
The mozе it brenneth the mozе it hath desire
To consume any thing that brent would be.
Thou saist, right as wozms shenden a tre
Right so a wife destroieth her husbond
This knowen they that been to wives bond
Lozdings right thus as ye haue vnderstond
Bare I stifly mine old husbond on hond
That thus they sayden in her dronkenesse
And al was fals, but as I toke witnesse
On Jenkin, and on my nece also
O Lozd the pain I did hem and the wo
Full giltelesse by Gods swete pine
Foz as an hoze I cond both bite and whine,
I coud plain, though I were in the gilt
Oz els often time I had ben spilt
Who so first to mill cometh, first grint
I plained first, and so was our war stint,
They were full glad to excusen hem blive
Of thing, that they a gilt neuer in her life
On wenches would I bere hem on hond
Whã that foz sick, vnnethes might they stond
Yet tickled I his hart, foz that he
Wend I had on him so great cheere
I swoze that all my walking out by night
Was foz to espie wenches that he dight
Under that colour had I much mirth
Foz all such wit is giuen vs in our birth
Deceit, weping, spinning, God hath giue
To women, kindly while that they liue
And thus of o thing I may auaunt me
At thende I had the best in ech degre.
By slight oz force, oz by some maner thing
As by continual murmure oz grutching
Namely a bed had they mischaunce
There would I chide, and dine no pleasaunce
I would no lenger in the bed abide
(If I felt his arme ouer my side)
Till he had made his ransome vnto me
Than would I suffer him to do his nicete
And therefoze euery man this tale I tell
Wiue who so may, all bene foz to sell
With empty hondes men may no hawkes lure,
Foz winning would I all his lust indure
And make me than a fained appetite,
And yet in Bacon had I neuer delite
That maked me euer that I would hem chide
Foz though the Pope had sitten hem beside
I would not spare him at her own boxde
Foz be my truth I quit him word foz word
As help me very God omnipotent
Tho I right now should make my testament
I ne ow hem a word, but it is quit
I brought it so about by my wit
That they must giue it vp as foz the best
Oz els had we neuer been in rest
Foz though he loked as wode as a lion
Yet should he fayle of his conclusion.
Than would I saie, good lefe take kepe
How meekely loketh wilken our shepe
Com nere my spouse, & let me kis your cheke
Ye should be all patient and meke
And haue a swete spiced conscience
Sith ye so preach of Jobs pacience
Suffreth al way, sith ye so wel can preach
And but if ye doe, we shall you teach
That it is so faire to haue a wife in pees
One of vs two mote obeien doutles
And sith a man is more reasonable
Than a woman is ye must bene sufferable
What aileth you to grutch thus and grone e
Is it foz ye would haue me queint alone e
Why take it all, lo, haue it euery dell
Peter beshrew you but you loue it well.
Foz if I would sel my belchose
I couth walke as fresh as any rose,
But I woll kepe it foz your own toth
Ye be to blame by God. I say you soth.
Such maner words had we on hond
Now wol I speake of my fourth husbond.
My fourth husband was a reuelour
This is to say, he had a paramour
And I was yong and full of ragerie
Stubborne and strong, and ioly as a Pie
Wel coud I daunce to an harpe small
And sing iwis as a nightingall
Whã I had dronken a draught of swete wine
Metellus, the foule churle the swine
That with a staffe beraft his wife her life
Foz she dronk wine: though I had be his wife
Ne should he not haue daunted me fro drinke
And after wine of Venus must I thinke
Foz also seker, as cold engendreth haile

A licorus mouth must haue a lecherous taste
In women vinolent is no defence
This knowe lechours by experience.
But lorde Christ, when it remembreth me
Upon my youth, and my iolite
It tickleth me about the hart roote
Unto this daie it doeth my hart boote
That I haue had my worid, as in my time
But age alas, that all woll enuenime
Hath me bireft my beaute, and my pith
Let go farewell, the deuill go therwith
The floure is gon, there nis no more to tell
The bran (as I best can) now mote I sell
But yet to be right merie woll I fonde
Now forth to tell of my fourth husbonde.
I saie I had in hart great dispite
That he of any other had delite
But he was quit, by God and sainct Joce
I made him of the same woode a croce
Not of my body in no foule manere
But certainly, I made folk such chere
That in his owne grete I made him frie
For anger, and for very ielousie
By God, in yearth I was his purgatorie
For which I hope his soule be in glorie
For God it wote he sat full oft and song
Whan that his shoe full bitterly him wrong
There was none, saue God and he, that wist
In many wise, how sore that I him twist
He died whan I came fro Hierusalem
And lieth in graue vnder the Rode beem
All nis his tombe so curious
As was the sepulture of him Darius
Which that Appelles wrought so subtelly
It is but waste to burie him preciously
Let him fare wel, god giue his soule good rest
He is now in his graue and in his chest.
Now of my fifth husbond woll I tell
God let neuer his soule come in hell
And yet was he to me the most shrewe
That fele I on my ribbes all by rewe
And euer shall, vnto mine ending daie
But in our bedde he was so fresh and gaie
And therewithall, he couth so well me glose
Whan that he would haue my belr chose
That though he had me bete one euery bone
He couth winne ayen my loue anone
I trowe I loued him the better, for that he
Was of his loue so daungerous to me
We women haue, if that I shall nat lie
In this matter, a queint fantasie
Waite what thing we may nat lightly haue
Thereafter woll we all daie crie and craue
Forbid vs thing, and that desiren we
Prese on fast, and than woll we flee
With daunger setten we all our chaffare
Great prees at market maketh dere ware
And to great chepe is hold at to little price
This knoweth euery woman that is wise
My fifth husbonde, God his soule blesse
Which I tooke for loue and no richesse
He some time was a clerke in Oxenforde
And had left schole, & went at home to borde
With my gossip, dwelling in our toun
God haue her soule, her name was Alisoun
She knewe my hart, and eke my priuite
Better than our parish preest to mote I thee
To her bewraied I my counsaile all
For had my husbonde pist against a wall
Or doen a thing, that should haue cost his life
To her, and to an other worthy wife
And to my nece, which that I loued well
I would haue told his counsaile euery dell
And so I did full often God it wote
That made his face full oft redde and hote
For very shame, and blamed him oft, for he
Had told to me so great a priuite.
And so befell, that ones in a Lent
So oft time I to my gossip went
For euer, yet I loued to go gaie
And for to walke in Marche, Aprill, & Maie
Fro hous to hous, to harken sondrie tales
That Jenkin clerke, & my gossip dame Ales
And I my selfe, into the feldes went
My husbonde was at London all that Lent
I had the better laiser for to plese
And for to see, and eke for to be sene
Of lusti folke, what wist I where my grace
Was shapen for to been, or in what place.
Therefore made I my visitacions
To vigilies, and to processions
To preaching eke, and to pilgrimages
To plaies of miracles, and to mariages
And wered on my gaie scarlet gites
These wormes, ticke mought es, ne these mi-
Upon my parill fret hem neuer a dell (tes
And wost thou why? for they were vsed well
Now woll I tell forth what happed me
I saie, that in the feldes walked we
Till truely we had such daliaunce
This clerke and I, that of my purueiaunce
I speake to him, and saied how that he
If I were wedowe, should wedde me
For certainly, I saie for no bostaunce
Yet was I neuer without purueiaunce
Of mariage, ne of other things eke
I hold a Mouses wit not worth a leke
That hath but one hole to sterten to
And if that faile, than is all idoe
I bare him on hand he had enchaunted me

My

My dame taught me forsoth that subtilte
And eke I saied, I met of him all night
He would a slaine me, as I laie vpright
And all my bedde was full of very blood
But yet I hope truely he should do me good
For blood betokeneth gold, as I was taught
and al was fals, I dremed of him right nauht
But as I folowed aie my dames lore
As well of that, as of other things more.
But now sir let me se, what shal I sain
A ha, by God I haue my tale againe
Whan that my fourth husband was on bere
I wept algate, and made sorie chere
As wines moten, for it is vsage
And with my kerchefe couered my visage
But for that I was purueied of a make
I wept but small, and that I vndertake
To church was my husband born on morow
With neighbours, that for him made sorow
And Jenkin our clerke was one of tho
As helpe me God, whan that I sawe him go
After the bere, me thought he had a pace
Of legges and of feete, so cleane and so faire
That all my hart, I yaue vnto his hold
He was I trowe twentie winter old
And I was fourtie, if that I shall saie for the
But yet I had alwaie a coltes tothe
Gaptothed I was, and that became me wele
I had the print of dame Venus stele
As help me God, I was a lustie one
And faire, riche, & yong, and well begone
And truely, as mine husband told me
I had the best queint that might be
For certes I am all fully Venerian
In felyng, and my hart is Marcian
Venus me yaue my lust and my likerousnesse
And Mars yaue me my sturdie hardinesse
Mine ascendent was Taure, & Mars therein
Alas alas, that euer loue was sin
I folowed aie mine inclination
By vertue of my constellation
That made me I couth not withdrawe
My chamber of Venus from a good felawe
Yet haue I Martes marke vpon my face
And also in a nother priuie place
For God so wisely be my saluation
I loued neuer by no discrecion
But euer folowed mine appetite
All were he short, long, blacke, or white
I tooke no kepe, so that he liked me
How poore he was, ne eke of what degre
What should I saie but at ỳ monethes end
This wily clerk Jenken, that was so hend.
Hath wedded me with great solempnite
And to him yaue I all the londe and fee
That euer was yeuen me here biforе
But afterward repented me full sore
He nolde suffre nothing of my list
By God he smote me ones with his fist
For that I rent out of his booke a lefe
That of that stroke, my eres wex defe
Stubborne I was, as is a Lionesse
And of my tongue a verray jangleresse
And walke I would, as I had done biforne
From hous to hous, although he had it sworne
For which full oft time would he preache
And me of old Romain iestes teache
How he Sulpicius Gallus left his wife
And her forsoke terme of his life
Not but for open heed he her saie
Looking out at his doore on a daie
An other Romain told he me by name
That for his wife was at a Sommer game
Without his weting, he forsoke her eke
And than would he vpon his Bible seke
That ilke prouerbe of Ecclesiaste
Wher he commaundeth, and forbiddeth faste
A man shal not suffre his wife go roule about
Than would he saie right thus out of dout
Who so buildeth his hous all of salowes
And prieketh his blind hors ouer ỳ falowes
And suffreth his wife for to seche hallowes
He is worthy to be honged on the gallowes
But all for nought, I set not an hawe
Of his prouerbes, ne of his old sawe
Ne I would not of him corrected be
I hate him that my vices telleth me
And so doe mo (God wote) than I
This made him wode with me all vtterly
I nolde not forbeare him in no caas
Now wol I saie you soth by S. Thomas
Why that I rent out of his booke a lefe
For which he smote me, that I was defe.
He had a booke, that gladly night and daie
For his disport, he would rede alwaie
He cleped it Valerie, and Theophraste
At which booke he lough alway full faste
And eke there was a clerke somtime at Rome
A Cardinall, that hight sainct Jerome
That made a booke against Jouinian
In which booke there was eke Tertulian
Crisippus, Trotula, and Helowis
That was Abbesse nat ferre fro Paris
And eke the parables of Salomon
Ouides art, and bookes many one
And all these were bounden in one volume
And euery night and daie was his custome
(Whan he had leiser and vacacioun
From other worldly occupacioun)
To reden in this booke of wicked wines

He

He knew of hem mo legendes and lines
Than been of good women in the Bible
For trusteth well, it is an impossible
That any clerke would speake good of wiues
But if it been of holy saintes liues
Ne of none other woman neuer the mo
Who peinteth the Lion, tell me who?
By God, if women had written stories
As clerkes han, within her oratories (nesse
They would haue wrought of men more wicked-
Than all the marke of Adam may redresse
The children of Mercury and Venus
Been in her working full contrarious
Mercury loueth wisedome and science
And Venus loueth riot and dispence
And for her diuers disposicion
Eche falleth in others exaltacion
And thus God wote, Mercury is desolate
In Pisces, where Venus is exaltate
And Venus falleth where Mercury is reised
Therefore no woman of no clerke is preised
The clerke whan he is old, & may nought do
Of Venus werkes, not worth his old sho
Than sit he doune, and write in his dotage
That women can not kepe her mariage
But now to purpose, why I told thee
That I was beaten for a booke parde
Upon a night Jenkin, that was our sire
Redde vpon his booke, as he sate by the fire
Of Eue first, that for her wickednesse
Was all mankind brought to wretchednesse
For which ỳ Jesu Christ himself was slain
That bought vs with his hart blood again
Lo here expresse of women may ye find
That woman was the losse of all mankind
Tho rad he me how Sampson lost his heres
Sleping, his leman cut hem with her sheres
Through which treason lost he both his yen
Tho rad he me, if that I shall not lien
Of Hercules, and of his Deianire
That caused him to set himself a fire
Nothing forgat he the care and the wo
That Socrates had with his wiues two
How that Xantippe cast pisse on his hedde
This sely man sat still, as he were dedde
He wiped his hedde, no more durst he sain
But er the thunder stint there cometh rain
Of Paliphae, that was Quene of Crete
For shrewednesse him thought that tas[illegible] swete
Fie, speake no more, it is a grisely thing
Of her horrible lust and her liking
Of Clitemnestra for her lecherie.
That falsely made her husbond for to die
He rad it with well good deuocion
He told me eke, for what occasion
Amphiaraus at Thebes lost his life
My husbond had a legend of his life
Eriphilem that for an ouch of gold
Hath priuily vnto the Grekes told
Where that her husbond hid him in a place
For which he had at Thebes sory grace
Of Lima told he me, and of Lucie
They both made her husbonds for to die
That one for loue, that other was for hate
Lima her husbond on an euin late
Enpoisoned had, for that she was his fo
Lucia likewise lowed her husbond so
That for he should alway vpon her thinke
She gaue him such a louemaner drinke
That he were dedde, er it were morow
And thus algates husbonds han sorow
Than told he me, how one Latumeius
Complained to his felow Arius
That in his garden growed such a tree
On which he said) that his wiues three
Honged himself for harts despitous
O lefe brother qd. this Arius)
Yeue me a plant of this blissful tre
And in my garden planted shall it be.
Of later date of wiues hath he redde
That some han slain her husbands in bedde
And let her lechour dight hem all the night
Whiles that the corps lay in flore vpright
And some had driuen nailes in her brain
Whiles they slepe, & thus they haue hem slain
Some haue yeue hem poison in her drinke
He spake more harme than hart may thinke
And therewithall he knew mo prouerbes
Than in this world ther groweth grasse or herbes
Bet is (qd he) thine habitacion
Be with a Lion, or a foule Dragon
Than with a woman vsing for to chide
Bet is (qd. he) high in the rofe to abide
Than with an angry wife doun in an hous
They been so wicked and so contrarious
They haten, that their husbonds louen aie
He said, a woman cast her shame awaie
Whan she cast of her smocke: and farther mo
A faire woman, but she be chast also
Is like a gold ring on a Sowes nose
Who could wene, or who could suppose
The wo, that in mine hart was and pine
And whan I saw he would neuer fine
To reden on this cursed booke all night
All sodainly three leues haue I plight
Out of his booke, right as he radde, and eke
I with my fist so tooke him on the cheke
That in the fire he fell backward adoun
And vp he stert, as doeth a wode Lion
And with his fist he smote me on mine hedde

That

That in the floze I lay as I were dedde
And whan he sey how still that I lay
He was agast, and would haue fled away
Till at the last out of my swoun I brayed
Oh, hast thou slain me false theefe I saied
For my lond thus hast thou murdred me
Et I be dedde, yet woll I ones kisse thee
And nere he came, and kneled faire adoun
And saied: dere suster, swete Alisoun
As helpe me God I shall thee neuer smite
That I haue doen it is thy selfe to wite
Forzeue it me, and that I thee beseke
And yet eft sones I hitte him on the cheke
And saied: theefe, thus much am I bewozke
Now woll I die, I may no lenger spekc.
But at the last, with mikell care and wo
We fell accozded with in our seluen two
He yaf me all the bridell in myne hond
To haue the gouernaunce of hous and lond
And of his tongue, and of his hond also
And made hem bzenne his booke anon tho
And whan I had gotten vnto me
By maistry, all the souerainte
Than he saied: mine owne true wife
Doe as thou list, the terme of all thy life
Kepe thyne honour, and eke mine estate
After that day we had neuer debate
God helpe me so, I was to him as kinde
As any wife fro Denmarke vnto Inde
And also true, and so was he to me
I pray to God, that sitte in Maieste
So blisse his soule, for his merry dere
Now woll I say my tale if ye woll here.
The frere lough whan he had heard all this
Now dame (qd. he) so haue I joy or blis
This is a long preamble of a tale
And whan the Sompner herd the frere gale
Lo (qd. this Sompner) by Goddes armes two
A Frere woll entermete him euermo
Lo good man, a Flie and eke a Frere
Woll fall in euery dish and eke matere
What speakest thou of preambulacion
What amble or trot, either peace or sit a doun
Thou lettest our disport in this mattere.
Ye woll thou so sir Sompner (qd. the Frere)
Now by my fay I shall, er that I go
Tell of a Sompner, soch a tale or two
That all the folke shull laugh in this place.
Now els Frere I beshrew thy face
(Quod this Sompner) and I beshrew me
But if I tell tales two or thre
Of Freres, er I come to Sittyngburne
That shall make thine hart for to murne
For well I wot thy pacience is goon.
Our host cried peace, and that anoon
And saied: let the woman tell her tale
Ye faren as folke, that dronken been of ale
Doe dame, tell forth your tale, and that is best
All redy sir (qd. she) right as you lest
If I haue licence of this worthy Frere
Yes dame, tell forth your tale, I woll it here.

¶ Here endeth the wife of Bathes Prologue, and here begynneth her Tale.

IN the old daies of king Artour
(Of which the Bretons speake great honour)
All was this lond fulfilled of fairy
The Elfe quene, with her ioly company
Daunsed full oft in many a grene mede
This was the old opinion as I rede
I speake of many an hundred yere ago
But now can no man se none elfes mo
For now the great charite and prayers
Of limitours and other holy Freres
That serchen euery land and euery streme
As thicke as motes in the Sunne beme
Blissing halles, chambers, kichens, & bowres
Citees, borowes, castelles, and hie toures
Thropes, Bernes, shepens, and Deiries
This maketh, that there been no fairies
For there as wont to walke was an Elfe
There walketh now the limitour himselfe
In vndermeles, and in morwynges
And saieth his Mattins, & his holy thinges
As he goeth in his limitacioun
Women may go safely vp and doun
In euery bush, and vnder euery tre
There nis none other incubus but he
And he ne will doen hem no dishonour.
And so fell it, that this kyng Artour
Had in his house a lusty bacheler
That on a day come ridyng fro the riuer
And happed, that alone as he was borne
He saw a maid walkyng him biforne
Of which maid anon, maugre her hed
(By very force) he birafte her maidenhed
For which oppression was soch clamour
And soch pursute vnto king Artour
That dampned was this knight to be dedde
By course of law, & should haue lost his hed
Peraventure soch was the statute tho
But that the Quene, and other ladies mo
So long prayden the king of grace
Till he his life graunted in that place

And

And yaue him to the quene, all at her will
To chese whether ỳ she would him saue or spill.
The quene thãketh ỳ king with al her might
And after this, thus spake she to the knight
whan she sey her time on a day.
Thou standeth yet (qd she) in such aray
That of thy life yet hast thou no suerte
I graunt thee thy life, if ỳ thou canst tell me
what thing is it, that women most desiren
Beware, and kepe thy necke bone from yren
And if thou canst not tel it me anon
Yet wol I yeue thee leue for to gon
A twelue moneth and a day, to seke and lere
An answere sufficient in this matere
And suertie wol I haue, er that thou passe
Thy body for to yelde in this place.
Wo was the knight, & sorowfully he siketh
But what, he may not don al as him liketh
And at last he chese him for to wende
And come ayen, right at the yeres ende
With such answer, as god wold him puruay
And taketh his leue, & wẽdeth forth his way
He seketh euery house and euery place
where as he hopeth for to finde grace
To lerne, what thing women louen most
But he ne couth arriuen in no cost
Where as he might finde in this matere
Two creatures acording ylere
Some said women loued best richesse
Some said honour, some said iolynesse
Some said riche aray, some said lust a bed
And ofte time to ben widowe and wed
Some said, that our herte is most y eised
Whan that we ben flatered and y plesed
He goeth full nye the sothe, I wol not lye
A man shall winne vs best with flaterye
And with attendaunce, and with busynesse
Ben we ilymed both more and lesse.
And some men sain how ỳ we louen best
For to ben fre, and do right as vs lest
And that no man repreue vs of our vice
But say that we be wise, and nothing nice
For trewly there nis none of vs all
If any wight wol clawe vs on the gall
That we nil kike, for that he saith vs sothe
Assaye, and he shal finde it, that so dothe
For we be neuer so vicious within
We woll be holden wise and cleane of sin.
And some men sain, ỳ great delite haue we
For to ben holde stable and eke secre
And in o purpose stedfastly to dwell
And nat bewrey thing that men vs tell
But that tale is not worth a rake stele
Pardie we women can nothing hele
Witnesse of Midas, woll ye here the tale.

Ouide, among other thinges small
Said, Midas had vnder his long heres
Growing on his heed, two asses eres
The which vice he hidde, as he best might
Ful subtelly from euery mannes sight
That saue his wife, there wiste of it no mo
He loued her most, and trusted her also
He prayed her, that to no creature
She nolde tellen of his disfigure.
She swore him, nat for all ỳ world to win
She nolde do that villany, ne that sin
To makẽ her husbonde haue so foule a name
She nold nat tel it for her owne shame
But natheles, her thought that she dide
That she so long should a counsaile hide
Her thought it swol so sore about her hert
That nedely some word she must a sert
And sith she durst tellen it to no man
Doun to a marris fast by she ran
Til she came there, her hert was on a fyre
And as a bitrout bumbeth in the myre
She laid her mouth vnto the water adoun
Bewray me not thou water with thy soun
Quod she, to thee I tell it, and to no mo
My husbonde hath long asses eres two
Now is myn hert al hole, now it is out
I might no lenger kepe it out of dout.
Here mowe ye se, though we a time abide
Yet out it mote, we can no counsaile hide
The remnaunt of the tale, if ye will here
Redeth Ouide, and there ye may it lere.
This knight, of which my tale is specially
Whãn that he sawe, he might not come therby
This is to say, what women louen moste
Within his herte sorowful was his goste
But home he goth, he might not sojourne
The day was come, he must home returne
And in his way, it happed him to ride
In al his care, vnder a forest side
Where he sawe vpon a daunce go
Of ladies foure and twenty, and yet mo
Toward the daunce he drowe him, & ỳ verne
In hope that some wisdome should he lerne
But certainly, er that he came fully there
Vanished was the daunce, he nist not where
No creature saw he that bare life
Saue in ỳ grene, he saw sitting an olde wife
A fouler wight there may no man deuise
Againe the knight the olde wife gan arise
And said: sir knight, here forth lieth no way
Tell me what ye seken by your fay
Peraduenture it may the better be
This olde folke conne much thing (qd she)
My lefe mot her (qd this knight) certaine
I nam but dead, but if that I can saine

What thing it is, that women most desire
Coud ye me wisse, I wold quite well your hire
Plight me thy trouth here in my hād (qd. she)
The next thing that I require of the
Thou shalt it do, if it be in thy might
And I woll tell it you, or it be night.
Haue here my trought (qd ẏ knizt) I graunt
Than qd she, I may me well auaunt
Thy life is safe, for I woll stond therby
Upon my life, the quene will say as I
Let se, which is the proudest of hem all
That wereth on a kerchefe or a call
That dare nay say, of that I shall you teche
Let vs go forth without lenger speche.
Tho rowned she a pistell in his ere
And bad him to be glad, and haue no fere.
Whā they ben comen to ẏ court, this knizt
Said, he had hold his day, as he had right
And redy was his answere, as he said
Full many a noble wife, and many a maid
And many a widow, for that they be wise
(The quene her selfe, sitting as a iustice)
Assembled ben his answere for to here
And afterward this knight was bode apere
To euery wight commaunded was silence
And that the knight should tell in audience
What thing that worldly women loued best
This knight ne stode not still as doth a best
But to his question anon answerd
With manly voice, that all the court it herd
My liege lady generally, qd. he
Women desiren to haue souereinte
As well ouer her husbonds as her loue
And for to ben in maistry hem aboue
This is your most desire, though ye me kill
Doth as you list, I am here at your will.
In all the court nas there wife ne maid
Ne widow, that contraried, that he said
But said, he was worthy han his life
And with that word, up sterte the old wife
Which ẏ the knight fond sitting on ẏ grene
Mercy (qd. she) my soueraine lady quene
Er that your court depart do me right
I taught this answere vnto this knight
For which he plight me his trouth there
The first thing I would of him requere
He wold it do, if it lay in his might
Before the court than pray I the sir knight
(Qd. she) that thou me take vnto thy wife
For well thou wost, that I haue kept thy life
If I say false, say nay vpon thy fay.
This knight answerd, alas and welaway
I wot right well that such was my beheste
For Goddes loue chese a new requeste
Take all my good, and let my body go.
Nay qd she, thā I shrewe vs both two
For though that I be foule, olde, and pore
I nolde for al the metall ne the ore
That vnder yerth is graue, or lithe aboue
But if I thy wife were and thy loue.
My loue (qd he) nay my dampnacion
Alas that any of my nacion
Should euer so foule disparaged be
But al for nought, the ende is this, that he
Constrained was, ẏ nedes must he her wed
And taketh this olde wife, and goeth to bed.
Now wolden some men say parauenture
That for my negligence, I do no cure
To tellen you the ioy and the array
That at the feast was that dike day.
To the which thing answere shortly I shall
I say there was no ioy ne feest at all
There nas but heuinesse and much sorowe
For priuely he wedded her on a morowe
And al day after hidde him as an oule
So woo was him, his wife loked so foule.
Gret was ẏ sorow ẏ knizt had in his thouzt
Whā he was with his wife a bedde ibrought
He walo weth and turneth to and fro.
His olde wife lay smiling euermo
And said: O dere husbonde, O benedicite
Fareth euery knight thus as ye
Is this the lawe of king Arthurs house?
Is euery knight of his loue so daungerous?
I am your owne loue, and eke your wife
I am she, which that saued hath your life
And certes yet did I neuer you vnright
Why fare ye thus with me the first night
Ye faren like a man that had lost his wit
Fy, what is my gilt, for gods loue tel me it
And it shal be amended if I may.
Amended (qd this knight) alas nay nay
That wol not ben amended neuer mo
Thou art so lothly, and so olde also
And therto comen of so lowe a kinde
That litle wōder is thouz I walow & winde
So would god (qd he) mine hert would breste,
Is this (qd she) the cause of your vnreste
Ye certainly qd he, no wonder nis.
Now sir (qd she) I couth amend all this
If that me list, er it were daies three
So wel ye might beare you vnto me.
But for ye speke of such gentilnesse
As is discended out of olde richesse
That therfore shullen ye be gentilmen
Such errogaunce is not worth an hen.
Lo who that is most e vertuous alway
Preuy and aperte, and most entendeth aye
To do the gentil dedes, that he can
Take him for the greatest gentilman.

Christ

Chriſt would we clamed of him our gẽtilneſſe
Not of our elders, for our old richeſſe
For though they geue vs all their heritage
For which we clayme to ben of hie parage
Yet may they not byqueth, for nothing
To none of vs, their vertuous liuing
That made them gentil men called be
And bad vs folowen them in ſuch degre.
Well can the wiſe poete of Florence
That hight Dante, ſpeke in this ſentence
Lo in ſuch maner rime is Dantes tale
Ful ſeldē vp riſeth by his braunches hale
Proweſſe of man: for God of his goodneſſe
Wol that we clayme of him our gentilneſſe
For of our elders may we nothing clayme
But tẽporal thing, ỹ men may hurt & maime
Eke euery wight wot this as wel as I
If gentilnes were planted naturally
Vnto a certaine lynage doun the line
Prely and aperte, that wold they neuer fine
To done of gentilneſſe the fayre office
They might don no vilany ne vice
Take fire & beare it into the derkeſt hous
Betwixt this and the mount Caucaſus
And let men ſhitte the doores, and go thenne
Yet wol the fire as faire lye and brenne
As twentie thouſand men might it beholde
His office naturall ay wol it holde
Vp peril of my life, til that it dye.
Here may ye ſe wel, how that genterye
Is not annexed to poſſeſſion
Sithen folke don not her operacion
Alway as doth the fyre, lo in his kinde
For god it wot, men may ful often finde
A lordes ſonne done ſhame and vilany
And he that wol haue pryſe of his gentry
For he was borne of a gentil houſe
And had his eldres noble and vertuouſe
And nil him ſelfe don no gentil dedes
Ne folow his gentil auncetre that deed is
He nis not gentil, be he duke or erle
For vilaines ſinful dedes maketh a cherle.
For gentilneſſe nis but the renomme
Of thine auncetres, for her high bountie
Which is a ſtrong thing to ſtonde perſonne
The gentilneſſe commeth fro God alone
Than comth our very gentilneſſe of grace
It was nothing bequeth vs with our place.
Thinketh how noble, as ſaith Valerius
Was thilke Tullius Hoſtilius
That out of pouertie roſe to hie nobleſſe
Redeth Seneck, and redeth eke Boece
There ſhall ye ſeen expreſſe, no drede is
That he is gentile, that doth gentile dedes
And therfore dere huſbond, I thus conclude
Al were it that mine auncetres were rude
Yet may that hie God and ſo hope I
Graunt me grace to liue vertuouſly
Than am I gentil, whan I begynne
To liue vertuously, and leaue ſinne
And there as ye of pouertie me repreue
The hie God, on whom that we bileue
In wilful pouerte chees to lede his life
And certes euery man, maide, and wife
May vnderſtond, Jeſu heuen king
Ne would not chuſe a vicious liuing.
Glad pouerte is an honeſt thing certaine
This wol Senecꝰ and other clerkes ſaine
Who ſo would holde him paide of his pouert
I holde him riche, al had he not a ſhert
He that coueitith is a full poore wight
For he wold han, that is not in his might
But he ỹ nought hath, ne coueiteth to haue
Is rich, although ye hold him but a knaue
Very pouert is ſinne proprely
Iuuenal ſaith of pouert merily
The poore man, whan he goeth by the way
Before the theues, he may ſing and play
Pouert is hateful good: and as I geſſe
A full great bringer out of buſineſſe
A great amender eke of ſapience
To him that taketh it in pacience
Pouert is, although it ſeme elenge
Poſſeſſion, that no wight wil chalenge
Pouerte ful often, whan a man is lowe
Maketh his god and eke him ſelfe to knowe.
Pouert a ſpectacle is, as thinketh me
Through which one may his verey freendes ſe
And therfore ſin that I you not greue
Of my pouert, no more me repreue.
Now ſir, eke of elde ye repreued me
And certes ſir, though none auctorite
Were in no booke ye gentile of honour
Saine that men ſhuld an old wight honour
And clepe him father for his gentilneſſe
And auctours ſhal I finde, as I geſſe.
Now there as ye ſeine, ỹ I am foule and olde
Than drede you not to ben a cokewolde
For filthe, elthe, and foule, alſo mote I the
Ben great wardeins upon chaſtite
But natheles, ſin I know your deſire
I ſhal fulfill your worldly appetite
Chuſe now, quod ſhe, one of theſe things two
To haue me foule and old, til that I dey
And be to you a trewe humble wife
And neuer you diſpleaſe in al my life
Or elis wol you haue me yong and faire
And take your auenture of the reſorte
That ſhal come to your houſe, bicauſe of me
Or in ſome other place, may well be

Now chese youre felwen whether ȳ you liketh
This knight maketh him, and loze liketh
But at the last, he said in maniere
My lady and my loue, and wife so dere
I put me in youre wife gouernaunce
Chese by your selfe, whiche may be moze ple=
And most honour to you & me also (saunce
I do no force whether of the two
For as you liketh, it suffiseth me.
Than haue I gote of you ȳ maistry (qd she)
Sin I may chese, and gouerne as my life
Ye certes wife (qd he) I hold it for the beste
Kisse me (qd she) we be no lenger wrothe
For by my troueth, I will be to you bothe
This is to say, to be both faire and good
I pray to God that I mote sterue wood
But I to you be also good and trewe
As euer was wife, sithen ȳ world was newe
And but I be to morow as faire to sene
As any Lady, Empresse, or Quene
That is betwene Est and eke the West
Doeth worth my life right as you lest
Cast vp the courtesie, and loke how it is.
And whan this knight sawe all this
That she so faire was, and so yong therto
For ioy he hent her in his armes two
His herte bathed in a bathe of blisse
A thousand times a towe he gan her kisse
And she obeyed him in euery thing
That mought done him pleasure or liking
And thus they liued vnto her liues ende
In parfite ioye: and Jesu Christ vs sende
Husbondes meke, yong, and freshe a bedde
And grace to ouerlyue hem that we wedde,
And I pray to God, to shorte her liues
That will not be gouerned by her wiues
And olde, and angry nygardes of dispence,
God send hem soone a very pestilence.

¶ Here endeth the wife of Bathes
tale, and here begynneth the
Freres Prologue.

THis worthy limitour, this noble Frere
He made alway a maner louring there
Vpon the Sompner, but for honestee
No villanye wordes as yet to him spake he
But at the last, he said to the wife
Dame, God yeue you right good life
Ye haue touched here, a full great difficulte
Ye haue said much thing right wel I faye
But dame, here as we riden by the waye
Us nedeth not to speken but of game
And leue auctorities a goddes name
To preching, and to schole of clergie,
But if it like vnto this compaine
I wol you of a Sompner tell a game
Pardee ye may wel knowe by the name
That of a Sompner may no good be saide
I pray, that none of you be yuell apaide
A Sompner is a renner vp and doun
With maundements, for fornication
And is ybeate at euery townes ende.
Thy spake our hoste & said sir ye shuld ben
And curteis, as a man of your estate (hende
In this compaine we wol no debate
Telleth your tale, and let the Sompner be
Nay (qd the Sompner) let him say to me
What so him list: when it cometh to my lote
By God I shall him quite euery grote
I shall him tell what a great honour
It is, to be a flattering limitour
And eke of many an other maner crime
Which needeth nat to rehersen at this time
And of his office I shall him tell ywis
Our hoste answered: peace, no more of this
And afterwarde he said vnto the Frere
Tell forth your tale, mine owne maister dere.

¶ Here endeth the Freres Prologue,
and here after followeth
his tale.

WHylome there was
dweling in my contree
An Archedeken, a man
of hye degree
That boldly did execucion
In punishing of fornicacion
Of witchecraft, and eke of bawdrie
Of defamacion, and aduoutrie
Of church reues, and of testamentes
Of contractes and lacke of sacramentes
Of vsery, and of simony also
But certes lecheroures did he much wo
They shoulden sing, if they were hent
And smale tythers they were soule yshent
If any person would vpon hem plaine
There might affert hem no pecunial paine
For small tithes, and small offring
He made the people pitously to sing
For er the bishop caught hem with his hoke
They were in the archedekens boke
And than had he (through his iurisdiction)

Power

Power to done on hem correction
He had a Sompner redy to his hond
A slier boy was there non in England
For subtelly he had his espiayle
That taught him where he might auayle
He couth spare of lechours one or two
To techen him to foure and twenty mo
For though this sompner wode wer as an hare
To tell his harlotry I wolle not spare
For we ben out of his correction
They haue of vs no iurdiction
Ne neuer shullen, terme of all her liues.
Peter so ben women of the stewes
(Qd. this Sompner) ypput out of our cure.
Peace with mischaūce & with misauenture
Said our host, and let him tell his tale
Now telleth forth and let the Sompner gale
Ne spareth not, mine owne maister dere.
This false theefe, this sompner (qd. the Frere)
Had alway baudes redy to his hond
As any hauke to lure, in England
That telleth him all the secre that they knew
For her aquaintaunce was nat come a new
They weren his aprowers prively
He toke him self a great profit therby
His maister knew not alway what he wan
Without maundement, a lend man
He cond sommen, on paine of christs curse
And they were glad to fillen his purse
And made him great feestes at the nale
And right as Judas had purs'd smale
And was a theefe, right such a theefe was he
His maister had but halfe his duetie
He was (if I shall yeue him his laud)
A theefe, a sompner, and eke a baud.
He had eke wenches of his retinue
That whether sir Roberd or sir Hue
Or John, or Rafe, or who so that it were
That lay by hem, they told it in his ere
Thus were the wenches and he of one assent
And he would fetch a fained maundement
And sommon hem to the chapiter both two
And pill the man, and let the wench go
Than wold he say, frend I shall for thy sake
Do striken the out of our letters blake
Thou dare no more as in this case trauaile
I am thy frend, there I may the auaile
Certaine he knew of bribries mo
Than possible is to tell in yeres two
For in this world nis dogge for the bowe
That can an hurt dere from an hole know
Bet than the Sompner knew a slie lechour
Or auouter, or els any paramour
For that was the fruit of all his rent
Therfore on it he sette all his entent.

And so befell that ones on a day
This Sompner waiting euer on his pray
Rode for to sumnon an old widow a Ribibe
Fayning a cause, for he would haue a bribe
And happed that he saw before him ride
A gay yoman vnder a forest side
A bow he bare, and arrowes bright and shine
He had vpon him a courtpie of grene
An hat vpon his heed with strings blake
Sir qd. this Sompner, hail and wel itake
Welcome qd. he, and euery good felaw
Whider rydest thou vnder ỹ greenwood shaw
Said this yoman, wilt thou fer to day?
This sompner him answerd, and said: nay
Here fast by (qd. he) is mine intent
To riden for to reisen vp a rent
That longeth to my lordes duete.
Art thou then a bailie? ye (qd. he)
He durst nat than for very filth and shame
Say that he was a sompner, for the name
Depardieux, qd this yoman lefe brother
Thou art a bayly, and I am another
I am vnknowen, as in this countre
Of thine acquaintaunce I wol pray the
And eke of brotherhed, if that thou list
I haue golde and siluer in my chist
If that ye happe to come in our shire
All shall be thine, right as thou wolte desire
Grāt mercy qd this sompner, by my faithe
Euerich in other his trueth laithe
For to be sworne brethren, till they dey
And with that word they riden forth her wey
This sompner with ỹ, was as ful of iāgles
As ful of venim, as ben these wariangles
And euer enquiring vpon euery thing
Brother qd he, where is your dwelling
Another day, if that I should you seche
This yoman him answerd in soft speche
Brother (qd he) fer in the North contre
Where as I hope sometime I shal the se
Or we depart, I shall the so well wisse
That of mine house thou shalt neuer misse.
Now brother, qd the sompner, I you pray
Teche me while we riden by the way
Sith that ye ben a bayly, as am I
Some subtelte, tel me faithfully
In mine office, how I may most winne
And spareth not for conscience ne for sinne
But as my brother, tel me how don ye.
Now by my trouth brother dere, said he
As I shall tellen thee a faithfull tale
My wages ben ful straite and smale
My lorde is harde to me and daungerous
And mine office ful labourous
And therfore, by extorcion I lyue

Forsoth all that men woll me yeue
Algate by sleyght or by violence
From yere to yere I wyn all my dispence
I can no better telen faithfully
Now certes (qd. the sompnour) so fare I
I spare not to take God it wote
But if it be to heuy or to hote
That I may getten in counsayle priuily
No maner conscience of that haue I
Nere myn extorcion, I might not liuen
Of such japes woll I not be shriuen
Stomake ne conscience knows I non
I shrew all these shrift fathers euerychon
Well be we met by God and swet saint Jame
But leue brother, tell me thy name
Qd. this Sompner in this meane while.
This yoman gan a litle for to smile
Brother qd. he, wolt thou that I the telle
I am a fende my dwelling is in helle
And here I ride about my purchasing
To wete where I may get any thing
My purchase is the effect of all my rent
Loke how thou ridest for the same entent
To win good, thou reckest neuer how
Right so fare I, for ride woll I now
Unto the worldes end for a pray
Ah, qd. this sompner, benedicite, what ye say
I wend ye were a yoman trewly
Ye haue a manes shape as well as I
Haue ye a figure than determinate
In helle, there ye ben in your estate?
Nay certainly qd he, there haue we none
But whan vs liketh, we can take vs one
Or elis make you seme we ben shape
Somtime like a man or like an ape
Or like an Angel can I ride or go
It is no wonder thing though it be so
A lousy iuggler can disceue the
And parde yet can I more craft than he.
Why qd. ỹ Sompnour, ride ye than or gon
In sondry shappe, and not alway in one?
For we qd. he, woll vs such forme make
As most able is our praiers for to take
What maketh you to haue all this labour?
Full many a cause lefe sir Sompnour
Said this fende, but all thing hath time
The day is short, and it is passed prime
And yet ne gote I not hing in this day
I woll entend to winning, if that I may
And nat entend our wittes to declare
For brother mine, thy wittes ben all to bare
To vnderstand all, though I wold tel hem the
But for thou askest why labouren we
For somtime be we Goddes instrumentes
And meanes to done his commaundementes
When that him list on his creatures
In diuers art and in diuers figures
Withouten him we haue no might certain
If that him list to stonden there again
And somtime at our pray haue we leue
Onely the body, & nought the soule to greue
Witnesse of Job, whom we deden wo
And sometime haue we might of both two
This is to sain, of body and soule eke
And sometime we ben suffred for to seke
Upon a man, and don his soule vnrest
And nat his body, and all is for the best
Whan he withstandeth our temptacion
It is a cause of his saluacion
Al be it that it was not our entent
He should be safe, but that we would him hent
And sometime be we seruauntes vnto man
As the archbishoppe saint Dunstan
And to the apostle eke seruaunt was I.
Yet tell me qd. this Sompnour faithfully
Make ye you new bodies thus alway
Of elementes? the fende answered nay
Somtime we fain, and somtime we arise
With deed bodies in sondry wise
And speke as reuably, faire and well
As the Pythonesse did to Samuell
And yet would some men say it was nat he
I do no force of your deuinite
But o thing I warne the, I woll not jape
Thou wolt algates wete how we be shape
Thou shalt herafterward (my brother dere)
Come, where the nedeth not of me to lere
For thou shalt by thine owne experience
Conne in the chare rede of this sentence
Bette than Vergill, while he was on liue
Or Dant also. Now lette vs ride blithe
For I woll hold company with the
Till it be so that thou forsake me
Nay qd. this Sompnour ỹ shall not betide
I am a yoman knowen full wide
My trouth woll I hold to the, as in this caas
For though thou were the deuill Sathanas
My trouth woll I hold to my brother
As I am sworne, and ech of vs to other
For to be trew brother in this caas
And brother, we gon to our purchaas
Take thou thy part, that men woll the yeue
And I shall mine, and thus shall we both leue
And if that any of vs haue more than other
Let him be trew, & part it with his brother
I graunt qd. the deuill, by my fay
And with that word they riden forth her way
And right at the entring of the tounes end
(To which the sompner shope him for to wend)
They saw a cart, that charged was with hay

which

Whiche that a carter drouc forth on his waie
Depe was the way, for which the cart stood
This carter smote, & stirued as he were wood
Heit scot heit drok, what spare ye for ý stones
The fend qd. he, you fetche body and bones
As ferforth as euer ye were foled
So moche wo as I haue for you tholed
The deuill haue all, both hors, cart, and hay.
qd. this Sompner, here shal we haue a pray
And nere the fend he drue, as nought ne were
Full priuily, and rouned in his ere,
Herken brother herken, by thy faith
Hearest thou what the carter saith:
Hent it anon, for he hath yeue it thee
Both hay and cart, and eke his caples three.
Nay qd. the deuill God wot neuer a dele
It is not his intent trust me wele
Aske him thy selfe if thou trowest not me
Or els stint a while and thou shalt see
This carter thacked his horse on the croupe
And they begon to draw and to stoupe,
Heit now qd. he, that Iesus Christ you blesse
And all his handy werke both more and lesse
That was well itwight mine owne liard boy
I pray God saue thee and saint Loy
Now is my cart out of the slow parde.
Lo brother qd. the fend, what told I thee:
Here may you seen mine owne dere brother
The carle spake o thing but he thought another
Let vs go forth about our viage
Here won we nothing vpon carriage.
Whan ý thei comen somwhat out of ý toune
This Sompner to his brother gan to roune:
Brother qd. he, here wonneth an old rebecke
That had almost as lefe to lose her necke
As for to yeue a peny of her good
I woll haue xii. d. tho that shee were wood
Or I will sompne her to our office
And yet God wot of her I know no vice
But for thou canst nat, as in this countre
Win thy cost, take here ensample of me.
This Sompner clappeth at ý wedows gate
Come out he saied, thou old veritrate
I trow thou hast some frere or preest with thee
Who clappeth there said this wife, benedicite
God saue you sir, what is your sweet will.
I haue qd. he, of summons of thee here a bill
Up paine of curling looke that thou be
To morrow before our Archdeacons kne
To answer to the court of certaine thinges
Now lord qd. she, Iesu king of kinges
So wisely helpe me, as I ne may
I haue ben sicke, and that full many a day
I may not go so ferre, qd. she, ne ride
But I be dead, so pricketh it in my side
May I not aske a libell sir Sompnour
And answere there by my proctour
To soche thing as men would oppose me
Yes qd. this Sompner, pay anon let see
Twelfe pens to me, and I will thee acquite
I shall no profit haue hereof but lite,
My maister hath the profit and not I
Come of and let me ridden hastely
Giue me xii. pens I may no lenger tary
Twelfe pens qd. she, lady sainct Mary
So wisely helpe me out of care and sinne
This wide worlde though I would it winne
Ne haue I nat xii. d. within my hold
Ye know well that I am poore and old
Kith your almes on me poore wretch,
Nay than qd. he, the foule fend me fetch
If I thee excuse though thou shouldst be spilt:
Alas qd. she, God wot yet haue I no gilt
Pay me qd. he, or by sweet sainct Anne
I wil beare away the new panne
For debt, which thou owest me of old
When thou madest thy husbond cokold
I paied at home for thy correction.
Thou liest qd. she, by my saluacion
Ne was I neuer erenow, widow ne wife
Sompned vnto your court in all my life
Ne neuer I nas but of body trewe
Vnto the deuill black and rough of hewe
Yeue I thy body and my panne also.
And whan the deuill heard her curse so
Upon her knees, he said in this manere,
Now Mably, mine owne mother dere
Is this your will in earnest that ye seie
The deuill qd. she, fet him ere he die
And pan and all, but he woll him repent.
Nay old stotte, that is not mine intent
Qd. this sompner, for to repent me
For any thing that I haue had of thee
I would I had thy smocke and euery cloth.
Now brother qd. the deuill, be not wroth,
Thy body and this pan is mine by right
Thou shalt with me to hell yet to night
Where thou shalt knowen of our priuite
More than a maister of diuinite
And with ý word the foule fend him hent
Body and soule, he with the deuill went
Where that sompners haue their heritage
And God that made after his image
Mankind, saue and guide vs all and some
And leaue the sompner good man to become.
Lordings I could haue told you, qd. this frere
Had I had leiser, of this sompner here
After the text of Christ, Poule, and John
And of other doctours many one
Soch paines, as your hearts might agrise

Albeit, so that no tongue maie it deuise
Though that I might a thouland winter tel
The peines of that cursed hous of hell
But for to kepe vs from that cursed place
Wake, and pray Jesu of his grace
So kepe vs from the temptour Sathanas
Hardeneth this word, beware as in this cas
The Lion sitteth in his awaite alwaie
To slea the innocent, if that he maie
Disposeth aie your hartes to withstond
The fend, that you would make thral & bond
He maie not tempt you ouer your might
For Christ wol be your champion and knight
And praieth, that this Sompner him repent
Of his mildeede, er that the fende hun hent.

¶ Here endeth the Freres tale, and beginneth the Sompners Prologue.

THis Sompner in his stirropes hie stood
Upon this Frere, his hert was so wood
That like an Aspen leefe he quoke for ire
Lordinges (qd. he) but one thing I desire
I you beseech, that of your curtesie
Sithens ye han heard this false Frere lie
As suffreth me I may my tale tell
This Frere bosteth that he knoweth hell
And God wote that is litle wonder
Freres and fendes been but litle asonder
For parde, ye han oft time heard tell
How that a Frere rauished was to hell
In spirite ones by a visioun
And as an Angell led him vp and doun
To shew him the paines that there were
In all the place saw he not a Frere
Of other folke he saw inow in wo
Unto the angell spake the Frere tho
Now sir qd. he, han freres such a grace
That none of hem shall come in this place:
Yes qd. this Angell, many a millioun
And vnto Sathanas lad he him adoun
And now hath Sathanas such a taile
Broder than of a Carike is the saile
Hold vp thy taile thou Sathanas (qd. he)
Shew forth thine erse, let the frere se
Where is the nest of freres in this place
And er that halfe a furlong way of space
(Right as bees swarmen out of an hiue)
Out of the diuels erse they gan driue
Twenty thouland freres on a rout
And throughout hell swarmed al about
And comen ayen as fast as they might gon
And into his erse they crepten eucrichon
He clapt his taile ayen, and lay stil.
This Frere whan he loked had his fill
Upon the turments of this sorie place
His spirit God restored of his grace
Unto his body ayen, and he awoke
But natheles yet for fere he quoke
So was the diuels erse aie in his mind,
That is his heritage of very kind.
God saue you all saue this cursed frere
My prologue wol I end in this manere.

Here endeth the Sompners Prologue, and followeth his Tale.

LOrdings ther is in Yorkshire, as I gesse
A marish countrie called Holdernesse
In which there went a Limitour about
To preach and eke to beg it is no doubt,
And so befell that on a day this Frere
Had preached in a church in this manere
And specially aboucn euery thing
Exhorted he the people in his preaching
To trentals, and to yeuen for Gods sake
Wherwith men mighten holy houses make
There as diuine seruice is honoured
Not there as it is wasted and deuoured
Ne there it needeth not for to be yeuen
As to possessioners that mowen eis leuen
Thonked be God, in wele and aboundaunce
Trentals deliuereth qd. he fro penaunce
Her frendes souls, as well old as yong
Ykthat they be hastely ysong
Not for to hold a priest ioly and gay
(He singeth not but one Masse a day)
Deliuereth out qd. he, anon the souls
Full hard it is with flesh hoke or with oules
To be iclawed, or to bren or bake
Now spedeth you hastely for Christes sake.
And when this Frere had sayd al his entēt
With qui cum patre, forth his way he went
Whā folk in church had yeue him what hē lest
He went his way, no lenger would he rest
With scrip and tipped staffe, itucked hie
In euery house he gan to pore and prie
And begged meale and chese, or els corne
His fellow had a staffe tipped with horne
A paire of tables all of Iuorie

And

And a pointell polished fetously
And wrote alwaie the names as he stood
Of all folke, that yaue hem any good
Askaunce as he would for hem preie
Yeue vs a bullock, other a kie,
A Godders kidell, or a reppe of Cheese
Or els what ye list, I may not chese
A Godders halfpenie, or a Masse penie
Or yeue vs of your Brawne, if ye haue anie
A dagon of your blanket, leue dame
Our suster dere, lo here I write your name
Bacon or Beefe, or such thing as ye finde
A sturdie harlot went him ate behind
That was her hostes man: and bare a sacke
And that men yaue hem, laied it on his backe
And whan he was out at the doore anon
He plained away the names euer eychon
That he before had written in his tables
He serued hem with nedles and with fables.
Nay there thou lest Sompner (qd the Freere)
Peace (qd our hoste) for Christes mother dere
Tell forth thy tale, and spare it not at all.
So thrive I (qd the Sompner) so I shall.
So long he went fro hous to hous till he
Came to an hous, ther as he was wont to be
Refreshed more than in an hundred places
Sicke lay the good man, whose the place is
Bedred upon a couche lowe he lais
Deus hic (qd he) O Thomas freend good daie
Said this freere, curtesly and soft
Thomas God yeld it you full oft
Haue I upon this benche faren full weale
Here haue I eaten many a mery meale
And fro the benche he droue awey the Catte
And laied adoune his potent and his hatte
And eke his scrip, and set him soft adoune
His felawe was go walked in to the toune
Forth with his knaue, into that hostelrie
Where as he shope him that ilke night to lie.
O dere maister, qd this sicke man
How haue ye faren sithen March began
I saw you nat this fortenight and more.
God wot (qd he) labored haue I full sore
And specially for thy saluacion
Haue I said many a precious oration
And for our other frendes God hem blesse
I haue this day been at your church at messe
And said a sermon, after my simple wit
Not all after the text of holy writ
For it is hard to you, as I suppose
And therfore I will teache you all the glose
Glosing is a glorious thing certain
For letter slayeth, as we clerkes sain
There haue I hem taught to been charitable
And spend her good there as it is reasonable
And there I saw our dame, where is she?
Ponder in the yarde I trowe she be
Said this man, and she will come anon
Ete maister welcome ye be by saint John
Said this man, how fare ye hartely?
This freere ariseth up full curtisly
And her embraceth in his armes narowe
And kissed her sweete, as doth the Popingay
With his lippes, dame (qd he) right wele
As he that is your seruaunt euery dele
Thanked be God, that you maie foule a life
Yet saw I not this day in all my life
In all the church, lo God saue me
Ye God amende all faultes sir (qd she)
Algates welcome ye be, by my fae
Graunmercie dame, for that haue I found alwaie
But of your greate goodnesse, by your leue
I will praie you, that ye not you greue
I will with Thomas speake a little throwe
The curates been full negligent and slowe
To gropen tenderly a mannes conscience
In shrift, and in preaching is my diligence
And to studie on Peters wordes and Poules
I walke to fulfill the charitable meanes soules
To yelde Jesu Christ his proper rent
To spreade his wordes, is all mine entent.
Now by your leue dere maister (qd she)
Chideth him well for saint Charite
Ye is as angrie as a pismire
Though that he haue all that he can desire
Though I hir wrie a night, and make him warme
And ouer him laie my legge or mine arme
He groneth like our boze that lieth in the stie
Other disport of him right none haue I
I may not plese him in no maner caas.
O Thomas, je dous die, Thomas Thomas
This maketh the fend, this must been amended
Ire is a thing that God highly defended
And therof will I speake a word or tow
Now maister (qd the wife) er that I go
What will ye dine? I will go there about.
Now dame (qd he) je dous die sanz doute
Haue I not of a Capon but the liuer
And of your white bread, but a shiuer
And after that a rosted Pigges hedde
(But I nold de not for me no deall were dedde)
Than had I store for my sustinaunce
I am a man of litle sustenaunce
My spirite halt his foddring in the Bible
My bodie is ate so redy and so penible
To wake, that my body is delivde
I praie you dame, be ye nought anelde
Though I be frendly you my counsaile shewe
By God, I nolde haue told it but a fewe.
Nolde ye (qd she) but one word er you go

My

My child is dedde within these wekes two
Soone after that we went out of this tow
His death saw I by reuelacion
Sated this Frere at home in our Mansion
I bare well fain er that paste an houre
After his death I saw him borne to blisse
In mine avision God me so wisse
So did our Sexton, and our Frermerere
That han been trewe Freres fifty yere
They may now God be thanked of his loue
Waken hir lowsie, and walken alone
And bp I awoke, and all our couent eke
With many a teare trilling on our cheke
Without noise or clatering of belles
Te deum was our song, and nothing elles
Save that to Christ I laied an orison
Thanking him of my reuelacion
For lif and dame, truliche me right well
Our ordres been moste effectuell
And more we seen of Christes secret things
Than boysell folke, although they wer kings
We live in pouerte, and in abstinence
And boysell folke in richesse and dispence
In meate and drinke, and in her foule delite
We han this worldly lust all in despite
Lazar and Dines, liueden diuersely
And diuers guerdons had they thereby
Who so wol preye, he must fast and be cleane
And fatte his soule, and make his body leane
We fare as saieth the Apostle, clothe and food
Sufficeth vs, though they be not full good
The clennesse and the fasting of vs Freres
Maketh that Christ acceptethe our prayeres.
Lo Moses, fourtie daies & fourtie nights
Fasted, er that the hie God of his mights
Spake with him in the mount of Sinai
With emptie woomb, fasting many a daie
Receiued he the lawe, that was written
With Gods finger, and Helye well ye witten
In mount Oreb, er he had any speche
With the high God, that is our soules leche
He fasted long, and was in contemplaunce.
Aaron that had the temple in gouernaunce
And eke the other priestes euerichone
Into the temple whan they should gone
To prayen for the people, and doen seruice
They nold drinke in no manere wise
No drinke, that dronke might hem make
But there in abstinence preye and wake
Lest that they dedden, take hede what I saie
But they be sobre that for the people praie
Ware that I say, no more for it sufficeth
Our Lord Iesu, as holy writte deuiseth
Gaue his ensample of fasting and prayers
Therefore we Mendicants, we sely Freres
Been wedded to pouert and continence
To charite, humblenesse, and abstinence
To persecucion for right mekenesse
To weping, mercicombe, and clennesse
And therefore may ye see that our prayeres
(I speake of vs mendicants, we Freres)
Been to the hie God more acceptable
Than yours, with your feast at your table.
Fro Paradise first, if I shall not lie
Was man chaced out for his gloterie
And chast was man in Paradise certain
But herken now Thomas what I shal sain
I haue no text thereof, as I suppose
But I finde it in maner of a glose
That specially our swete Lorde Iesus
Spake this by vs Freres, whan he saied thus
Blessed be they that poore in spirite been
And so forth all the Gospell may ye seen
Whether it be like our profession
Or hers that swimmen in possession
Fie on her pompe, and on her glotonie
And on her lewednesse, I hem defie
Me thinketh they been like Iouinian
Fat as a whale, and walking as a Swan
All vinolent as botell in the spence
Her prayer is of full little reuerence
Whan they for soules saie the psalme of Dauid
Lo bousse they sain, (Cor meum eructauit)
Who folweth Christes Gospell & his lore
But we that humble be, chaste, and poore
Workers of Gods worde, and not auditours
Therefore right as an hauke at a lours
Up springeth in to the aire in maners
Of charitable and chast busie Freres
Waken her lours to Gods eares two
Thomas Thomas so more I ride or go
And by that lord that cleped is saint Yue
Ne thou our brother were thou shuldest thriue
For in our Chapitre praie we day and night
To Christ that he thee send health & might
Thy body for to welden vertely.
God wote (q he) nothing therof I fele
As helpe me Christ, as in fewe yeres
Haue I spended upon diuers maner Freres
Wel many a pound, yet fare I neuer the bet
Certain my good haue I almoste beset
Farewell my good, for it is almost ago.
The ferse and werd (q Thomas doest thou so
What nedeth thee diuers Freres seche
What nedeth him that hath a perfite leche
To seche other leches in the toun
Your inconstaunce is your confusion
Hold ye me than, or els our couent
To praien for you insufficient
Thomas, Thomas so wis vs not worth a mite

Your

Your maladie is for we haue to lite
A,peue that couent half a quarter Otes
And peue that couent four and twenty grotes
And peue that Frere a penne, and let him go
Nay nay Thomas,it may nothing be so
What is a farthing worth parted in twelue?
Lo,eche thing that is oned in him selue
Is more strong,than whan it is so skattered
Thomas,of me thou shalt not been flattered
Thou wouldst haue all our labour for nought
The hie God, ꝑ all this world hath wrought
Saith,that the workman is worthy his hire
Thomas,naught of your treasour I desire
As for my self,but that all our couent
To praie for you is aie so diligent
And for to builden Christes owne chirche
Thomas,if ye woll learne for to wirche
Of building vp of chirches may ye finde
If it be good,in Thomas life of Inde.
Be liggen here full of angre and of ire
With which ꝑ diuel setteth your hart on fire
And chiden here this holy innocent
Your wife,that is so meke and patient
And therefore trowe me Thomas if you lesse
Ne chide not with thy wife,as for the best
And beare this worde a waie by thy fauthe
Touching such thing, lo what ꝑ wise saieth
Within thy house be thou no Lion
To thy subiectes doe thou none oppression
Ne make not thine acquaintaunce to flee
And yet Thomas,eftsones charge I thee
Beware of her that in thy bosom slepeth
Ware thee of the serpent,that so slily crepeth
Under the grasse, and stingeth full subtelly
Beware my sonne,and herken paciently
That twenty thousand men han lost her lines
For striuing with her lemmans & her wiues
Now sens ye haue so holy and meke a wife
What needeth you Thomas to make strife?
There nis iwis no serpent so cruell
(Whan men treden on his taile) ne half so fell
As a woman is,whã she hath caught an ire
Uengeaunce is than all her desire.
Ire is a sinne,one of the greatest of seuen
Abhominable vnto the high God of heuen
And to himself it is a distruction
This euery leude Uicare and Parson
Can saie, how ire engendreth homicide
Ire is in sothe the executour of pride.
I could of ire saie so much sorowe
That my tale should last till to morowe
And therefore I pray God both day & night
That to an irous man he sende litle might
It is great harme, and eke great pitee
To set an irous man in hie degree.

Whilom there was an irous potestate
As saith Seneke, that during his estate
Upon a day out ridden knightes two
And as fortune would it should be so
That one of hem came home, ꝑ other nought
Anon the knight before the iudge is brought
That said thus: thou hast thy felowe slain
For which I deme thee to the death certain
And to an other knight commaunded he
Go lede him to the death I charge thee
And happed as they went by the weie
Toward the place, there he should deie
The knight came, which mē wend had be ded
Than thought they it was the best rede
To lede hem bothe to the Judge againe
They saiden lord, the knight hath not slain
His felowe, here he stant hole aliue.
Ne shullen be dedde (qd he) so mote I thriue
That is to saie, both one, two, and three
And to the first knight, right thus spake he.
I damn ed thee, thou must algate be dedde
And thou must also lese nedes thine heddе
For thou art cause why thy felowe dieth
And to the third knight right thus he saieth
Thou hast not don that I commaunded thee
And thus he did hem slean all three.

Irouse Cambises was eke dronkelewe
And aie delited him to been a shrewe
And so befell, a lorde of his meine
That loued wel vertuous moralite
Saied on a day bitwixt hem two right thus
A lorde is lost, if he be aught vicious
And dronkennesse eke is a foule record
Of any man, and namely of a lorde
There is many an ye and many an eere
Awaiting on a lorde, he notte were:
For Goddes loue drinketh more temperatly
Wine maketh a man to lese wretchedly
His minde, and his limmes euerichone.
The reuers shalt thou se (qd he) anone
And preue it by thine owne experience
That wine ne doeth to folke no such offence
There nis no wine bireueth me my might
Of honde, of foote, ne of mine ye sight
And for dispite he dronke mochell more
An hundred times than he did before
And right anon this cursed irous wretche
Let this knightes sonne biforne him fetche
Cõmaunding him he should beforne him stond
And sodainly he tooke his bowe in honde
And vp the string he pulled to his eere
And with an arrow he slough the child there.
Now whither haue I a liker hond or none
Quoth he, Is all my might and minde agone?

Hath

Hath wine bireuen me mine eyen sight.
What should I tell the answer of the knight
His sonne was slain, there is no more to saie
Beware therefore, with lordes how ye plaie
Sing Placebo, and I shall if I can
But if it be vnto a poore man
To a poore man, one should his vices tell
But not to a lord, though he should go to hel.

Lo irous Cirus, thilke Persien
How destroyed he the riuer of Gisene
For that an hors of his was dreint therein
Whan he went Babilon to winne
He made that the riuer was so small
That men might ride and waden ouer all
Lo, what saied he, that so well teache can
Ne be no felowe to none irous man
Ne with no woode man walke by the waie
Lest thou repent, I will no farther saie
Now Thomas leue brother, leaue thine ire
Thou shalt me find as iust, as is a squire
Hold not the diuels knife ate in thine hart
Thine anger doth thee all to sore smart
But shew to me all thy confession.
Nay (qd. the sicke man) by sainct Simon
I haue be shriue this day of my Curate
I haue told him all mine estate
Nede hath no more to speake of it, saieth he
But if me list, of mine humilite.
Yeue me thā of thy gold, to make our cloister
Qd. he, for many a mussle & many an Oister
Whan other men haue been full well at ease
Hath been our food, our cloister for to rese
And yet God wot, vnneth the foundament
Parformed is, ne of our pauement
Is not a tile yet within our wones
By God we owen fourty pound for stones
Now helpe Thomas, for him ỳ harowed hell
For elis mote we our bookes sell
And if you lacke our predicacion
Than goeth this world all to destruction
For who so woll fro this world vs bireue
So God me saue, Thomas by your leaue
He would bireue out of this world the sonne
For who can techen & worchen as we conne
And that is not of litle time (qd. he)
But sith Helie was, or Helise
Han Freres been, that find I of record
In charite, ithonked be our Lord
Now Thomas, for sainct charite
And doune anon he litteth on his kne.
This sicke man wore nie wood for ire
He would the Frere had been a fire
With his false dissimulacion
Such thinges as been in my possession
(Qd. he) that may I gine, and none other
Ye saine me thus, how ỳ I am your brother
Yes certes (qd. this Frere) trusteth me weele
I tooke our dame our letter and our sele.
Now (qd. he) well, and somwhat shal I yeue
Vnto your holy couent, while I liue
And in thine hond, thou shalt it haue anone
On this condicion, and other none
That thou depart it so, my leue brother
That euery Frere, haue as moch as other
This shalt thou sweare on thy profession
Without fraud or cauelacion.
I sweare it (qd the Frere) by my faieth
And therewithall his hond in his he laieth
Lo here my faith, in me shall be no lacke.
Than put thine hond doune by my backe
Saied this man, and grope well behind
Bineth my buttocke, there thou shalt find
A thing that I haue hid in priuite
Ah, thought the Frere, that shall go with me
Adoune he thrith his hand to the clift
In hope to finde there some good gift
And whan this sicke man felt this Frere
About his towell, groping here and there
Amid his honde, he let the Frere a farte
There nis no capell, drawing in a carte
That might haue let a farte of such a soun
The Frere vpstart, as doth a wode Lion
A false churle (qd the Frere) for Goddes bones
This hast thou in dispite doe, for the nones
Thou shalt abie this farte, if I maie
His meinie, that heard of this affraie
Came leping in, and chased out the Frere
And forth he goeth, with a ful angrie chere
And fet his felowe, there as laie his store
He looked as he were a wilde Bore
He grinned his tethe, so was he wroth
A sturdie pace doune to the Court he goth
Wher as there wonned a mā of great honour
To whom that he was alwaie confessour
This worthy man, was lorde of that village
This Frere came, as he were in a rage
Where as this lorde sat eating at his bord
Vnnethes might the Frere speake o word
Till at the last he saied, God you se
This lord gan looke, and saied Benedicite
What Frere Iho, what maner world is this
I see well that somthing is a mis
Ye lose as though ỳ wodde wer full of theuis
Sit doune, and tell me what your grief is
And it shall be amended, if that I maie
I haue (qd he) had a dispite to daie
God yelde it you, adoune in your village
That in this world, is none so poore a page
That he nolde haue abhominacioun

Of

Of that I haue receiued in your toun
And yet me greueth nothing so sore
Is that the olde churle, with lockes hore
Blasphemed hath our holy couent eke.
Now maister (qd this lord) I you beseke
No maister sir (qd he) but seruitour
Though I haue had in schole that honour
God liketh not, that men vs Raby call
Neither in market, ne in your large hall.
No force (qd he) but tell me of your greefe.
Sir (qd this Frere) an odious mischefe
This day is betide, to mine ordre, and to me
And so per consequens to erthe degre
Of holy churche, God amende it sone.
Sir (qd the lord) ye wot what is to done
Distemper you not, you ben my confessour
Ye ben the salte of the erth, and the sauour
For goddes loue your pacience now holde
Telleth me your grefe; and he anon him told
As ye han herd before, ye wot wel what
The lady of the house, aye still sat
Til she had herde what the Frere saide.
Eye gods mother (qd she) a blisful maide
Is there nought els, tel me faithfully
Madame (qd he) how thinketh ye therby
How that me thinketh, so God me spede
I say a churle hath done a churles dede
What should I say, God let him neuer the
His sicke heed is full of vanite
I holde him in a maner of frenesie.
Madame (qd he) by God I shall not lye
But I in any wise may ben on him a wreke
I shal saunder him ouer al, where I speke
That false blasphemour that charged me
To part it, that might not departed be
To euery man liche, with mischaunce.
The lord sat still, as he were in a traunce
And in his hert he roled vp and doun
How that this churle had imaginacioun
To shewe such a probleme to the Frere
Neuer erst ne now ne herde I such a matere
I trowe the Diuel put it in his minde
In al Arsmetrike there shal no man finde
Before this day, of such a question
Who should make a demonstration:
That euery man should haue lyke his parte
Of a sowne or sauour of a farte
O nice proude churle, I shrewe thy face.
Lo sirs (qd the lord) with hard grace
Who euer herde of such a thing or nowe
To euery man like, tell me howe
It is an impossible, it may not be
Eye nice churle, God let hem neuer the
The rombling of a farte, and euery soun
Nys but of eyre reuerberacioun
And euer it wasteth litel and litel away
There is no man can demen, by my fay
If that it were departed equally
What lo my churle: lo, yet how shrewdly
Unto my confessour to day he spake
I holde him certaine a demoniake.
Now eteth your meate, & let ꝑ churle go play
Let him go hongen him self a Diuel way.
Now stode the lordes squier at the borde
That carfe his meate, & herd word by word
Of all thing, of which I haue you saide
My lord (qd he) be not yuel apaide
I couth tell for a gowne clothe
To you sir frere, so that ye ben not wrothe
How that this farte should euen ideled be
Amonges your couent, if it liketh the.
Tel on (qd the lord) & thou shalt haue anon
A gowne clothe, by God and by saint John
My lord (qd he) whan ꝑ the weder is faire
Without en winde, or perturbing of aire
Let bring a carte whele here into this hall
But looke he haue his spokes all
Twelue spokes hath a carte whele comenly
And bring me than xii. freres, wote ye why?
For thirtene is a couent as I gesse
Your confessour here, for his worthinesse
Shall performe me vp the nombre of his couent
Than shulle they kneelen adoun by one assent
And to euery spokes ende, in this manere
Full sadly lay his nose shall a Frere
Your noble confessour there, God him saue
Shal holde his nose vpright vnder the naue
Than shal this churle with belly stiffe & tought
As any tabour, hither ben ibrought
And set him on the whele, right of this carte
Upon the naue, and make him let a farte
And ye shullen se, by ꝑ trouthe of my life
By preef, which is demonstratife
That equally the soune of it wil wende
And eke the stinke, vnto the spokes ende
Saue that this worthy man your confessour
(Because he is a man of great honour)
Shal haue the first frutes, as reson is
The noble vsage of Freres yet is this.
The worthest man of hem shall first be serued
And certainly, he hath it well deserued
He hath to day taught vs so much good
With preching in the pulpet there he stood
That I may vouchesafe, I say for me
He had the first smell of fartes thre
And so would all his brethren hardely
He berreth him so faire and holyly.
The lord, ꝑ lady, & echo man saue the Frere
Said that Ienken spake in this matere
As wel as Ouide did or Ptholome

Touchyng the churles saide subtilte
And hie wit made him speke as he spake
He nis no foole, ne no demoniake
And Jenken hath twonne a newe goune
My tale is done, we ben almost at toune.

¶Here endeth the Somners tale, & here folowech the clerke of Oxenfords Prologue.

SIr Clerke of Oxford, our host saide
Ye ride as still and coye, as doth a maide
Were newe spoused, sitting at the borde
This day ne herde I of your mouth a worde
I trowe that ye studye about some sophime
But Salomon saith, al thing hath time
For goddes sake, bethe of better chere
It is no time now to studie here
Tell vs some mery tale by your fay
For what man is entred into a play
He nedes mote vnto that play assent
But precheth not, as Freres done in lent
To make vs for our olde sinnes to wepe
Ne that thy tale make vs not to slepe.
Tel vs some mery thing of auentures
Your termes, your figures, & your colours
Kepe hem in store, til so be that ye endite
High style, as whan men to kings write
Speaketh so plaine at this time, I you pray
That we may vnderstonde what ye say.
This worthy Clerke beningly answerde
Host (qd he) I am vnder your yerde
Ye haue of vs as now the gouernaunce
And therfore wol I do you obeysaunce
As farre as reason axeth hardely
I woll you tell a tale, which that I
Lerned at Padow, of a worthy Clerke
As preued is by his wordes and his werke
He is now deed, and nayled in his cheste
I pray to God sende his soule good reste.
Fraunces Petrarke, the laureat poete
Hight this clerke, whose Rhetorike sweete
Enlumined all Itaile of poetrie
As Liuian did of Philosophie
Or lawe, or other arte particulere
But deth that wol not suffer vs dwellen here
But as it were the twinkling of an eye
Hem both hath slaine, and all we shal dye.
But for to tellen of this worthy man
That taught me this tale, as I first began
I say that he first with hie style enditeth
(Or he the body of his tale writeth)
A proheme, in which discriueth he
Piemount, and of Saluce the countre
And speaketh of Apenny the hilles hye
That ben the bounds of west Lumbardie
And of mount Vesulus in speciall
Where as the Poo, out of a wel small
Taketh his first spring and his sours
That eastwarde euer increseth in his cours
To Emelleward, to Ferare, and to Venise
The which a long time were to deuise
And truely, as to my iudgement
Me thinketh it a thing impertinent
Saue that him list conuey his matere
But this is his tale as ye shullen here.

¶Here endeth the prologue of the Clerke of Oxforde, and here foloweth his tale.

THere is, in the west side of Itaile
Doun at the roote of Vesulus the colde
A lusty plaine, habundant of vitaile
Where many a toun and tour thou maist behold
That founded were in time of fathers olde
And many another delectable sight
And Saluces, this noble countre hight.

A Marques whilom was in that londe
As were his worthie elders him before
And obeysant aye redy to his honde
Were all his lieges, both lesse and more
Thus in delite he liued, & hath done yore
Beloued & drad, through fauour of fortune
Both of his lordes, and of his commune.

Therwith he was, as to speke of linage
The gentilest ybore of all Lombardy
A faire person, and strong, and yong of age
And ful of honour and curtesy
Discrete ynow, his countre for to gye
Saue in some thynges he was to blame
And Walter was this yong lordes name.

I blame him thus, that he cõsidred nought
In time comming, what him might betide
But on his lust present was all his thought
And for to hauke and hunt on euery side
Wel ny all other cures let he slide
And eke he ne would, that was worst of all
Wedde

wedde no wife, for ought that might befall

Onely that pointe his people bere so fore
That flockmele on a day to him they went
And one of hem, that wisest was of lore
(Or els that the lorde wolde best assent
That he sholde tel him what his people ment
Or elis reade he shewe such matere)
He to the Marques said, as ye shullen here.

O noble Marques, your humanite
Assureth vs, and yeueth vs hardinesse
As ofte time as is necessite
That we may to you tell our heuinesse
Accepteth lord of your gentilesse
That we to you with pitous hert plaine
And let your eares nat my voice disdaine.

All haue I not to done in this matere
More than another hath in this place
Yet for as muche, as ye my lord so dere
Haue alway shewed me fauour and grace
I dare the better aske of you a space
Of audience, to shewen our requeste
And ye my lord to done right as you leste.

For certes lord, so wel vs liketh your
And al your werkes, fro euer haue don, that we
Ne could our owen selfe deuisen how
We might more liuen in felicite
Saue one thing lord, if it your wil be
That for to be a wedded man, you lest
Thã were your people in souerain herte rest.

Boweth your necke vnder the blissful yoke
Of soueraunte, and not of seruise
Which men clepen spousale or wedlocke
And thinketh lord, among your thoughtes wise
How that our daies passen in sundry wise
For though we slepe or wake, rome, or ride
Aye fleeth the time, it wol no man abide.

And though your grene youth flowre, as yet
In crepeth age alway as still as stone
And deth manaseth euery age, and smyte
In eche estate, for there escapeth none
And also certain, as we knowen echone
That we shul dye, as uncertaine we all
Ben of that day, that deathe shal on vs fall

Accepteth than of vs the trewe entent
That neuer yet refused your heste
And we wol all forde, if ye wol assent
Chese you a wife in shorte time, at the lest
Borne of the gentilleste and of the meste
Of all this londe, so that it ought seme
Honour to god & you, as nere as we can deme

Deliuer vs out of all this busy drede
And take a wife, for hie goddes sake
For if it so befell, as God forbede
That thorow you deth, your linage should slake
And that a straunge successour should take
Your heritage, O woe were vs on liue
Wherfore we pray you hastely to wiue.

Her meke praier and her pitious chere
Made the Marques for to haue pite
Wel ye (quod he) mine owene people dere
To that I neuer erst thought, constraine me
I me reioyced of my liberte
That seldom time is found in mariage
There I was free, I mote den in seruage.

But natheles, I se your true entent
And trust vpon your wit, and haue done aye
Wherfore of my free will I will assent
To wedden me, as sone as euer I may
But there, as ye haue profred me to day
To chese me a wife, I you relese
That choice, and pray you of that profer cese

For God it wote, that children ofte been
Unlike her worthy elders, hem before
Bounte cometh all of God, & not of the streem
Of which they ben engendred and bore
I trust in Goddes bounte, and therfore
My marinage, mine estate, and rest
I him betake, he may don as him lest.

Let me alone in chesing of my wife
That charge vpon my backe I wol endure
But I you pray, and charge vpon your life
That what wife I take, ye me ensure
To worship her, whiles her life may dure
In worde and werke, here and elswhere
As she an Emperours doughter were

And furthermore, thus shall ye swere, that ye
Ayenst my choice shall neuer grutch ne stryue
For sith I shall forgo my liberte
At your request, as euer mote I thriue
There as mine hert is set, there wol I wiue
And but ye will assent, in such manere
I pray you speketh no more in this matere

With herty will they sworne and assent
To all this thing, there said no wight nay
Beseching him of grace er they went
That he would hem graunt a certaine day

Of his spousaile, as soone as ever he may
For yet alwaye the people som what dredde
Lest this Marques would no wife wedde.

He graunted hem a day, such as him lest
On which he would be wedded sekerly
And such he did all this at her request
And dide honour vnto his estate full notably
Kneling vpon her knees full reverently
Him thonked all, and thus they han an end
Of her entent, and home ayen they wend.

And here vpon he tolde his officers
Commaunding for the feest to purvey
And to his privy knightes and squiers
Such charge gave, as him lift on hem lay
And they to his commaundement obey
And ech of hem doth his diligence
To don to the feest reverence.

Explicit prima pars, & sequitur pars secunda.

NOught ferre fro thilke place honorable
Where this Marques shope his marriage
There stode a thorpe, of sight full delectable
In which poore folke of that village
Hadden her beestes and her herbergage
And of her labour toke her sustenaunce
After that the erthe gave hem habundaunce

Among this poore folke, ther dwelled a man
Which that was holden poorest of hem all
But hye God sometime send can
His grace vnto a litel oxe stall
Janicola men of that thorpe him call
A daughter had he, faire inough in sight
And Grisilde this yong maiden hight.

But for to speke of vertuous beaute
Than was she one the fairest under sonne
And full poorely ifostred was she
No likerous lust was in her hert ironne
Well ofter of the well than of the tonne
She dronke, and for she would vertue plese
She knew well labour, but not idle ese.

But though this maid were tender of age
Yet in the kest of her virginite
There was enclosed, sadde and ripe corage
And in great reverence and charite
Her old poore father fostred she
A few shepe spinning on the feld she kept
She would not ben idle till she slept.

And whan she homward came, she would bring
Wortes and herbes, times full oft
Which she shredde and sethe for her living
And made her bed full hard, and nothing soft
And aye she kept her fathers life on loft
With every obeisaunce and diligence
That child might do to the fathers reverence

Upon Grisilde the poore creature
Well oft hath the Marques set his eye
As he an hunting rode per aventure
And when it fell, that he might her aspie
He (not with wanton loking and folie)
His eyen cast vpon her, but in sadde wise
Upon her chere, he would him oft avise.

Commending in his hert her womanhede
And eke her vertue, passing every wight
Of so yong age, as well in chere as in dede
For though the people have no great insight
In vertue he considered full right
Her bounte, and disposed that he would
Her wedde, if he ever wedde should.

The day of wedding com, but no wight can
Tell what woman it should be
For which marvaile, wondred many a man
And saiden, whan they were in her privite
Will not our lord yet leave his vanite
Will he not wedde, alas alas, the while
Why will he thus himselfe and us beguile.

But natheles this Marques hath do make
Of gemmes set in gold and in asure
Broches and ringes, for Grisildes sake
And of her clothing, toke he the mesure
Of a maiden like to her stature
And eke of other ornamentes all
That to such a wedding should fall

The time of undren, in the same day
Approched, that the wedding should be
And all the palais put was in array
Both halle and chambre, ech in his degre
Houses of office stuffed with great plente
There maist thou se all dainteous vitaile
That may be found, as far as lasteth Itaile

This royall Marques, richely arraide
Lordes and ladies in his compaine
The which that to the feest were preyde

And

And of his retinue the bachelerie
With many a sowne of sondrie melodie
Unto the village, of which I told
In this aray, the right way hath hold.

Grisild (God wote of this full innocent
That for her was shape all this aray)
To fetch water at a well went
And commeth home as soone as euer she may,
For well she heard say, that ilke day
That the Marques should wed, & if she might
She would faine seene some of that sight.

She thought: I would with other maidēs stōd
That ben my felowes in our doze and see
The Marques, and therto woll I fond
To don at home, as soone as it may be
The labour, which that longeth to me
And than may I at leiser it behold
If she the way to the castel hold.

And as she would ouer the threshold gon
The Marques came, and gan her for to call
And she set doun her water pot anon
Beside the threshold of the oxe stall
And doun vpon her knees she gan to fall
And with sad countenance she kneeled still
Till she had herd what was the lords will.

This thoughtful Marques spake to the maid
Well soberly, and said in this manere,
Where is your father Grisild, he saide
And she with reuerence and meke chere
Answered, lord he is alredy here,
And in she goeth, without lenger let
And to the Marques she her father set

He by the hond than toke this old man
And said thus, whan he had him aside
Janicola, I neither may ne can
Lenger the pleasaunce of mine hert hide
If that thou vouchsafe, whatsoeuer betide
Thy doughter woll I take, or that I wende
As for my wife, to my liues ende.

Thou louest me, I wot well certaine
And art my faithfull liege man ibore
And all that liketh me, I dare well saine
It liketh thee, and specially therefore
Tell me that point, that I haue said before
If that thou wolt to this purpose draw
To take me for thy sonne in law.

This sodaine case, the man astoned so
That reed he wext abashed, and all quaking
He stode, ne vnneth said he wordes mo
but only thus (qd. he) lord my willing
Is as ye woll, ne agenst your liking
I woll nothing, ye be my lord so dere
Right as you list, gouerne this matere.

Than wol I thus (qd. this Marques) softly
That in thy chambre, I, you, and she,
Haue a collation, and wotest thou why
For I wol aske her, if her will be
To be my wife, and rule her after me:
And all this shall be done in thy presence
I wol not speke out of thine audience.

And in the chambre, while they were about
The treties, which ye shall after here
The people came into the house without
And wondred hem, in how honest manere
So tentisely she kept her father dere
But vtterly Grisild wonder might
For neuer erst saw she such a sight.

No wonder is though she be astoned
To see so gent a gest come into that place
She was neuer to such gests woned
For which she looked with full pale face
But shortly for this matter for to pace
These weren the wordes y the Marques said
To this benigne and very faithfull maid:

Grisild he said, ye shall well vnderstond
It liketh vnto your father and me
That I you wed, and eke it may so stond
As I suppose, that ye wol that it so be
But these demands I aske first (qd. he)
That sithen it shall be done in hastly wise
Wol ye thereto assent, or elis you auise.

I say thus, be ye redy with good hert
To all my lust, and that I freely may
As me best liketh, though ye laugh or smert
And neuer ye to grutch, night ne day
Whan I say ye, that ye say not once nay
Neither in word, ne by frouning countenance
Swere this, and here I swere our alliance.

Wondring vpon these words, quaking for
She said, lord, indigne and vnworthy (dred
Am I, to thilke honour that ye me bede
But right as you woll, so wol I
And here I swere, that neuer willingly
In word, werke, ne thought, I will you disobie
For to be dead, though we were loth to die.

This is inough Grisild mine (qd. he)

And forth he goth with a lordes chere
Out at the dore, and after came she
And to the people he said in this manere,
This is my wife (qd. he) that standeth here
Honoureth her, and loueth her, I you pray
Who so me loueth, there nis no more to say.

And for that nothing of her old gere
Shee should bring into his house, he bad
That women should dispoilen her right there
Of which these ladies were nothing glad
To hadle her clothes, in which she was clad
But natheleſſe, this maiden bright of hew
Fro foot to head they clothed han all new.

Her heer han they kembed, ꝑ lay vntressed
Full rudely, and with her fingers smale
A croune on her head they han idressed
And set it full of ouches great and smale
Of her array, what should I make a tale
Vnneth the people her knew for her fairenesse
Whan she transformed was in such richesse.

This Marques hath her spoused with a rig
Bought for the same cause, and then her set
Upon an horse snow white, well ambling
And to his palcis, or he lenger let
With ioyfull people that her ladde and met
Conueied her, and thus the day they spend
In reuell, till the sonne gan discend

And shortly forth this tale for to chace
I say, that to his new Marquesse
God hath sent such fauour of his grace
That it seemed not, as by her likelinesse
That she was borne and fed in rudenesse
As in a cote, or in an ore stall
But norished in an Emperours hall.

To euery wight, she woxen is so dere
And worshipfull, ꝑ folke there as she was bore
And fro her birth, knew her yere by yere
Vnneth trowed they, but durst haue swore
That to Janicola (of which I spake before)
Shee doughter nas, for as by coniecture
Hem thought she was another creature.

For though that euer vertuous was she
She was increased in such excellence
Of thewes good, set in hie bounte
And so discrete, and faire of eloquence
So benigne, and digne of reuerence
And coud the peoples hearts so embrace
That ech her loued that looked in her face.

Not only of Saluce in the toun
Published was the bountie of her name
But eke beside, in many a regioun
If one said well, another said the same
So spread of her bountie the fame
That men and women, both young and old
Gone to Saluces her to behold.

This Walter lowly, and full roially
Wedded hath with fortunate honeste
In gods peace: liueth full easily
At home, and outward grace mough had he
And for he saw that vnder low degree
Was honest vertue hid, the people him held
A prudent man, and that is seene well seld.

Not only this Grisild, through her wit
Couthe all the feate of wifely humblesse
But eke, whan the case required it
The comen profit could she redresse
There nas discord, rancour, ne heuinesse
In all the lond, that she ne couthe apese
And bring hem all wisely in rest and ese.

Though her husbond absent were or none
If gentilmen, or other of her contre
Were wroth, she would bring hem at one
So wise and ripe wordes had she
And iudgement of so great equite
That she fro heuen sent was, as men wend
People to saue, and euery wrong to amend.

Not long time after this, Grisild
Was wedded, she a doughter had bore
All had she leuer haue borne a man child
Glad was the Marques & his folke therfore
For though a maid child came all before
She may to a man child attaine
By likelihood, sithens she is not barraine.

Explicit secunda pars, et incipit pars tertia.

THere fel, as it befalleth oft times mo
Whā ꝑ this childe had sucked but a throw,
This Marques in his hert longed so
To tempt his wife, her sadnesse to know
That he ne might out of his hert throwe
This marueilous desire, his wife to assay
Needlesse God wot, he thought her to affray

He

He had affaied her inough biforе
And fonde her euer good, what nedeth it
Her foꝛ to tempte? And alway moꝛe and moꝛe
Though some man pꝛaise it foꝛ a subtill wit
But as foꝛ me, I say full euill it sit
To assay a wife, whan that it is no nede
And put her in anguish and in dꝛede.

Foꝛ which this Marques wꝛouꝛt in this ma-
He came alone a night ther as she lay (nere
With sterne face, and right vgly chere
And saied thus: Grisilde (qd. he) that day
That I tooke thee out of thy pooꝛe aray
And put thee in estate of hie nobilesse
Thou hast not that foꝛgeten, as I gesse

I say Grisilde, the pꝛesent dignite
In which I haue put thee, as I trow
Maketh not thee foꝛyetfull foꝛ to be
That I thee take in pooꝛe estate full low
Foꝛ any wele, thou must thy self know
Take hede of euery wooꝛd what I say
There is no wight that hereth but we tway

Thou wotest thy self, how ỹ thou cam here
Into this hous, it is not long ago
And though to me thou be both lefe and dere
Unto my gentils thou art nothing so
They say, to hem it is great shame and wo
Foꝛ to been subiect, and been in seruage
To thee, that boꝛne art in so smale a village.

And namely sith thy doughter was iboꝛe
These wooꝛdes haue they spoken doubtles
But I desire, as I haue doen beforе
To liue my life with hem, in rest and pees
I may not in this case be recheles
I mote doen with thy doughter, foꝛ the best
Not as I would, but as my gentils lest.

And yet God woote, this is full loth to me
But natheles without thy witting
I woll nought doe, but this I woll (qd. he)
That thou to me assent, as in this thing
Shew now thy patience, in thy werking
That thou me hight and swoꝛe in our village
That day that maked was our mariage.

Whan she had heard all this, she not amoued
Neither in wooꝛd, in chere, ne in countenaunce
Foꝛ as it semed, she was not agreued
She saied looꝛd, all lieth in your pleasaunce
My child and I with hartely obeisaunce
Been yours all, and ye may saue oꝛ spill
With your owne, wooꝛketh your owne will.

There may nothing, so God my soul saue
Liken to you, that may displease me
Ne I desire nothing foꝛ to haue
Ne dꝛede foꝛ to lese, saue onely ye
This will is in my hart, and aie shall be
No length of time, oꝛ death it may deface
Neither chãge my coꝛage into another place

Glad was the Marques of her answering
But yet he fained as he were not so
All dꝛery was his chere, and his looking
Whan that he should out of the chamber go
Sone after this, a foꝛlong way oꝛ two
He pꝛiuely had told all his entent
Unto a man, and to his wife him sent

In maner of a sergeant was this pꝛiuy man
The which he faithfull oft found had
In thinges great, and eke soch folke well can
Doen execucion of thinges bad
The looꝛd knew well, he him loued and dꝛad
And whan this sergeant wist his looꝛds will
Into the chamber he stalked him full still.

Madame he saied, ye mote foꝛyeue it me
Though I do thing, which I am constrained
Ye be full wise, and full well know ye
That looꝛdes hestes may not be fained
They may well be waited and complained
But men must nedes vnto her lust obay
And so woll I, there nis no mooꝛe to say.

This child I am commaunded to take
And spake no moꝛe, but vp the child he hent
Dispitously, and gan a chere to make
As though he would haue slain it oꝛ he went
Grisilde must all suffer, and consent
And as a lambe, she sitteth meke and still
And let this cruell Sergeant doe his will.

Suspect was the fame of this man
Suspect his face, suspect his wooꝛd also
Suspect the time in which he this began
Alas her daughter, that she loued so
She wend he would haue slain it right tho
But natheles, she neither wept ne siked
Confirming her to that the Marques liked.

But at the last to speake she began
And meekely she the Sergeant pꝛaid
(So as he was a vertuous gentell man)
That she might kisse her child er that it deide
And in her atme, this little child she leide
With full sad face, and gan the child blisse

And lulled it, and after gan it kisse.

And thus she saied in her benigne voice
Farwell my child, I shall thee neuer see
But sithen I haue marked thee with ỳ croice
Of thilke father yblessed mote thou bee
That for vs died vpon the Rood tree
Thy soule lyttle child, I him betake
For this night shalt thou dien for my sake.

I trow that to a norice in this cea
It had been hard, this routh for to se
Well might a mother than crie alas
But natheless, so sad and stedfast was she
That she endured all her aduersite
And to the Sergeant meekely she said
Haue her ayen your little yong maid.

And goth now (qd. she) ⁊ doth my lordes hest
And o thing would I pray you of your grace
But if my lord forbid it you at the lest
Burieth this little body in some place
That no beastes ne birdes it to race
But he no word to that purpose would say
But tooke the child and went anon his way.

This Sergeaunt came to the lord again
And of Grisildes wordes, and of her chere
He told him word by word, short and plain
And him presented with his doughter dere
Somwhat this lord had routh in his manere
But natheless, his purpose held he still
As lordes doen, whan they will haue her will

And badde the sergeaunt that full priuely
He should this child well soft wind ⁊ wrappe
With all the circumstance tenderly
And carie it in a coffer, or in a lappe
But on pain of his hedde of to swappe
That no man should know of his entent
Ne whens he came, ne whither he went.

But at Boleine, to his suster dere
That thilke time of Pauie was Countesse
He should it take, and shew her this matere
Beseething her to doen her diligence
This child to foster in all gentilnesse
And whose child that it was, he bad her hide
From euery wight, for ought ỳ might betide

This sergeãt goth ⁊ hath fulfilled this thing
But to this Marques now retourne we
For now goeth he full ofte imagining
If by his wines chere, he might se
Or by her wordes, perceiue that she
Were chaunged, but he neuer could find
But euer in one like sadde and kind.

As glad, as humble, as busie in seruage
And eke in loue, as she was wont to be
Was she to him, in euery maner wise
Ne of her doughter one word spake she
None accident, for none aduersite
Was seen in her ne neuer, her doughters name
Nempned she, for ernest ne for game.

Explicit tertia pars, et incipit pars quarta.

In this estate, passed bin four yere
Er she with child was, but as God would
A man child she bare by this Walter
Well gracious, and faire to behold
And whan folke it to the father told
Not onely he, but all the countre mery
Was for the child, ⁊ God they thonke ⁊ hery.

Whan it was two yere old, and fro the brest
Departed from his norice on a day
This Marques cought yet an other lest
To tempten his wife eft sones, if he may
O nedeles was she tempted, I dare well say
But wedded men ne conne no measure
Whan they find a pacient creature.

Wife (qd this Marques) ye haue herd or this
My people herely beareth our mariage
And namely sithen my sonne borne is
Now is it worse than euer in our age
The murmure slaeth my hart and my corage
For to my eres cometh the voice so smarte
That it well me destroied hath my hart.

Now saie they thus, whan Walter is agon
Than shall the blood of Janicola succede
And been our lorde, for other haue we non
Soche wordes saie my people, it is no drede
Well ought I of soch murmure take hede
For certainly I drede soch sentence
Tho they not plainly speke in mine audience

I would line in peace, if that I might
Wherfore I am disposed vtterly
As I his suster serued by night
Right so I thinke to serue him priuely
Thus warne I you, that ye not sodainly
Out of your self, for no wo should outray
Beth pacient, and therof I you pray.

I haue (qd she) saied, and euer shall
I woll ne nill nothing certain
But as you list: nought greueth me at all
Though ꝑ my doughter & my sonne be slain
At your commaundement: this is to sain
I haue had no part of children twain
But first sickenesse, and after woo and pain.

Ye been our lord, doth with your owen thing
Right as you list, and taketh no rede of me
For as I left at home my clothing
Whan I came first to you, right so (qd she)
Left I my will, and all my liberte
And toke your clothing: wherfore I you pray
Doe your will, I woll to it obaie.

And certes, if I had prescience
Your will to knowe, er ye your lust me told
I would it doen, without negligence
But now I wote your lust, & what ye would
All your pleasaunce, ferme and stable I hold
For wist I that my death would doen you ese
Gladly would I suffer it you to plese.

Death may make no comparisoun
Unto your loue: and whā this Marques saie
The constance of his wife, he cast adoun
His yen two: and wondred how she maie
In such patience, suffereth all this arraie
And forthy he goth, with dreery countenaunce
But to his hart, it was full great pleasaunce

This eiger Sergeaunt, in the same wise
That he her doughter caught, right so he
Or worse, if he could wers deuise
Hath hent her sonne, that was full of beaute
And euer in one so pacient was she
That she no chere made of heuinesse
But kisseth her child, & after gan him blesse

Saue this she praied him, if that he might
Her little sonne he would in pearth graue
His tender limmes, delicate to sight
Fro fowles and fro beastes to saue
But she none answere of him might haue
He went his waie, as he nothing raught
But to Boleine he tenderly it brought.

This Marques wondred euer lēger ꝑ more
Upon her pacience, and if that he
Ne had sothly known there before
That parfitly her children loued she
He would haue wend, that for some subtelte
And of malice, or cruell corage
That she had suffred this with sad visage.

But he knew well, ꝑ next himselfe certain
She loued her children best, in euery wise
But now of women would I aske faine
If these assaies might not suffise
What could a sturdie husbonde more deuise
To preue her wifehode, and her stedfastnesse
But be continuing euer in sturdinesse.

But there be folke of such condition
That whan they han a certain purpose take
They couth not stint of her intencion
But as they were bounden to a stake
They woll not of that purpose slake
Right so this Marques, hath fully purposed
To tempt his wife, as he was first disposed.

He wayteth, if by wordes or countenaunce
She were to him chaunged of corage
But neuer could he finde variaunce
She was ay in one hart and visage
And euer the further that she was in age
The more trewer (if it were possible)
She was to him in loue, and more penible.

For which it semeth thus, that of hem two
There was but one will: for as Walter lest
The same lust was her pleasaunce also
And God be thonked, all fell for the best
She shewed well, for no worldly unrest
A wife, as for her selfe, nothing should
Willen in effect, but as her husbond would.

The slaunder of Walter, wonder wide spradd
That of cruell harte, full wret chedly
(For he a poore woman wedded had)
Hath murdred both his children prively
Which murmure was among hem comonly,
No wonder was: for to the peoples ere
Ther came no word, but ꝑ they murdred were

For which, there as his people there before
Had loued him wel, discended of his blame
Made hem, that they hated him therfore
To been a murtherer is an hatefull name
But nathelesse, for earnest ne for game
He of his cruell purpose would not stent
To tempt his wife, was all his entent

Whan ꝑ his doughter xii. yere was of age
He to the court of Rome, in subtell wise
(Enformed of his will) sent his message
Commaunding hem, such billes to deuise
As to his cruell purpose may suffise
How that the Pope, for his peoples rest
Bad him wedde another, if that him lest.

I saie he bad, they should counterfete
The Popes bulle, making mencion
That he hath leue, his first wife to lete
As by the Popes dispensacion
To stint rancour and dissencion
Betwixt his people & him, thus spake ỹ bull
The which they han published at the full.

The rude people, as no wonder nis
Weenden full well, it had been right so
But whan these tidings come to Grisildis
I deme, that her hart was full wo
But she was lyche sadde euermo
Disposed was this humble creature
The aduersite of fortune to endure.

Abiding euer his lust and his pleasaunce
To whom she was yeuen, hart and all
As to her worldly sufficiaunce
But certainly, if I this storie tell shall
This Marques prouiden hath in speciall
A letter, in which he shewed his entent
And priuely, he it to Bolonie sent,

To the Erle of Panie, which that had tho
Wedden his sister: he prated specially
To bringen him ayen his children two
In honourable estate all openly
But one thing he him prayed all veterly
That he to no wight, thouz men would enquere
Should tellen whose children they were

But saie that ỹ maiden should wedded be
Unto the Marques of Saluce anon
And as the Erle was prayed, so did he
For at a daie yet, he on his waie is gone
Toward Saluce, and lordes many one
In riche araie, this maiden for to gide
Her yong brother riding by her side.

Arayed was toward her mariage
This maiden fresh, full of gemmes clere
And her brother, that seuen yere was of age
Arayed was eke freshly in his manere
And thus in great noblesse and glad chere
Toward Saluce, shapen her iournaie
Fro day to day, riding forth her waie.

Explicit quarta pars, et sequitur pars quinta.

Now all this, after his wicked vsage
This Marques his wife yet to tempten more
(To the vttermost profe of her corage
Fully to haue experience and lore
If that she were as stedfast as before)
He on a day in open audience
Full boistously hath said her this sentence.

Certes Grisild, I had ynough of pleasaunce
To han you to my wife, for your goodnesse
And for your trouth, and your obeysaunce
Not for your lineage, ne for your richesse
But I now know in very sothfastnesse
That in great lordship, if I me wel auise
There is great seruitude in sundry wise.

I may not done, as euery ploughman may
My people me constraineth for to take
Another wife, and crien day by day
And eke the Pope this rancour for to slake
Consenteth it, that dare I vndertake
And truely, thus much I wol you say
My new wife is coming by the way.

Be strong of hert, & voide anon her place
And thilke dowery that ye brought to me.
Take it ayen, I graunt it of my grace
Retourneth to your fathers house (qd he)
No man may alway haue prosperite
With euen hert, I rede you to endure
The stroke of fortune, or of auenture.

And she ayen answerd in patience:
My lord (qd she) I woote and wilde alway
How that betwixt your magnificence
And my pouere, no man can ne may
Maken no comparison, it is no nay
I helde me neuer digne in no manere
To ben your wife, ne yet your chamberere.

And in this house, there ye me lady made
(The hie God take I, as for my witnesse
And al so wisely, as he my soule glad)
I helde me neither lady ne maistresse
But humble seruaunt to your worshipnesse
And euer shal, while my life may endure
Aboven euery worldly creature

That ye so long of your benignite
Haue holde me in honour and nobley
(Where I was not worthy for to be)
That thonke I God & you, to whom I prey
So yelde it you, there is no more to sey
Unto my father gladly wol I wende
And with him dwell to my liues ende

There I was fostred of a childe full small
Til I be deed, my life there wol I lede

A widowe clene in herte, body and all
For lithen I yaue to you my maydenhede
And am your trewe wife, it is no drede
God shilde such a lordes wife to take
Another man, to husbonde or to make.

And of your new wife, God of his grace
So graunt you welth & high prosperitie
For I wol gladly yeue her my place
In which I was blisfull wont to be
For sithen it liketh you my lorde (qd she)
(That whilom weren al my hertes rest)
That I shal gon: I shal go when you lest.

But there as ye me profred such dowayre
As I first brought, it is wel in my minde
It were my wretched clothes, nothing faire
The which to me now were ful hard to finde
Oh, good god: how gentil and how kinde
Ye semed by your speche and your visage
The day that maked was our mariage.

But soth is said, algate I finde it trewe
For in effect it is proued now on me
Loue is not olde, as whan it is newe
For certes lord, for none aduersite
To dien in this case, it shal neuer be
That euer in worde or worke I shall repent
That I you yaue mine hert in good entent

My lord ye wote, that in my fathers place
Ye did me stripe out of my poore wede
And richely ye clad me of your grace
To you brought I naught els out of drede
But faith, nakednesse, and maidenhede
But here ayen your clothing I restore
And eke my wedding ring for euermore

The remnant of your iewels redy be
Within your chambre, dare I safely saine
Naked out of my fathers house (qd she)
I came: and naked I mote turne againe
Al your plesaunce would I folow faine
But yet I hope it be not your entent
That I smockles out of your paleis went

Ye could not do so dishonest a thing
That like wombe in which your children lay
Should before the people, in my walking
Be sene all bare: wherfore I you pray
Let me not like a worme go by the way
Remembreth you mine owne lord so dere
I was your wife, though I vnworthy were

Wherfore in rewarde of my maidenhede
Which I to you brought, and not ayen bere
As vouchesafe to yeue me to my mede
But such a smocke as I was wont to were
That I therwith may wrie ỳ wombe of here
That was your wife; & here I take my leue
Of you, mine own lord, lest I you greue.

The smocke (qd he) ỳ thou hast on thy backe
Let it be still, and bere it forth with thee
But wel vneth that worde he spake
But went his way, for routhe and pite
Before the folke her selfe stripeth shee
And in her smocke, with foote & heed all bare
Toward her fathers house forth is she fare

The folke folowed weping in her wey
And fortune euer they cursed as they gone
But she fro weping kept her eyen drey
Ne in this time, worde spake she none
Her father, that this tydings herde anone
Cursed the day and time, that nature
Shope him to ben a liues creature.

For out of doute, this olde pore man
Was euer suspect of her mariage
For euer he demed, sithen it began
That whan the lord pilled had his corage
Him would thinke it was a disparage
To his estate, so lowe for to alight
And voiden her, as sone as euer he might.

Ayenst his doughter hastely goth he
(For he by ỳ noise of folke knew her cõming)
And with her olde cote as it might be
Ye couered her, ful sore weping
But on her bodie might he it not bring
For rude was the cloth, and she more of age
By daies fele than was her mariage.

Thus with her father, for a certaine space
Dwelleth this floure of wifely pacience
That neuer by her wordes, ne by her face
Bifore the folke, ne eke in absence
Ne shewed she, that her was done offence
Ne of her hye estate no remembraunce
Ne had she, as by her countenaunce.

No wonder is, for in her great estate
Her goste was euer in plaine humilite
No tender mouth, ne hert delicate
Ne pompe, ne semblaunce of royalte
But full of pacience and benignite
Discrete, and prudelesse, and aye honorable
And to her husband euer meke and stable.

Men speake of Job, & most of his hūblesse
As clerkes (whan hem list) can well endite
Namely of men: but in sothfastnesse
Though clerkes praise women but a lite
There can no man in humblesse hem aquite
As women can: ne be halfe so true
As women been, but it befall of newe.

Explicit quinta pars: & sequitur pars sexta.

FRo Boloine is the Erle of Pavie come
Of which the fame sprong to more and lesse
And to the peoples eares, all and some
Was couth eke, how a newe Marquesse
he with him brought, in pomp & such richesse
That was neuer seen with mannes eye
So noble araie, in West Lumbardie

The Marques, that shope & knewe al this
Er that this Erle was come, sent his message
To thilke poore and sely Grisildis
And she with humble hart, and glad visage
Not with swelling hart in her corage
Came at his heste, and on her knees her set
And reuerently and wisely she him gret

Grisilde (qd he) my will is utterly
This maide, that wedded shall be vnto me
Receiued be to morowe all so royally
As it is possible in my hous to be
And eke that euery wight in his degre
Haue his estate in sitting and seruice
And also pleasaunt, as ye can best deuise.

I haue no woman sufficient certain
The chambers for to araie in ordinaunce
After my lust, and therfore wold I fain
That thine were all such gouernaunce
Thou knowest eke of old all my pleasaunce
Though thine araie be bad, and euil besee
Doe thou thy deuer at the lest wee.

Not onely lorde that I am glad (qd she)
To doen your lust, but I desire also
You for to please, and serue in my degre
Withouten faining, and shall euer mo
Ne neuer for no wele, ne for no wo
Ne shall the ghost within my hart stent
To loue you best, with all my true entent.

And with ỳ word, she gan the house to dight
And tables to set, and beddes to make
And pained her to doen all that she might
Praying the chamberers for Gods sake
To hasten hem, and fast swepe and shake
And she the most seruisable of hem all
Hath euery chamber araied, and his hall.

Abouten vndren gan this Erle alight
ỳ with him brought these noble children tweye
For which the people ran to see that sight
Of her araie, so richely beseye
And than at erste emonges hem they seye
That Walter was no foole, though him lest
To chaunge his wife: for it was for the best.

For she is fairer, as they demen all
Than is Grisilde, and more tender of age
And fairer fruit bitwene hem shall fall
And more pleasance, for her hie linage
Her brother eke, so faire was of his age
That him to seen ỳ people had cauzt pleasance
Cōmending now the Marques gouernance

O sterne people, vnsad and vntrue
Aie vndiscrete, and changing as a fane
Deliting euer in rumer that is newe
For like the Moone euer wane ye and wane
Euer full of clapping, dere ynough a lane
Your dome is fals, your cōstance euil preueth
A full great foole is he that on you leueth.

Thus saiden sad folke in that cite
Whan that the people gased vp and doun
For they were glad, right with the nouelte
To haue a newe lady of her toun
No more of this make I now mencioun
But to Grisilde ayen will I me dresse
And tellen her constaunce and her busines.

Well busie was Grisilde on euery thing
That to the feast was appertinent
Right nauzt was she abashed of her clothing
Though they were rude, & somwhat to rent
But with glad chere, to the yate is went
With other folke, to greten the Marquesselle
And after doeth she forth her busines.

With right glad chere, ỳ gestes she receiueth
And duzomly, eueriche in his degre
That no man defaute there perceiueth
But euer they wondren, what she might be
That in so poore aray was for to se
And coud such honour, and reuerence
And worthily they prailen her prudence.

In

In all the meane whyle she ne stent
This maiden ȝeke her brother to commend
With all her hert, and benigne entent
So well, that no man could her ꝑfite amend
But at the last, whan these lordes wend
To sitten adoun to meat, he gan to call
Grisilde, as she was busy in the hall.

Grisilde (qd. he) as it were in his play
How liketh the my wife, and her beaute
Right well my lord (qd. she) for in good fay
A fairer saw I neuer none than she
I pray to God so ȝeue you ꝓsperite
And so hope I, that he wolle to you send
Plesaunce inough, vnto your liues end

But one thing I beseche, and warne also
That ye nicke with no turmenting
This tender maiden, as ye han do me
For she is fostred in her norisshing
More tenderly, in my supposing
She could not aduersite endure
As could a pore fostred creature.

And whan this Walter saw her pacience
Her glad chere, and no malice at all
And he so oft hath done her offence
And she aye constant, and stable as a wall
Continuing euer her innocence ouer all
This sturdy Marques, gan his hert dresse
To rewe vpon her wifely stedfastnesse.

This is inough, Grisilde mine (qd. he)
Be no more agast, ne ill apaid
I haue thy faith, and thy benignite
As well as euer woman was assaid
In great estate, or pore ly araid
Now know I dere wife thy stedfastnesse
And her in armes toke, and gan to kesse.

And she for wonder, toke therof no kepe
She herd not what thing he to her said
She fared as she had stert out of her slepe
Till she out of her maseednesse abraid
Grisild (qd. he) by God that for vs deid
Thou art my wife, and none other I haue
Ne neuer had, as God my soule saue

This is thy doughter, which thou hast suppo-
To ben my wife, & none other feithfully (sed
And this shall ben mine heir, as I haue dispo-
Thou bare hem in thy body truly (sed
At Bolóine haue I kept hem likerly
Take hem ayen, for now maist thou not say
That thou hast lorne any of thy children tway

And folke, that other wise han said of me
I warne hem wel, that I haue done this dede
For no malice, ne for no cruelte
But for to assay in the thy womanhede
And not for to sley my children. God forbede
But for to kepen hem prively and still
Til I thy purpose knew, and all thy will

Whan she this herd, a swoune doun she falleth
For pitous ioy, and after her swouning
She both her yong children to her calleth
And in her armes, pitously wepyng
Enbraced hem both, tenderly kissing
Full like a mother, with her salt teres
She bathed both her visage and her heres

O which a pitous thing it was to se
Her swouning, and her pitous voice to here
Graunt mercy lord, god thonke it you (qd. she)
That ye haue saued me my children dere
Now recke I neuer to be dead right here
Sithen I stond in your loue, & in your grace
No force of deth, ne whan my spirit pace.

O tendre, O dere, O yong children mine
Your wofull mother wend stedfastly
That cruell hounds, or some foule vermine
Had eten you, but God of his mercy
And your benigne father, so tenderly
Hath done you kepe: and in that same stound
All sodainly she swapt doun to the ground.

And in her swouning, so sadly holdeth she
Her children two, whan she gan hem enbrace
That with great sleight and difficulte
The children from her armes they gan to race
O many a tere, on many a pitous face
Doune ran, of hem that stoden there beside
Vnneth about her might no man abide.

Walter her gladdeth, and her sorow slaketh
She riseth vp all abashed from her traunce
And euery wight her ioy and feest maketh
Till she hath caught ayen her countinaunce
Walter her doth so faithfully plesaunce
That it was deinty to seen the chere
Betwixt hem two, whan they were met fere

These ladies, whan they her time sey
Han taken her, and into chambre gon
And strippen her out of her rude array
And in a cloth of Gold, that bright shone
With a croune of many a rich stone
Vpon her heed, they her in to hall brought:
And there she was honoured as she ought.

Thus hath this pitous day a blisful ende
For euery man and woman doth his might
This day in mirth and reuell to dispend
Till on the welken shone the sterres bright
For moze solempne in euery mans sight
This feast was, and greater of costage
Than was the reuell of her marriage.

Well many a yeere, in hie prosperite
Liuen these two, in concord and in rest
And richly his doughter married he
Unto a lozd, one of the wozthiest
Of all Italy, and than in peace and rest
His wives father in his court he kept
Til that his soule out of his body crept.

His sonne succeedeth in his heritage
In rest and peace, after his fathers day
And fortunate was eke in mariage
All put he not his wife in great affray
This world is not so strong, it is no nay
As it hath ben in old times yore
And herkneth what thautour saith therfore.

This storie is said, not for ỳ wives should
Folowen Grisild, as in humilite
For it were inportable tho thei would
But that euery wight in his degre
Should be constant, in all aduersite
As was Grisild, wherefore Petrarke writeth
This storie, which with hie stile he inditeth.

For sith a woman was so patient
Unto a mortal man, well more we ought
Receiue all in gree that God vs sent
For sikill he preueth that he wrought
But he ne tempteth no man that he bought
As saith saint Jame, if ye his pistell rede
He preueth folke but a day, it is no drede.

And suffereth vs as for our exercise
With sharpe scourges of aduersite
Full oft to be beaten, in sondry wise
Not for to know our will, for certes he
Or we were borne, knew all our frelte
And for our best, is all his gouernance,
Let vs liue than in vertuous suffrance.

But one word herkeneth lozdings or ye go
It were full hard to find now a dayes
In all a countre Grisildes three or two
For if thei were put to such assayes
The gold of hem hath so bad a layes
With brasse, for though it be faire at eie
It would rather brast in two than plie.

For which here, for ỳ wives loue of Brytayne
Whose life and eere, mighty God maintene
In high maistry, or else were it straunge
I will with lusty heart, fresh and grene
Say you a song, to glad you I wene
And let vs stint of earnest matere,
Herkneth my song, that saith in this manere.

Lenuoye de Chaucer a les mariz de nostre temps.

Grisild is dead and eke her patience,
And both at once buried in Italie,
For which I cry in open audience
No wedded man be so hardy to assaile
His wives pacience in trust to find
Grisildes, for in certaine he shall faile.

O noble wives, full of hie prudence
Let no humilite your tong naile
Ne let no clerke haue cause ne diligence
To write of you a storie of such merualle
As of Grisild, pacient and kind
Lest Chechisface swallow you in her entraile.

Folweth Ecco, that holdeth no silence
But euer answereth at the countre taile
Beth not abashed for your innocence
But sharply taketh on you the gouernaile
Enprinteth well this lesson in your mind
For commen profite, sithens it may auaile.

Ne dredeth hem not, doth hem no reuerence
For though thine husbond armed be in maile
The arrowes of thy crabbed eloquence
Shal perce his brest, and eke his aduentaile
In ielousie eke, looke thou him bind
And ỳ shal make him couch as doth a quaile.

If thou be faire, there folke ben in presence
Shew thou thy visage, and thine apparaile
If thou be foule, be free of thy dispence
To get thee friends aye doe thy trauaile
Be aye of chere, as light as leef on linde
And let him care, weepe, wring and waile.

Ye archwives, stondeth aye at your defence
Sith ye be strong, as is a great camaile
Ne suffereth not, that men doe you offence
And ye slendre wives, feble as in bataile
Beth eygre as any tigre is in Inde
Aye clappeth as a mill, I you counsaile.

¶ Here endeth the Clerke of Oxfords tale.

¶ Here

¶ Here folowcth the wozdes of our Host.

This wozthy clerck, whā ended was his tale
Our Host said and swoze by cockes bones
We were leuer than a barel of ale
My wife at home had herd this legend ones
This is a gentell tale foz the nones
As to my purpose, wist ye my will
But thing that woll not be, let it be still.

¶ Here endeth the wozdes of our Host, and here folowcth the Frankeleins Prologue.

THese old gentill Britons in her daies
Of diuers auentures maden laies
Rimed first in her mother tong
Which layes, with her instrumēts they song
Oz els reden hem foz her plesaunce
And one of hem haue I in remembraunce
Which I shall say, as willing as I can.
But sirs, bicause I am a bozell man
At my beginning first I you beseche
Haue me excused of my rude speche
I lerned neuer Rhetozike certaine
Thing that I speke, mote be bare and plaine
I slept neuer on the mount of Pernaso
Ne lerned neuer Marcus Tullius Cicero
Colours ne know I none, withouten drede
But such colours as growen in the mede
Oz els such as men dien oz painte
Colours of Rhetozicke, ben to me quainte
My spirit feleth not of such matere
This is my tale, if ye woll it here.

¶ Here endeth the Frankeleins prologue, and here folowcth the Frankeleins tale.

IN Armozike, that called is Britaine
There was a knight, that loued and did his paine
To serue ladies in his best wise
And many a labour, & many a great empzise
He foz his lady wzought, ere she were wonne
Foz she was one the fairest vnder sonne,
And eke thereto comen of hie kinrede
That well vneth durst this knight for drede
Tell her his wo, his paine, and his distresse
But at the last, she of her wozthinesse
And namely foz his meke obeysaunce
Hath such a pite caught of his penaunce
That pziuily she fill of his acozd
To take him foz her husbond and her lozd
Of such lozdship, as men haue ouer her wiues
And foz to lead in the moze blisse her liues
Of his free will he swoze her as a knight
That neuer in all his life, day ne night, it
Ne should he take vpon him no maistry
Againe her will, ne kith her iealousie
But her obey, and follow her will in all
As any louer to his lady shall
Saue that the name of souerainte
That would he haue foz shame of his degree.
She thōked him, & with ful great humblesse
She said: sir, sithe of your gentilnesse
Ye pzofred me to haue so large a raine
Ne would God neuer betwixt vs twaine
As in my gilt, were either werre oz strife
Sir, I woll be your tredw humble wife
Haue here my truth, till that my hert brest
Thus beene thei both in quiet and in rest,
Foz one thing sirs, safely dare I seine
That frends, euerich other must obeine
If thei wol long holden company
Loue will not be constrained by maistrie
When maistrie cometh, the God of loue anon
Beateth his wings, and farewell he is gon
Loue is a thing, as any spirit free
Women of kind desiren liberte
And not to be constrained as a thzall
And so done men, if I sothe say shall
Loke who that most pacient is in loue
He is at his auauntage all aboue
Pacience is an high vertue certaine
Foz it venquisheth, as these clerkes saine
Things that rigoz shall neuer attaine:
Foz euery wozd, men may not chide oz plaine
Lerneth to suffer, oz els, so mote I gone
Ye shall it lerne whether ye wol oz none
Foz in this wozld certaine, no wight there is
That he ne doth oz saith sometime a mis
Ire, sickness, oz constellacion
Wine, wo, oz changing of complexion
Causeth full oft, to don a misse oz speken
On euery wzong, a man may not be wzeken
After the time, must be temperance
To euery wight that can of gouernance
And therefoze, hath this wozthy wise knight
To liue in ease, suffraunce her hight
And she to him full wisely gan swere

That neuer should ther be default in here
Here may men se, humble and wise acord
Thus hath she take her seruaunt & her lord
Seruaunt in loue, and lord in mariage
Than was he both in lordship and seruage
Saruage: nay, but in lordship aboue
Sithen he hath both his lady and his loue
His lady certes, and his wife also
The which that law of lond accordeth to
And when he was in this prosperite
Home with his wife he goth, into his contre
Nat fer fro Dēmarke, ther his dwelling was
Where as he liueth in ioy and in solas
Who could tell, but he had wedded be
The wo, the ease, and the prosperite
That is betwixt an husbond and his wife
Euermore lasted this blisfull life
Till that this knight, of which I speke thus
That of Caere Iuda, was cleped Aruera=
Shope him to dwell, a yere or twaine (gus
In Englond, that cleped was Butaine
To seken in armes worship and honour
For all his lust he sette in such labour
And dwelt ther two yere, the boke saith thus
Now will I stint of this Arueragus
And speke I will of Dorigen his wife
That loueth her husbond as her hertes life
For his absence, wepeth she and siketh
As don these noble wines whan hem liketh
She mourneth, waileth, fasteth & plaineth
Desire of his presence, her so constraineth
That all this wide world set she at nought
Her frendes, which knew her heuy thought
Conforten her, in all that euer they may
They preachē her, and tellen her night & day
That causeles she slew her selfe, alas
And euery comfort possible in this caas
They don to her, with all her businesse
And all for to maken her leue her heuinesse.
By proces se, as ye knowen euerichone
Men mowen so long grauen in a stone
Till some figure therin printed be
So long han they comforted her, till she
Receiued hath by hope and by reson
The emprinting of her constellacion
Through which her gret sorow gan aswage
She may not alway endure en such a rage
And eke Arueragus in all this care
Hath sent his letters home of his welfare
And that he will come hastely againe
Or els had this sorow her hert slaine.
Her frendes saw her sorow gan to slake
And praiden her on knees, for Goddes sake
To come and romen in her companie
Away to dryuen her derke fantasie
And finally she graunted that request
For well she saw it was for the best.
Now stode her castell fast by the see
And oft with her frendes walked she
Her to disport on the bankes hie
Where as she may shippes and barges sie
Sailing her course, where hem list go
But yet was that a parcell of her wo
For to her selfe full oft alas said she
Is there no shippe, of so many as I se
Wol bring home my lord: than were my hert
Warished of these bitter paines smert.
Another time, would she sitte and thinke
And cast her eyen downward fro the brinke
But when she saw the grisly rockes blake
For very feare, so would her hert quake
That on her fete she might not her sustene
Than would she sit adoun vpon the grene
And pitously into the see behold
And say right thus, with sorowfull sikes cold
Eterne God, that through thy purueyance
Ledest this world, by certeine gouernance
In idle as men sain, dest thou nothing make
But lord, these grisly fendely rockes blake
That semen rather a foule confusion
Of werke, than a faire creacion
Of such a parfit God, wise and full stable
Why haue ye wrought this werk vnreasonable
For by this werke, north, south, west, ne este
Ther nis fostred, man, bird, ne beste
It doth no good, but annoyeth
See ye not lord, how mankind it distroieth
An hundred thousand bodies of mankind
Haue rockes slain, al be they not in mind
Sin mankind is so faire a part of thy werke
That thou it madest like thy owne werke
Than semed it ye had a great cherte
Toward mankind, but how then may it be
That ye such menes maken it to distroyen
Which menes don no good, but euer anoyen.
I wote well clerkes will saine as hem lest
By arguments, that all is for the best
Though I ne can not the causes well know
But thilke God, that made the wind to blow
As kepe my lord, this is my conclusion
To clerkes lette I all this disputacion
But wold God that all these rockes blake
Were sonken in to hell for his sake
These rockes slee mine heart for feare
Thus wold she say with many a pitous teare
Her frendes saw it was to her no disport
To romen by the see, but discomfort
And shapen hem to plain somwhere elles
They leden her by riuers and by welles
And eke in other places delectables

They

They dauncen and they plaien at the tables
So on a day, right in the morowe tide
Unto a gardeine, that was there beside
In which that they had made her ordinance
Of vitailes, and other purueyance
They gon and plain hem al the long day
And this was in the sixte morowe of May
which May hath paired with his soft shours
This gardaine full of leues and of floures
And crafte of mannes honde so curiously
Arayed had this gardaine truely
That neuer nas there garden of such prise
But if it were the very paradise
The odour of floures, and the fresh sight
Would haue made any hert light
That euer was borne, but if to gret sickenesse
Or to great sorowe helde it in duresse
So was it full of beaute, with pleasance.
And after dinner gonne they daunce
And sing also, saue Dorigene alone
That yet vnto her selfe made her mone
For she ne sey him on the daunce go
That was her husbonde, and her loue also
But natheless, she must her time abide
And with good hope, let her sorow slide.
Upon this daunce among other men
Daunced a squier before Dorigen
That freshe and was, and louer of aray
As to my dome, then is the moneth of May
He singeth and dauncth, passing euery man
That is or was, sithen the world began
And therwithal, a men should him discrue
One of the best faring men on liue
Yong, strong, vertuous, riche and wise
And wel beloued, and holden of great prise
And shortly, if I the sothe tell shall
Unwitting of this Dorigen at all
This lusty squier, seruaunt to Venus
Which yeleped was Aurelius
Had loued her beste of any creature
Two yere and more, as was his auenture
But neuer durst he tell her his grefaunce
Withouten cuppe he dronke all his penaunce
He was dispaired nothing durst he say
Saue in his songs somwhat would he wray
His wo, as in general complaining
He said he loued, and was beloued nothing
Of which matere made he many layes
Songes, complaints, roundels, virelayes
How that he durst not his sorow tell
But languish, as doth a fury in hell
And die he must (he said) as did Ecco
For Narcissus, that durst not tell his wo.
In other maner than ye herde me say
He durst not he to her his wo bewray
Saue parauenture somtime at daunces
There yong folke keepen her obseruances
It may well be, he loked on her face
In such a wise, as men that asken grace
But nothing wist she of his entent
Natheless it happed, er they thence went
Because that he was her neighbour
And was a man of worship and honour
And had knowen him of times yore
They fell in speche, and so forth more & more
Unto his purpos than drewe Aurelius
And when he saw his time he said thus.
Madame (qd he) by god ỹ this world made
So that I wist, that I might your hert glade
I would that day, that your Arueragus
Went ouer the see, that I Aurelius
Had went ther ỹ I should neuer come again
For wel I wote my seruice is in vaine
My guerdon nis but bresting of mine hert
Madame reuth vpon my paines smert
For with one worde ye may me slee or saue
Here at your fote God would ỹ I were graue
I ne haue as now no leiser more to say
Haue mercy swete, or ye wol do me dey.
She gan to loke vpon Aurelius
Is this your wil (qd she) and say ye thus?
Neuer erst qd she, ne wist I what ye ment
But now I know Aurelius your entent
By thilke God, that yaue me soule and life
Ne shal I neuer be vntrewe wife
In word ne in werke, as far as I haue wit
I wol ben his to whom I am knit
Take this for a final answere of me
But after this in plaie thus said she.
Aurelius, qd she, by God aboue
Yet wol I graunt you to ben your loue
(Sithen I see you so pitously complaine)
Loke what day that endlong Britaine
Ye remeue all the rockes, stone by stone
That they ne let shippe ne bote to gone
I say whē ye haue made these costes so clene
Of rockes that there nis no stone sene
Than wol I loue you best of any man
Here haue my trouth, in al that euer I can.
Is there none other grace in you (qd he)
No by that lord (qd she) that maked me
For wel I wote that it shall neuer betide
Let such folie out of your hert glide
What deintie should a man haue in his life
For to go loue another mannes wife:
That hath her body when so that him liketh
Aurelius full oft sore siketh
Wo was Aurely, when he [illegible]
And with a sorowful chere he [illegible]
Madame (qd he) this were [illegible]

Then mote I die on sodeine dethe horrible
And with that worde he turned him anone.
Tho come her other frendes euerichone
And in the aleyes romeden vp and doun
And nothing wist of this conclusion
But sodainly began to reuell newe
Till that the bright sonne lost his hewe
For the orizont hath reft the sonne his light
This is as much to say, as it was night
And home they gon in ioy and in solas
Saue onely wretched Aurelius, alas
He to his house is gon with sorowfull harte
He said he might not from his deth astarte
Him semed, that he felte his hert colde
Up to heuen his hondes gan he holde
And on his knees bare, he set him adoun
And in his rauing said this orizoun
For very wo out of his witte he braide
He nist what he spake, but thus he saide
With pitous hert hath his cõplaint begonne
Unto the goddes, and first vnto the sonne
He said: God Apollo and gouernour
Of euery plante, herbe, tree, and flour
That yeuest after thy declinacion
To ilke of hem his time and season
As thine herberow chaungeth low and hie
Lord Phebus, cast thy merciable eye
On wretched Aurelius, which am but lorne
Lo lord, my lady hath my deth ysworne
Without gilt, but thy benignite
Upon my deedly hert haue some pite
For wel I wot lord Phebus, if ye lese
Ye may me helpe saue my lady chese
Now vouche ye saue, that I you deuise
How that I may be holpē & in what wise.
Your blisfull suster Lucina the shene
That of the see is goddesse and quene
Though Neptunus hath deite in the see
Yet empresse aboue him is she
Ye knowen wel lord, right as her desire
Is to be quickened and lighted of your fire
For which that she foloweth you full besily
Right so the see desireth naturally
To folowen her that is goddesse
Both of the see, and riuers more and lesse
Wherfore lord Phebus, this is my requeste
Do this miracle, or do mine hert breste
That now next at this opposicion
Which in signe shal be the Lion
As praieth her so great a flodde to bring
That fiue fadome at the lest, it ouerspring
The highest rocke in Armorike Britaine
And let this flodde dure yeres twaine
Then certes to my lady may I say
Holdeth your hest, the rockes ben away
This thing may ye lightly don for me
Pray her to gon no faster course than ye
I say thus, prayeth your suster that she go
No faster course than ye in peres two
Than shall she be at the full alway
And spring floode lasting both night and day
And but she vouchesafe in suche manere
To graunt me my souereine lady dere
Pray her to sinken euery rocke adoun
Into her owne derke regioun
Under the ground, there Pluto dwelleth in
Or neuer more shall I my lady win
Thy tẽple in Delphos, wol I barfote seke
O lord Phebus, se the teares on my cheke
And on my paine haue some compassion
And with that word, in swoun he fel adoun
And long time he lay in a traunce.
His brother, which ỹ knew of his penaunce
Up caught him, and to bed him brought
Dispeired in this turment and this thought
Let I this wofull creature lie
Chese he whether he wol liue or die.
Arueragus with heale and great honour
(As he that was of chevalry the flour)
Is comen home, and other worthy men
O blisfull art thou now Dorigen
That hast thy lusty husbond in thine armes
That fresh knight, ỹ worthy man of armes
That loueth the, as his own hertes life
Nothing list him to be imaginatife
If any wight had spoken (while he was out)
To her of loue, therof had he no dout
He entendeth not to such matere
but daũceth, iusteth, & maketh her good chere
And thus in ioy and blisse I let hem dwell
And of wofull Aurelius wol I tell.
In langour and in torment dispitous
Two yere and more, lay wretched Aurelius
Er any fote on erth he might gone
Ne comfort in this time had he none
Saue of his brother, which was a clerke
He knewe of all this wo and all this werke
For to non other creature certain
Of this matere, durst he no word sain
Under his brest he bare it more secre
Then euer did Pamphilus for Galathe
His brest was hole without for to seen
But in his hert aye, was the arrowe keen
And well ye knowen that of a surfanure
In surgery, is perilous the cure
But men might touch ỹ arow or com therby
His brother weepeth and waileth priuely
Till at the last him fel in remembraunce
That while he was at Orliance in Fraunce
(As these clerkes yong that ben likerouse)

To reden artes that been curious
Seken in euery halke and in euery Herne
Perticuler science for to lerne
He him remembred that vpon a deie
At Orliaunce in studie a booke he seie
Of Magike naturell, which his felawe
That was in that tune a bacheler of lawe
All were he there to learne an other craft
Had priuely vpon his deske plaft
Which booke spake of mochell operations
Touching the foure and twentie Mansions
That longen to the Moon, and such folie,
As in our daies is not worthe a Flie
For holy churche saieth in our bileue
Ne suffreth non illusion vs to greue
And whā this boke was in his remembraunce
Anon for ioie his hart gan daunce
And to himselfe he saied priuely
My brother shall be warished sikerly
For I am liker that there be sciences
By which men maken diuers aparences
Such as these subtell tregetores plaie
For oft at feastes haue I well herd saie
That tragetors, within an hall large
Haue made come in water and a barge
And in the halle rowen vp and doun
Somtime hath semed a grim Lion
And somtime floures spring as in a mede
Somtime a vine, and grapes white and rede
Somtime a castell of lime and stone
And whan hem liked, voiden hem anon
Thus semed it to euery mannes sight.

Now than conclude I thus, if that I might
At Orliaunce some old felawe finde
That had this Moones Mansions in minde
Or other Magike naturall aboue
He shuld wel make my brother haue his loue
For with an apparance a clerke may make
To mannes sight, that all the rockes blake
Of Britain, were yuoided euerichone
And shippes by ꝑ brinke to comen and gone
And in such forme enduren a yere or two
Than wer my brother warished of his wo
Than must she nedes hold her biheste
Or els he shall shame her at the leste

What should I make a lenger tale of this,
Unto his brothers bedde he comen is
And such comfort he taue him for to gon
To Orleaunce, that he vp stert anon
And on his waie than is he forthyfare
In hope to been lessed of his care.

Whan they were comen almost to that cite
(But if it were a two forlong or three)
A yong clerke rouning by himselfe they met
Which that in Latin thriftely hem gret
And after ward he saied a wonder thing
I know the cause of your comming
And er they farther any foote weut
He told hem all that was in her entent.

This Briton clerke asked him of felowes
The which he had knowen in old daies
He answerde him, that they dede were
For which he wept oft full many a tere.

Doune of his horse Aurelius light anon
And with this Magicien forth is he gon
Home to his house, and made him well at ese
Hem lacked no vitaile that hem might plese
So well arraied an hous as there was one
Aurelius in his life sawe neuer none.

He shewed him, er he went to suppere
Forestes and parkes, full of wilde dere
He sawe there Hartes, with hornes hie
The greatest that euer were seen with eye
He se of hem an hundred slain with houndes
And some of arowes bled with bitter woūds
He sawe, whan voided were the wilde dere
These fauconers, vpon a faire riuere
That with the haukes han the Heron slain

Tho sawe he knightes iusting in a plain
And after this he did him such plesaunce
That he him shewed his lady in a daunce
On which himself daunced as him thought.
And whā this maister, ꝑ this magike wrought
Sawe it was time, he clapped his hondes to
And fare well our reuell, all was ago
And remeued neuer out of his hous
While they sawe al this sight merueilous
But in his studie there his bookes be
They saten still, no wight but they three.

To him this maister called his squier
And saied him thus, is redy our supper
Almoste an houre it is, I vndertake
Sithen I you bad our supper redy make
Whan that these worthy men went with me
Into my studie, there as my bookes be.

Sir (qd the squier) whan it liketh you
It is all redy, though ye woll right now.

Go we suppe than (qd he) for the best
These amorous folke somtime mote haue rest

And after supper fell they in tretc
What summe shold this maisters guerdon be
To remeue all the rockes of Britain
And eke from Girond to the mouth of sain.

He made it strange & swore so god him saue
Lasse thā a thousand pond wold he not haue
Ne gladly for that summe nolde he it don.

Aurelius with blisfull herte anon
Answerd thus: Fie on a thousand pound
This wide worlde, which men saie is round
I would it peue, if I were lord of it.

This bargain is full dzive, foz we be knit
Ye shall be paied truely by my trouth
But looke now foz no negligence oz slouth
Ye tarien vs here no lenger than to mozowe
Nay(qd this clerk) here my trouth to bozow
To bedde is gon Aurelius whan hym leste
And well nie all night he had his rest
What foz his labour, and his hope of blisse
His wofull harte of penaunce had a lisse.
Upon the mozowe whan that it was daie
To Bzitain toke they the right waie
Aurelius, and this Magician hym beside
And been discended there they would abide
And this was, as the boke doth remember
In the cold frostie season of December.
Phebus waxed old, and hewed like Laton
That afoze in his hote declination
shone as ỹ bzening gold, with stremes bright
But now in Capzicozne adoune he light
where as he shone full pale, I dare well sain
The bitter frost, with the sloddzain
Destroyed hath the grene in euery yerde
Janus sit by the fire with double beerde
And dzinketh of his bugle hozne the wine
Befozn him stont bzaune of the tusked swine
And nowell crieth euery lustie man.
Aurelius, in all that euer he can
Doeth to this maister chere and reuerence
And praieth him to doen his diligence
To bzingen him out of his paines smart
Oz with a swerd that he would slit his hart.
This clerke such routh hath on this man
That night & day he spedeth him that he can
To waite a time of his conclusion
This is to saie, to make illusion
Oz such an apparence oz iogelrie
I ne can no termes of Astrologie
That he & euery wight should wene & saie
That of Bzitain the rockes were awaie
Oz els they were sonken vnder the ground
Till at the last he hath his time yfound
To make his iapes and his wzetchednesse
Of such superstitious curiosnesse
His tollitan tables he fozth bzought
Full wel cozrected, him lacked nought
Neither his collect, ne his expans yeres
Ne his rootes, ne his other geres
As been his centris, and his arguments
And his pzopozcionell conueniences
Foz his equacions in euery thing
And by his eight spheres in his werking
He knew full well how far alnath was shoue
Fro the hedde of thilke fixe Aries aboue
That in the ninth spere considered is
Full subtelly he had calked all this
And whan he had found his first Mansion
He knewe the remnaunt by pzopozsion
And knew the rising of the Moone wele
And in such face, the terme and euery dele
And knew also his other obseruaunces
Foz such illusions and such mischaunces
As Heathen folke vsed in thilke daies
Foz which ne maked he no lenger delaies.
But thzough his magike, foz a weke oz twaie
It seemed that all the rockes were awaie.
Aurelius, which that dispeired is
whither he shall haue his loue, oz faire amis
Awaiteth night and daie on this miracle
And whan he knew there was non obstacle
But that voided were these rockes euerichon
Doune to the maisters fete he fell anon
And saied, I wofull wzetche Aurelius
Thanke you lozd and lady mine Uenus
That me hath holpen fro my cares cold
And to ỹ temple his waie fozth hath he hold
Where as he knew he should his lady se
And whan he sawe his time, anon right he
With dzedfull hart, and with humble chere
Salued hath his souerain lady dere.
My right full lady (qd this wofull man)
Whom I serue and loue, as I best can
And lothest were of all this world displease
Were it that I foz you haue such disease
That I must die here at your feete anon
Nouzt would I tel you how wo is me begon
But certes either must I die oz plain
Ye slea me gilteles foz very pain
But of my death, though ye haue no routh
Auisen you, er that ye breaken your trouth
Repenteth you, foz that like God aboue
Foz ye slea me, because that I you loue
Foz madame, well ye wot that ye haue right
Not that I chalenge any thing of right
Of you my souerain lady, but of your grace
But in a garden yond in such a place
Ye wote right well what ye right me
And in myne hond your trouth plight ye
To loue me best, God wote ye saied so
All be it I am wozthy thereto
Madame I speake foz the honour of you
Moze than foz to saue my harts life now
I haue done right as ye commaunded me
And if ye vouchsafe, ye may go se
Doeth as you list, haueth your hest in minde
Foz quick oz ded, right there ye shal me finde
In you lieth all to doe me liue oz deie
But well I wote the rockes been aweie.
He toke his leue, and she astonied stoode
In all her face there nas a dzoppe of blood
She wend neuer han come in such a trappe
Alas

Alas(qd.she)that euer this should happe
For wend I neuer by possibilite
That such a mister or marualle might be
It is against the processe of nature
And home she goeth a sorrowful creature
For very feare vnnethes may she go
She wepeth and waileth a day or two
And swoumeth, that it was routh to see
But why it was to no wight told she
For out of toune was gon Arueragus
But to her selfe she spake, and saied thus
In her complaint, as ye shall after here
With face pale, and with sorrowful chere.
Alas(qd. she) on thee Fortune I plaine
That vnware hast wrapped me in thy chaine
Fro which to escape, wot I no socour
Saue onely death, or els dishonour
One of these two behoueth me to chese
But nathales, yet had I leuer to lese
My life, than of my body to haue a shame
Or knowen my selfe false, or lese my name
And with my death, I may be quit iwis
Hath there not many a wife er this
And many a maid, slaine her selfe alas
Rather than with her body doen trespas
And certes lo, these stories been witnes
When thurty tyrants, full of cursednes
Had slaine Phidon, in Athens at the feest
They commanded his doughters to arest
And bringen hem before hem in despite
All naked, to fulfill her foule delite
And in her fathers blood, he did hem daunce
Upon ỳ pauement, God yeue him mischaunce
For which this wofull maidens full of drede
Rather than thei would lesen her maidenhede
Thei priuily been stert into a Well
And drenched hem selfe, as bookes tell.
They of Messene let enquire and seke
Of Lacidomony fifty maydens eke
On which thei would haue doen her lechery
But there was none of all that company
That she nas slaine, and with a glad entent
Chese rather for to dien, than for to assent
To been oppressed of her maidenhede
Why should I than to die been in drede.
Lo eke the tyraunt Aristoclides
That loued a maid, that hight Stimphalides
When that her father slaine was on a night
Unto Dianes temple goth she anon right
And hent the image, with her armes two
Fro which image wold she neuer go
No wight might fro it her honds race
Till she was slain, right in the selfe place.
Now sithens ỳ maidens had such dispite
To ben defouled with mans foule delite
Wel ought a wife rather her selfe slo
Than be defouled, as thinketh me.
What shall I say of Hasdrubals wife.
That at Cartage biraft her selfe her life
For when she saw ỳ Romans wan the toun
She tooke her children all, and lept adoun
Into the fire, and chese rather to die
Than any Romain did her vilany.
Hath not Lucrece slain her self, alas
At Rome, there she oppressed was
Of Tarquine, for her thought it was shame
To liue, when that she had lost her name.
The eight maidens of Mylesy also
Han slain hem selue for very drede and wo
Rather than folk of Gaul should hem oppres
More than a thousand stories, as I ges
Could I now tell as touching this matere.
When Abradas was slain, his wife so dere
Her selfe slow, and let her blood to glide
In Abradas woundes, broad and wide
And said, my body at the lest way
There shall no wight defoule if I may.
What should I mo ensamples hereof sain
Sithens that so many han hem selfe slain
Well rather than they would defouled be
I will conclude that it is best for me
Wil rather slea my self in some manere
As did Demotius doughter dere
Bicause that she nold not defouled be.
O Sedasus, it is full great pite
To reden how thy doughters diden, alas.
That slowen hem self for such a maner caas
As great a pite was it or well more
The Theban maiden, that for Nichanore
For one of Macedon had her oppressed
With her deth her maidenhede she redressed.
What shal I sain of Nicerates wife
That for such ease biraft her self her life.
How true was eke to Alcibiades
His loue, that for to dien rather chees
Than for to suffrein his body vnburied be.
Lo which a wife was Alcest (qd. she)
What saith Homer of good Penelope.
All Greece knoweth of her chastite.
Pardé of Laodomia is written thus
That whã at Troy was slain Protheselaus
No longer nold she liue after his day.
The same of noble Portia tell I may
Withouten Brutus couth she not liue
To whom she had all her heart igiue.
The parfite wifehood of Artemisy
Honoured is, throughout all Barbary
Oh Thenta Queene, thy wifely chastite
To all wines may a mirrour be.
The same thing I say of Bilia

Of

Of Rodogone, and eke Valeria.
Thus plained Dorigene a day or tweie
Purposing euer that she would deie,
But nathaleſſe vpon the third night
Home came Arueragus, the worthy knight
And asked her why she wept so sore
And she gan wepen euer the lenghe more
Alas (qd. she) that euer was I borne
Thus haue I said (qd. she) thus haue I sworn
And told him all, as ye haue heard before
It nedeth not to rehearse it no more (wise
This husbond with glad chere in sondrie
Answerd and saied, as I shall you deuise
Is there aught els Dorigene but this?
Nay nay (qd. she) God helpe me so as wis
This is too much, and it were Gods will.
Ye wife (qd. he) let slepe that is still
It may be well yet peraucenture to day
Ye shall your troth hold by my fay
For God so wisly haue mercy on me
I had well leuer sticked for to be
For very loue which that I to you haue
But if ye should your trouth saue
Trouth is the hiest thing that men may kepe
But that word he brast anon to wepe
And said, I you forbid on paine of death
That neuer whiles you lasteth life or breath
To no wight tell of this misauenture
As I may best I woll my wo endure
Ne make no countenance of heuinesse
That folke of you may deme harme ne gesse
And forth he cleped a squire and a maid
Goth forth anon with Dorigene he saied
And bringeth her in soch a place anone
They toke her leue, and on her way thei gone
But they ne wist why she thider went
She nolde no wight tell her entent.
This squier, which that hight Aurelius
On Dorigene, which that was so amerous
Of auenture happed her to mete
Amid the toune, right in the hie strete
As she would haue gon the way forth right
Toward the garden, there as she had hight
And he was to the gardenward also
For well he spied whan she would go
Out of her hous, to any maner place
But thus they met of auenture or of grace
And he salueth her with glad entent
And asked of her whider that she went.
And she answerd halfe as she wer mad
Unto the garden as my husbond badde
My trouth for to hold, alas alas
Aurelius gan wondren of this caas
And in his hart had great compassion
Of her chere, and of her lamentacion
And of Arueragus the worthy knight
That bad her hold all that she had hight
So loth he was that she should breke her trouth
And in his hart he caught of it great routh
Considring the best on euery side
That fro his lust wer him better abide
Than doe so hie a churlish wretchidnesse
Ayenst fraunchise, and ayenst all gentilnesse
For which in few words saied he thus
Madame, saieth to your lord Arueragus
That sithen I se this great gentilnesse
Of him, and eke I se well your distresse
That ye to me should hold your trouth
Certes me thinketh it wer great routh
I haue well leuer euer to suffer wo
Than depart the loue betwixt you two
I you release madame into your bond
Quite euery surement and euery bond
That ye haue made to me, as here biforne
Sithens thilke time that ye were borne
My trouth I plight, I shall you neuer repreue
Of no behest, and here I take my leue
As of the truest and the best wife
That euer yet I knew in all my life
But euery wight beware of her behest
On Dorigene remembreth at the lest
Thus can a squier doen a gentill dede
As well as can a knight, withouten drede.
She thonked him vpon her knees all bare
And home vnto her husbond is she fare
And told him all as ye han heard me saied
And be ye siker, he was so well apaied
That it were vnpossible me to write
What should I lenger of this case endite?
Arueragus, and Dorigene his wife
In souerain blisse leden forth her life
Neuer after was there anger hem betwene
He cherished her, as though she wer a Quene
And she was to him true for euermore
Of these two folkes ye get of me no more.
Aurelius, that his cost hath all forlorne
Cursed the time that euer he was borne
Alas (qd. he) alas that euer I behight
Of pured gold a thousand pound of weight
Unto this Philosopher, how shall I doe?
I se no more, but that I am fordoe
Mine heritage mote I nedes sell
And be a begger, here may I no lenger dwell
And shame all my kinred in this place
But I of him may get better grace
But natheles I woll of him assay
At certain daies, yere by yere to pay
And thonke him of his great curtesie
My trouth woll I kepe, I woll not lie
With hart sore, he goth vnto his cofer

And brought gold vnto this Philosopher
The value of fiue hundred pound as I gesse
And him beseecheth of his gentilnes
To graunt him daies of the remenaunt
And saied, maister I dare well make auaunt
I failed neuer of my trouth as yet
For sikerly my debt shall be quite
Towards you, how that euer I fare
To gon a begging in my kirtell bare
But would ye vouchsafe vpon suerte
Two yere or three for to respite me
Than were I well, for els mote I sell
Mine heritage, there is no more to tell.
This Philosopher soberly answerde
And saied thus, whan he this worde herde
Haue I not hold couenant vnto thee?
Yes certes, well and truely (qd he)
Hast thou not had thy lady as thee liketh?
No no (qd he) and sorily he siketh.
What was the cause, tel me if ỹ thou can?
Aurelius anon his tale began
And told him all as ye han heard before
It nedeth not to rehearse it any more.
He said Armiragus of gentilnes
Had leuer die in sorrow and in distresse
Than his wife were of her trouth fals
The sorow of Dorigene he told him als
How loth she was to been a wicked wife
And that she had leuer haue lost her life
And ỹ her trouth she swore through innocẽce
She neuer erst heard speake of apparence
That made me haue of her so great pite
And right as frely as he sent her to me
As frely sent I her to him again
This is all & some, there nis no more to sain.
The Philosopher answered, leue brother
Euerich of you did gentilly to other
Thou art a squier, and he is a knight
But God forbid, for his blisfull might
But if a clerke could doen a gentill deede
As well as any of you, it is no dreede.
Sir I release thee thy thousand pound
As now thou were crope out of the ground
Ne neuer er now haddest thou knowen me
For sir, I wol not take a peny of thee
For all my craft, ne nought for my trauaile
Thou hast ypaied right well for my vitaile
It is ynough, and farewel & haue good daie
And toke his horse, & rode forth on his waie.
Lordings this question would I aske now
Which was the most fre, as thinketh you?
Now telleth me, er that I ferther wende
I can no more, my tale is at an ende.

¶ Here endeth the Frankelins tale.

¶ Here begineth the second Nonnes Prologue.

The minister and the norice vnto vices
Which that menne clepen in English idelenesse
That is Porter of the gate of delices
To eschue, and by her contrary her oppresse
That is to saien, by lefull besinesse
Well ought we to doen our entent
Lest that the fend through idlenes vs hent.

For he that with his thousand cords slie
Continually vs waiteth to be clappe
Whan he may man in idelenesse espie
He can so lightly catch him in his trappe
Till that a man be hent, right by the lappe
He nis not ware the fend hath him in hond
Well ought vs werch, and idlenes withstond.

And though men dredden neuer for to die
Yet se men well by reason doubtles
That idelnesse is roote of slogardie
Of which there cometh neuer no good increes
And sikines that sloth holdeth hem in a lees
Onely to sleepe, and for to eate and drinke
And to deuouren all that other swinke.

And for to put vs from such idelnesse
That cause is of so great confusion
I haue here doen my faithfull besinesse
After the Legend in translacion
Right of thy glorious life and passion (lilly
Thou with thy garlond, wrought with rose &
Thee meane I, maid and martir saint Cecily.

And thou that art floure of virgins all
Of whome that Bernard list so well to write
To thee at my beginning first I call
Thou comfort of vs wretches, do me endite
Thy maidẽs deth, ỹ wan through her merite
The eterne life, and of the fend victory
As men may after rede in her storie.

Thou maiden & mother, douzter of thy son
Thou Well of mercy, sinfull soules cure
In whom ỹ God of bounte chese for to won
Thou humble and high ouer euery creature
Thou noblest, so farre ouer nature
That no disdaine the maker had of kind
His sonne in blood and flesh to cloth & wind.

which in the cloister of thy blisfull sides

Toke

Toke mannes shape, the eterne loue and pees
That of the true compas, Lord and guide is
Whom heauen, yerth, and sea, withouten les
Aie herien, and thou virgins wemles
Bare of thy body, and dwellest maiden pure
The creatour of euery creature.

Assembled is in the magnificence
With mercy, goodnes, and with soch pitee
That thou art the sonne of excellence
Not onely that helpest hem that praien thee
But often time of thy benignite
Full freely, or that men thine helpe beseche
Thou goest beforne, and art her liues leche.

Now help thou blissfull, and meke faire maid
We sinned wretch, in this desert of gall
Thinke on the woman of Canane, that saied
That whelpes eaten some of ỳ crommes small
That from her Lordes table been ifall
And though ỳ I vnworthy doughter of Eue
Be sinfull, yet accepteth my beleue.

And for that faith is ded withouten werkis
So for to werch, yeue me witte and space
That I be quit frō the place that derk is
O that thou art so faire and full of grace
Be mine aduocate in that hie place
There as without end is song Osanna
Thou Christes mother, & doughter of Anna

And of thy light, my soule in prison light
That troubled is by the contagion
Of my body, and also by the wight
Of yearthly lust, and also false affeccion
O hauen, O refute, O saluacion
Of hem that been in sorow and distresse
Now helpe, for to my werke I will me dresse.

Yet I pray you that reden that I write
Forgeueth me, that I doe no diligence
This ilke storie subtelly to endite
For both haue I the wordes and the sentence
Of him that at the sainctes reuerence
The storie wrote, and folowen her legend
And pray you that ye will my werke amend

First will I you the name of sainct Cecily
Expoune, as men may in her storie se
It is to say in English, heuens lilly
For pure chastnes of virginite
Or for the witnesse had of honeste
And greue of conscience, and of good fame
The sote sauour Lilly was her name.

Or Cecily is to say, the way to blind
For the enlample was by good teaching
Or els Cecily, as I written find
Is ioigned by a maner contoigning
Of heauen and Lia, in her figuring
The heauen is set for thought of holinesse
And Lia, for her lasting besinesse.

Cecily may eke be saied in this manere
Wanting of blindnes, for her great light
Of sapience, and for her thewes clere
Or els Lo, this maidens name bright
Of heauen & Leos cometh, of which by right
Men might the heauen of people her call
Enlample of good and wise werkes all.

For Leos people, in English is to say
And right as men may in the heuen se
The Sunne, and Moon, & sterres euery way
Right so men ghostly, in this maiden se
Sawen of faith, the great magnanimite
And eke the clerenes hole of Sapience
And sondry werkes, bright of excellence.

And right so as these Philosophers write
That heauen is swift, round, & eke brenning
Right so was faire Cecily the white
Full swift and besie in euery good working
And round and hole in good perseuering
And brenning euer in charite full bright
Now haue I declared you what she hight.

¶ Here endeth the second Nonnes Prologue, and beginneth her Tale.

This maiden bright Cecile, as her life saith
Was comen of Romaines and of noble kind
And so forth fostred vp in the faith
Of Christe, and bare his Gospell in her mind
She neuer ceassed, as I written find
Of her praier, and God to loue in drede
Beseching him to kepe her maidenhede.

And whan this maid should vnto a man
Iwedded be, that was full yong of age
Which that icleped was Valerian
And day was come of her mariage
She full deuout and humble in her corage
Under her robe of gold, that sat full faire
Had next her flesh iclad her in an heire

And

And whiles that the organs made melodie
To God alone thus in hert song she
O lord, my soule and eke my body gie
Unwemmed, lest I confounded be
And for his loue that died vpon a tre
Euery second or third day she fast
Aye biding in her orisons full fast.

The night cam, and to bed must she gon
With her husbond, as often is the manere
And priuily she said vnto him anon
O sweet and welbeloued spouse dere
There is a counsail, and ye wol it here
Which that right faine I would to you saine
So that ye me assure it not to bewraine.

Valerian gan fast vnto her swere
That for no cas, ne thing that might be
He should neuer to none bewraien here
And than at earst, thus to him said she
I haue an angel, which that loueth me
That with gret loue, wher so I wake or slepe
Is redy aye, my body for to kepe.

And if that he may felen out of drede
That ye me touch or loue in vilony
He right anon will sle you with the dede
And in your youth thus shall ye die
And if that ye in clene loue me gie
He wol you loue as me, for your clennesse
And shew you of his ioy and brightnesse.

This Valerian, corrected as God wold
Answerd ayen, if I shal trust the
Let me that angel se, and him behold
And if that it a very angel be
Than wol I done as thou hast prayed me
And if thou loue another man forsoth
Right with this sword thā wil I sle you both.

Cecile answerd anon in this wise
If that ye lust, that angel shul ye se
So that ye trow on Christ, and you baptise
Goth forth to Via apia (qd. she)
That frō this town ne stant but miles thre
And to the pore folke that there dwell
Say hem right thus, as I shal you tell.

Tel hem that I Cecile, you to hem send
To shewen you the good Urban the old
For secret nedes, and for good intent
And whan that ye saint Urban han behold
Tel him the words that I to you told
And whan that he hath purged you fro sinne
Than shall ye see that angel er ye twin.

Valerian is to that place igon
And right as him was taught by his lerning
He found this holy Urban anon
Among these saints burials louting
And he anon, without tarying
Did his message, and whan he had it told
Urban for ioy, gan his hondes vp hold.

The teres from his eyen let he fall
Almighty God, O Jesu Christ (qd. he)
Sower of chaste counsaile, hierd of vs all
The fruite of thilke sede of chastite
That thou hast sow in Cecile, take to the
Lo like a bely be, withouten gile
The serueth aye thine owne thral Cecile.

For thilke spouse, that she toke but new
Full like a fierce Lion, she sendeth here
As meke as any lambe was to ewe
And with that word, anon there gan apere
An old man, clad in white clothes clere
That had a booke with letters of gold in hōd
And gan biforne Valerian for to stond.

Valerian as dede fell doun for drede
Whan he this old man saw standing so
Which forthwith anon he herd him rede
O Lord, O faith, O God withouten mo
Of Christendome, and father of al, alsō
Abouen all, and ouer all euery where
These words al with gold written were.

Whan this was rad, than said this old mā
Leuest thou this thing or none, say yea or nay
I leue al this thing (qd. Valerian)
Under the heuen no wight ne thinke may
Sother thing than this, I dare well say
Tho vanished the old man, he nist where
And Pope Urban him christened right there.

Valerian goth home, and finderh Cecily
Within his chamber, with an angell stond
This aungel had of rose and of lilly
Croones two, the which he bare in hond
And first to Cecile, as I vnderstond
He yaue that one, and after gan he take
That other to Valerian her make.

With body clene, & with vnwemmed thought
Kepeth aye wel these croones (qd. he)
From paradise to you I haue hem brought
Ne neuer more shullen they rotten be
Ne lese her swete sauour, trusteth me
Ne neuer wight shall sene hem with eie
But he be chaste, and hate vilonie.

And thou Valerian, for thou so sone
Assentedest to good counsaile also (bone
Say what thou list, and thou shalt haue thy
I haue a brother (qd Valerian tho)
That in this world I loue no man so
I pray you that my brother may haue grace
To know the trouth, as I do in this place.

The angel answerd, God liketh your requeſt
And both with the palme of martyrdome
Shall ye come vnto the blisful feest
And with ỹ word Tiburce his brother come
And whan that he the sauour vndernome
Which that the roses and the lillies cast
Within his hert he gan to wonder fast.

And said: I wonder this time of the yere
Whence that this sote sauour cometh so
Of roses and lillies that I smell here,
For though I had hem in mine hondes two
The sauour might in me no deper go
The swete smel that in my hert I find
Hath chaunged me all in another kind.

Valerian said, two croumes haue we
Snow white & rose red, that shineth clere
Which that thine eyen han no might to se
And as thou smellest hem through my praiere
So shalt thou seen hem my leue brother dere
If it so be that thou wilt without slouth
Bileue aright, and know the very trouth.

Tiburce answerd, saiest thou this to me
In sothnesse, or in dreme herken I this
In dremes (qd. Valerian) han we be
Unto this time, brother mine iwis
But now at erst, our dwelling in trouth is
How wast thou (qd. Tiburce) & in what wise
Nd. Valerian, that I shall thee deuise.

The angel of God hath me ỹ trouth itaught
Which thou shalt seene, and thou wilt reney
The idols, and be clene, and els naught
And of the miracles of these croumes twey
Saint Ambrose in his preface lust to sey
Solempnly this noble doctor dere
Commendeth it, and saith in this manere.

The palme of martyrdom for to receiue
Seint Cecile, fulfilled of Gods yift
The world & eke her chambre gan she weiue
Witnes Tiburce, and Ceciles shrift
To which God of his bounte wold shift
Croumes two, of floures well smelling
And made the Angel hem tho croumes bring.

The maid hath brought hem to blisse aboue
The world hath wist what it is worth cer-
Deuocion & chastite wel for to loue (tain
Tho shewed him Cecile all open and plaine
That all idols ben but things in baine
For they ben dumbe, and thereto they bin defe
And charged him his idols for to lefe.

Who that troweth not this, a beest he is
(Nd. this Tiburce) if that I shall not lie
She kissed his brest whan she herd this
And was full glad he couth trouth espie
This day take I the for mine ally
Said this blisful maiden faire and dere
For after that she said as ye may here.

Lo right so as the loue of Christ (qd. she)
Made me thy brothers wife, right in ỹ wise
Anon for mine ally here take I thee
Sithens that thou wolt thine idols despise
Go with thy brother now, and the baptise
And make the clene, so that thou maist behold
The Angels face, of which thy brother told.

Tiburce answerd and said, brother dere
First tell me whether I shall, & to what man:
To whom he said, come forth with good chere
I wol the lede vnto the pope Urban
To Urban brother mine Valerian
(Nd. this Tiburce) wilt thou me thider lede:
Me thinketh that it were a wonder dede

Ne menest thou not Urban (qd. he tho)
That is so oft dampned to be deed
And wonneth in haikes to and fro
And dare not once put forth his heed
Wen should him burn in a fire so reed
If he were found, and men might him spie
And we also that beare him company.

And while we seken thilke diuinite
That is hid in heuen priuily
Algate ybrent in this world should we be
To whom Cecile answerd boldly
Wen might drede well and skilfully
This life to lese, mine owne dere brother
If this were liuing only and non other.

But there is better liuing in other place
That neuer shall be lost, ne drede the nought
Which gods son vs told through his grace
That fathers son hath al thing wrought
And all ỹ wrought is with a skilful thought
The gost that from the father gan procede
Hath souled him without any drede.

By word and by miracle, lo goddes ſonne
When he was in this world, declared here
That there is other life there mē may wonne
To whom answerd Tiburce: O ſuſter dere
Ne ſaidest thou right now in this manere
There nas but one God lord in ſothfaſtneſſe
and now of three how may thou bere witneſſe

That ſhal I tel (qd ſhe) er that I go
Right as a man hath ſapiences thre
Memory, engine, and intellect alſo
So in ſuch being of diuinite
Thre perſons may there right wel be
Tho gan ſhe there full beſily him preche
Of Chriſtes ſonne, and of his paines teche

And many pointes of his paſſion
How Gods ſonne in this world was with-holde
To do mankind plaine remiſſion
That was bound in ſinnes and cares colde
All theſe things ſhe vnto Tiburce tolde
And after this Tiburce in good entent
With Valerian to pope Urban went.

That thonked god, & with glad hert & light
He chriſtened him, & made him in that place
Perfite in his lerning goddes knight
And after this Tiburce gate ſuch grace
That euery day he ſaw in time and ſpace
The Angel of God, and euery maner boone
That he God aſked, it was ſped full ſoone

It were full harde by order for to ſaine
How many wonders Jeſu for him wrought
But at the laſt, to tell ſhort and plaine
The ſergeaunt of the toun hem ſought
And hem before Almache ỳ prouoſt brought
Which hem apoſed, and knew al her entent
And to the Image of Jupiter hem ſent.

And ſaid, who ſo wol do no ſacrifice
Swappe of his heed, this is my ſētence here
Anon theſe martirs, that I you deuiſe
One Maximus that was an officere
Of the prefectes, and his councelere
Hem hent, & whan he forth the ſaintes lad
Him ſelfe he wept for pite that he had

Whan Maximus had herd this ſaints lore
He gate hem of the tormentours leue
And had hem to his houſe withouten more
And with her preching, er that it were eue
They gon from the tormentour reue
And from Maximus, & from his folk echone
The falſe faith, to trowen in God alone.

Cecile came, whan it was woxen night
With prieſtes, that hem chriſtened all in fere
And afterward, whan day was woxen light
Cecile hem ſaid with a ſober chere
Now Chriſtes own knightes leue and dere
Caſteth al away the werkes of derkneſſe
And armeth you in armour of brightneſſe.

Ye han forſoth ydone a great bataile (ſerued
You cours is done, your faith hath you con-
Goth to the croune of life that may not faile
The rightfull Judge, which ye han ſerued
Shal yeue it you as ye it deſerued
And whan this thing was ſaid, as I deuiſe
Men lad hem forth to done the ſacrifice.

But when they were vnto ỳ place ybrought
To tell ſhortly the concluſioun
They nolde enſence ne ſacrifice right nought
But on her knees, they ſaten hem adoun
With humble hert and ſadde deuocion
And loſten bothe her heddes in the place
Her ſoules went to the king of grace.

This Maximus that ſaw this thing betide
With pitous teares tolde it anon right
That he her ſoules ſawe to heuen glide
With angels full of clereneſſe and of light
And with his word conuerted many a wight
For which Almachius did him ſo to bete
With whippes of lede, til he his life gan lete

Cecile him toke, and buried him anon
By Tiburce and Valerian ſothly
Within her burying place vnder a ſtone
And after this Almachius haſtely
Bad his miniſters fetchen openly
Cecile, ſo that ſhe might in his preſence
Do ſacrifice, and Jupiter incence

But they conuerted at her wiſe lore
Wepten full ſore, and yaue full credence
Vnto her worde, and criden more and more
Chriſt goddes ſonne, without difference
Is very God, this is all our ſentence
That hath a ſeruaunt ſo good him to ſerue
Thus with o voice we trowe thogh we ſterue

Almachius, that herde all this doyng
Bad fetche Cecile, that he might her ſe
And alderfirſt this was his aſking
What maner woman art thou (qd he?)
I am a gentill woman borne (qd ſhe)
I aſke of thee (qd he) though it thee greue
Of thy religion and of thy beleue?

Ye haue begon your question folisbly
(Qd she) that would two answers conclude
In one demaunde, ye asken leudly
Almachius answerde to that similitude
Of whence cometh thine answere so rude.
Of whence (qd she) whē that she was framed
Of conscience, and of good faith vnfained.

Almachius said, ne takest thou none hede
Of my power: and she him answerde this
Your might (qd she) full liteil is to drede
For euery mortall mannes power mis
But ylike a bladder full of winde ywis
For with a nedles point, when it is yblowe
May all the bost of it be laide full lowe.

Full wrongfully begannst thou (qd he)
And yet in wrong is thy perseueraunce
Wost thou not how our mighty princes fre
Haue thus cōmaunded & made ordinaunce
That euery christē wight shal haue penaūce
But if that he his christendome wil sey
And gon al quite, if he wol it reney.

Your princes erren, as your nobles dothe
Qd tho Cecile, in a wode sentence
Ye make vs guilty, and it is not sothe
For ye that knowen wel our innocence
For as much as we done a reuerence
To Christ, and for we bere a christen name
Ye put on vs a crime and eke a blame.

But we that knowen thilke name so
For vertuous, we may it not withsey
Almachius answerd, chese one of these two
Do sacrifice, or christendome reney
That thou mowe scapen by that wey
At which worde the holy blisfull maide
Gan for to laugh, and to the iudge she saide

O iudge confused in thy nicete
Wost thou that I reney innocence
To make me a wicked wight (qd she)
Lo he dissimuleth here in audience
He stareth and woddeth in his aduertence
To whom Almachius said: O sely wretche
Thou wost not howe farre my might maye (stretche

Hath not our mighty princes yeuen
To me, both power and eke auctorite
To make folke to dien or to liuen:
Why spekest thou so proudly than to me:
I ne speke it not but stedfastly (qd she)
Not proudly, for I say as for my side
I hate deedly thilke vice of pride.

And if thou drede not a sothe for to here
Than wol I shewen al openly by right
That thou hast made a full greate leasing here
Thou saist thy princes han yeuen the might
Both to slee and eke to quicke a wight
Thou ne maiste but onely like bereue
Thou hast non other power ne leue.

But thou maist say, thy prices han y maked
Minister of dethe, for if thou speke of mo
Thou liest, for thy power is full naked
Do way thy boldnesse, said Almachius tho
And do sacrifice to our goddes er thou go
I recke not what wrong thou me profer
For I can suffer, as can a philosopher.

But thilke wrongs may I not endure
That thou spekest of our gods here (qd he)
Cecile answerd, O nice creature
Thou saidst no worde sithens thou spakest to
That I ne knewe therwith thy nicite (me
And that thou were in euery maner wise
A leude officer, and a vaine iustice.

The lacketh nothing to thine vtter eyen
That thou nart blind, for thing y we seen all
That is a stone, that men well may aspien
That like stone, a God thou wolt it call
I rede thee let thine honde vpon it fall
And tast it wel, and stone thou shalt it finde
Sens y thou seest not with thyn eyen blinde.

It is a shame that the people shall
So scorne the, and laugh at thy folye
For comenly men wot it well ouer all
That mightie God is in his heuens hye
And these ymages, wel maiste thou aspie
To thee ne to hemselfe may they not profite
For in her effecte, they be not worth a mite.

Thus and such other wordes said she
And he wexe wroth, & bad she should be lede
Home to her house, and in her house (qd he)
Brenne her in a bathe, with flames rede
And as he bad, right so was done the dede
For in a bathe they gan her fast sheten
And night & day great fire vnder they beten.

All the long night, and eke the day also
For all the fire, and eke the bathes hete
She sat all colde, and felt of it no wo
It made her not a droppe for to swete
But in that bath her life she mote lete
For Almachie, with a full wicked entent
To sleen her in the bathe, his sonde sent.

Thre ſtrokes in the necke he ſmote her tho
The turmentour, but for no mancr chaunce
He might not ſmite all her necke a two
And for there was that time an ordinaunce
That no mā ſhuld do no perſon ſuch penaūce
The fourth ſtroke to ſmite, ſoft or ſore
This turmentour durſt ſmite no more.

But halfe decd, with her neeke ycorue there
He left her lye, and on his way they went
The chriſten folke that about her were
With ſhetes home full faire her hent
Thre daies liued ſhe in this turment
And neuer ceſſed ſhe the faith to teach
That ſhe had foſtred hem, ſhe gan to preach.

And hem ſhe yaue her mouables & her thing
And to the pope Urban betoke hem two
And ſayd, I aſked this of the heuen king
To haue reſpite thre daies and no mo
To recommaund to you er that I go
Theſe ſoules, and that I might ſo werch
Here of mine houſe perpetuellich a cherch.

Saint Urban, with his dekens priuely
The body fette, and buried it by night
Among his other ſaintes honeſtly
Her houſe the church of ſaint Cecile hight
Saint Urban halowed it, as he well might
In which into this day in noble wiſe
Men don to Chriſt and to his ſaintes ſeruiſe.

¶ Here endeth the ſecond Nonnes tale, and here beginneth the prologue of the Chanons yeman.

Whan ended was the life of
ſaint Cecile
Er we fully had ridden fiue
mile
At Boughton vnder the blee,
vs gan a take
A man, that clothed was in clothes blake
And vnder that he had a white ſurpliſe
His hakney, that was all pomely griſe
So ſwete, that it wonder was to ſe
It ſemed that he had picked miles thre
The horſe eke that his yoman rode vpon
So ſwete, that vneth might he gon
Aboue the paytrell ſtode the fome full hye
He was of fome as flecked as a pye
A male twifold on his croper lay
It ſemed that he caried litell aray
All light for ſommer rode this worthy man
And in my hert wondren I began
what that he was, till I vnderſtode
How that his cloke was ſewed to his hode
For which, when I had long auiſed me
I demed him ſome chanon for to be
His hatte hing at his backe by a lace
For he had ridden more than trot or pace
He rode aye pricking as he were wode
A clote lefe he had laid vnder his hode
For ſwette, and for to kepe his heed fro hete
But it was ioy for to ſe him ſwete
His forehced dropped as a ſtillatory
Were full of plantaine or of peritory
And when he was come, he gan cry
God ſaue (qd. he) this ioly company
Faſt haue I pricked (qd. he) for your ſake
Becauſe that I wold you ouer take
To riden in this mery company
His yoman was eke full of curteſy
And ſaid ſirs, now in the morow tide
Out of our hoſtry I ſaw you ride
And warned here my lord and ſoucraine
which that to ridden with you is full faine
For his diſport, he loueth daliaunce.
Fre for thy warning god yeue ỹ good chance
Then ſaid our hoſt, certaine it wold ſeme
Thy lord were wiſe, and ſo I may well deme
He is full iocond alſo dare I lay
Can he ought tell a mery tale or tway
With which he glad may this company.
Who ſir my lord, ye, without lie
He can of mirth and eke of iolite
Not but inough alſo ſir truſteth me
And ye him knew alſo well as do I
Ye would wonder how well and thriftely
He couth werke, and that in ſondry wiſe
He hath taken on him many a great empriſe
Which were full hard, for any that is here
To bring about, but they of him it lere
As homely as he rideth among you
If ye him knew, it wold ben for your prow
Ye wold not forgon his acquaintaunce
For mochell good I dare lay in balaunce
All that I haue in my poſſeſſion
He is a man of hie diſcreſſion
I warne you well he is a paſſing wiſe man.
Well (qd. our hoſt) I pray the tell me than
Is he a clerke or non, tell what he is.
A clerke, nay he is greter thē a clerke iwis
Said the yoman, and in wordes few
Hoſt of his craft ſomwhat woll I ſhew
I ſay my lord can ſuch a ſubtelte
But all his craft ye may not wete of me
And ſomewhat helpe I yet to his werching
That all the ground that we be on riding
Till we com to Canterbury toune

He could all clene turne vp and doune
And pane it all of siluer and of gold.
And whan this yoman had thus told
Unto our host: he said benedicite
This thing is wonder meruailous to me
Sens that thy lord is of so hie prudence
(Bycause of which, men should him reuerẽce)
That of his worshipp recketh he so lite
His ouerest sloppe is not worth a mite
As in effect to him, so mote I go
It is all baudy and to tore also
Why is thy lord so slot hich I you pray
And is of power better clothes to bey:
If that his dede acord with thy speech
Tell me that, and that I the beseech.
Why (qd. this yeman) whereto aske ye me:
God helpe me so, for he shall neuer the
But I woll not auow that I say
And therefore kepe it secret I you pray
He is to wise m fay, as I beleue
That is ouerdone nill not preue
And right as clerkes saine, it is a vice
Wherfore I hold him in that, leud and nice
For whan a man hath ouer great a wit
Full oft it happeth him to misusen it
So doth my lord, and that me greueth sore
God amend it, I can say you no more.
Therof no force good yeman (qd. our host)
Sens of the comming of thy lord thou wost
Tell how he doth, I pray the hertely
Sens that he is so crafty and so sly
Wher dwellen ye, if it to tell be:
In the subbarbes of a toune (qd. he)
Lurking in hernes and in lanes blind
Where these robers, and theues by kind
Holden her priuy fearfull residence
As they that dare not shewen their presence
So fare we, if that I shall say the sothe.
Yet (qd. our host) let me talke to the
Why art thou so discoloured in thy face:
Peter (qd. he) God yeue it hard grace
I am so vsed in the hote fire to blow
That it hath chaunged my colour as I trow
I am not wont in no mirrour to prie
But swinke sore, and lerne to multiplie
We blondren euer, and poozen in the fire
And for all that, we failen of our desire
For euer we lacken our conclusion
To much folke we do illusion
And borow gold, be it a pound or two
Or ten or twelue, or many summes mo
And make hem wene at the lest way
That of a pound we could make tway
Yet is it false, and aye han we good hope
It for to done, and after it we grope
But that science is so ferre vs biforne
We mow not although we had it swore
It ouertake, it flyt away so fast
It woll vs make beggers at the last.
Whiles this yeman was thus in his talking
This Chanon drew him nere, & herd al thing
Which this yeman spake, for suspection
Of mennes speech euer had this Chanon
For Cato saieth, he that gilty is
Demeth all thing be spoken of him iwis
Bicause of that, he gan so nigh to draw
To his yeman, to herken all his saw
And thus he said vnto his yeman tho
Hold now thy peace, & speke no wordes mo
For if thou do, thou shalt it sore aby
Thou slaundrest me here in this company
And eke discouerest that thou shuldest hide.
Ye (qd. our host) tell on what so euer betide
Of all this threting, recke the not a mite.
In faith (qd. he) no more do I but lite
And whan this Chanon saw it would not be
But his yeman would tell his priuete
He fledde away for very sorow and shame.
A (qd. the yeman) here shall rise a game
All that I can, anon woll I you tell
Sens he is gon, the foule fend him quell
For neuer here after, woll I with him mete
For peny ne for pound, I you behete
He that me brought first vnto that game
Er that he die, sorow haue he and shame
For it is ernest to me by my faith
That fele I well, what so any man saith
And yet for all my smert and all my greke
For all my sorow, labour and mischeke
I couth neuer leaue it in no wise
Now wold God my witte might suffise
To tellen all that longeth to that art
But natheless, yet woll I tell you a part
Sens that my lord is gon, as I wol not spare
Such thing as I know I woll declare.

¶ Here endeth the Prologue of the Chanons yeman, and here foloweth his tale.

With this chanon I dwelt leuen yere
And of his science I am neuer the nere
All that I had, I haue lost therby
And God wotte, so hath many mo than I
There I was wont to be right fresh & gay
Of clothing, and eke of other good aray

Now

Now may I were an hose vpon mine hedde
And where my colour was both fresh & redde
Now is it wanne, and of a leaden hew
Who so it vseth, sore shall him rue
And of my swinke, yet blered is mine ye
Lo which auauntage it is to multiplie
That sliding science, hath me made so bare
That I haue no good, where that euer I fare
And yet I am ende tted so thereby
Of gold, that I haue borowed truely
That while I liue, I shall it quite neuer
Let euery man beware by me euer
What maner man that casteth him therto
If he continue, I hold his thrift ido
So helpe me God, thereby shall he neuer win
But empte his purse, & make his wittes thin
And whā he, through his madnesse and foly
Hath lost his owne good, through ieopardy
Than he exciteth other men thereto
To lese her good, as himself hath do
For vnto shrewes, ioy it is and ese
To haue her felawes in pain and disese
For thus was I ones learned of a clerke
Of that no charge, I woll speke of our werke
When we be there, as we shall exercise
Our cluish craft, we semen wonder wise
Our termes been so clergiall and so quaint
I blow the fire, till mine hart faint.
What should I tell ech proporcion
Of thinges, which we werchen vpon
As on siue or sixe vnces, may well be
Of siluer, or of some other quantite
And besie me to tellen you the names
Of Orpiment, brent bones, yron squames
That vnto pouder grounden been full small
And in earthen potte, how put is all
And salt iput in, and also papere
Before these pouders that I speake of here
And well icouered, with a lampe of glas
And of moch other thing that there was
And of the pottes and glas englutyng
That of the aire might passe out nothing
And of the elie fire and smart also
Which that was made, and of the care & wo
That we had in our maters subliming
And in amalgaming, and calsening
Of quicksiluer, icleped Mercury crude
For all our sleight, we cannot conclude
Our Orpument, and sublimed Mercury
Our ground litarge eke on the porphiry
Of ech of these, vnces a certain
Not helpeth vs, our labour is in vain
Ne eke our spirites assencioun
Ne yet our matters, that lien all fire adoun
Now in our werking nothing auaile
For lost is all our labour and our trauaile
And all the cost, a twenty deuill way
Is lost also, which we vpon it lay.
There is also full many an other thing
That is to our craft appertaining
Though I by order hem ne rehearce can
Because that I am a leud man
Yet woll I tellen hem, as they come to mind
Though I ne can set hem in her kind
As Bole Armoniake, Verdegreece, Boras
And sondry vessels made of yearth and glas
Our vrinals, and our discensories
Viols, crosselles, and sublimatories
Concurbites, and alembykes eke
And other soch, deare inough a leke
It nedeth not to rehearce hem all
Waters rubifying, and Boles gall
Arsneke, sal Armoniake, and Brimstone
And herbes could I tell eke many one
As Egremony, Valerian, and Lunary
And other soch, if that me list to tary
Our lampes brenning both night and day
To bringen about our craft, if that we may
Our fourmice eke of calcinacion
And of waters albificacion
Unsleked lime, chalke, and gleire of an eye
Pouders diuers, ashes, dong, pisse, and cleie
Sered pokettes, salt Peter, and Vitriole
And diuers fires, made of wood and cole
Sal Tartre, Alcaly, and sal preparate
And combust matters, and coagulate (osle
Cley made with hors dung, mans heere, and
Of tartre alim, glas, berme, wort, & argoile
Reasgor, and other matters enbibing
And eke of our matters encorporing
And of our siluer citrination
Our sementing, and eke fermentacion
Our yngottes testes, and many mo.
I woll you tell as was me taught also
The foure spirites, and the bodies seuen
By order, as oft I heard my lord nemen.
The first spirit quicke siluer cleped is,
The second Orpiment, the third ysois
Sal Armoniake, the fourth Brimstone.
The bodies seuen eke, lo here hem anone
Sol gold is, and Luna siluer we threpe
Mars yron, Mercury quicke siluer we clepe
Saturnus lead, and Iupiter is Tinne
And Uenus Coper, by my father kinne.
This cursed craft, who so woll exercise
He shall no good haue that may him suffice
For all the good he spendeth there about
He lese shall, thereof haue I no doubt
Who so that listen to vtter his foly
Let him come forth and learne to multiply

And euery man that hath ought in his cofer
Let him appere, and were a Philosopher
I shaunce that craft is so light for to lere
Nay nay God wot, al be he Monke or Frere
Preest or Chanon, or any other wight
Though he sit at his booke both day & night
In lerning of this cluish nice lore
All is in vaine, and parde moch more
Is to lere a leud man this subtilte,
Fie speake not thereof, it woll not be
All could he lettrure, or could he none
As in effect he shall find it all one
For both two, by my salvacion
Concluden in multiplicacion
Fliche well, whan thei haue all ido
This is to sain, thei failen both two
Yet forgate I moch rehearsaile
Of waters corosife, and of limaile
And of bodies mollification
And also of her induration
Oiles, ablutions, metals fusible
To tellen you all, would passe any bible
That O where is, wherefore as for the best
Of all these names now would I rest
For as I trow, I haue you told inow
To reise a fende, all looke he neuer so row.
A nay let be the Philosophers stone
Elixer cleped, we sliken fast echone
For had we him, than were we siker inow
But vnto God of heuen I make a vow
For all our craft, whan that we han all ido
And all our sleight, he woll not come vs to
He hath made vs spend much good
For sorow of which, almost we waxen wood
But that good hope creepeth in our hart.
Supposing euer, though we sore smart
To been releued of him afterward
Supposing and hope is sharpe and hard
I warne you well it is to liken euer
That future temps hath made men discreuer
In trust thereof, all that euer thei had
Yet of that art they could not waxe sad
For vnto him it is a bitter swete
So semeth it, for ne had thei but a shete
Which ỹ they might wrappē hem in a night
And a gratte to walken in a day light
Thei wouldē hem sel, & spend it on this craft
They come not stint, till nothing be laft
And euermore where that euer thei gone
Men may hem ken by smell of brimstone
For all the world thei stinken as a Gote
Her sauour is so rammish and so hote
That though a man a mile from hem be
The sauour woll infect him trusteth me
Lo, thus by smelling, & by threde bare aray
If that men list, this folke know they may
And if a man woll aske him priuily
Why thei be clothed so vnthriftily
Right anon they wol roune in his ere
And saine, if that thei espied were
Men woll hem slea, because of her science
Lo thus these folke bitraien innocence
Passe ouer this, I go my tale vnto
Ere that the pot be on the fire ido
Of metals, with a certaine quantite
My lord hem tempereth, and no man but he
Now he is gon, I dare say boldly
For as men saien, he can do craftily
Algate I wote well he hath such a name
And yet full oft he renneth in the blame
And wote ye how, full oft it happeneth so
The pot to breaketh, and farewell all is go
These mettals been of so great violence
Our walles may not make hem resistence
But if thei were wrought of lime and stone
Thei percen so, & through the wall thei gone
And some of hem sinken into the ground
Thus haue we lost by times many a pound
And some are scattered all the flore about
Some lepen into the rofe withouten doubt
Tho that the fend not in our sight him shew
I trow that he with vs be, that like shrew
In hell where that he is lord and sire
Ne is there no more wo, ne angre ne ire
Whan that our pot is broke, as I haue saied
Euery man chite, and holte him well apaied
Some said it was long of the fire making
Some said nay, it was on the blowing
Than was I ferde, for that was mine office
Straw (qd. the third) ye been leud & nice
It was not tempred as it ought to be.
Nay (qd. the fourth) stint and herken me
Because our fire was not made of Beche
That is the cause, and none other so theche
I can not tell whereon it is along
But well I wote great strife is vs emong.
What (qd. my lord) there nis no more to done
Of these perils I woll beware eftsoone
I am right siker, that the pot was craied
Be as be may, be ye not amased
As vsage is, let swepe the flore as swithe
Plucke vp your hart, and be glad and blithe.
The mullocke on an heape iswept was
And on the flooze cast a canuas
And all this mullocke in a Sine it throw
And isifted and iplucked many a throw.
Parde (qd. one) somwhat of our metall
Yet is there here, though we haue not all
And tho this thing misbapped hath as now
Another time it may been well inow

The

We mote put our good in auenture
A Marchaunt parde, may not aye endure
Trusteth me well in his prosperitee
Somtime his good is drouned in the see
And somtime it cometh safe vnto the londe.
Peace (qd my lord) ỹ next time I wol fonde
To bring our craft all in an other plite
And but I doe sirs, let me haue the wite
There was default in somwhat well I wot.
In other saied, the fire was our hote.
But be it hote or cold, I dare say this
That we concluden euer more amis
We failen of that which we would haue
And in our madnesse euermore we raue
And whan we be togither euerichone
Euery man seemeth as wise as Salomon
But al thing, which that shineth as the gold
Is not gold, as I haue heard told
Ne euery appell that is faire at ye
Nis not good, what so men clappe or crie.
Right so it fareth emong vs
He that semeth the wisest by Jesus
Is most foole, whan it cometh to the prefe
And he that semeth truest is a thefe
That shal ye know, er that I frō you wende
By that I of my tale haue made an ende.
There was a Chanon of Religioun
Emonges vs, would infect all a toun
Though it as great were as Nimme
Rome, Alisaundre, Troie, and other thre
His sleight and his infinite falsnesse
There couth no man writen as I gesse
Though that he might liue a thousand yere
In all this world of falsnesse nis his pere
For in his termes he woll him so winde
And speake his words in so slie a kinde
Whan he comen shall with any wight
That he woll make him dote anon right
But it a fende be as himselfe is
Full many a man hath he begiled er this
And mo woll, if that he may liue a while
And yet men riden & gone full many a mile
Him for to seke, and haue aquaintaunce
Not knowing of his false gouernaunce
And if ye lust to giue me audience
I woll it tellen here in your presence.
But worshipfull Chanons religious
Ne deemeth not that I sclaunder your hous
Although that my tale of a Chanon be
Of euery order some shrewe is parde
And God forbid that all a company
Should rue a singuler mannes folie
To slaunder you is not mine entent
But to correct that misse is ment
This tale was not onely told for you
But eke for other mo, ye wote well how
That emong Christes Apostles twelue
There was no traitour but Judas him selue
Than why should the remnant haue blame
That giltelesse were, by you I say the same
Saue onely this, if ye woll herken me
If any Judas in your couent be
Remeueth him betime, I you rede
If shame or losse may causen any drede
And be nothing displeased I you praie
But in this case herketh what I saie.

In London was a priest annuellere
That therein had dwelt many a yere
Which was so pleasant & so seruisable
Unto the wife, where he was at table
That she would suffer him nothing to pay
For bord ne clothing, went he neuer so gay
And spending siluer had he right ynow
Thereof no force, I woll procede as now
And tell forth the tale of the Chanon
That brought this priest to confusion.
This false Chanon came vpon a daie
Unto this priestes chamber, where he laie
Beseching him to lene him a certain
Of gold, and he would quite him ayen
Leneth me a Marke (qd he) but daies thre
And at my daie I woll quite it thee
And if it so be, that thou finde me false
An other daie hang me by the halse.
This priest tooke him a marke, & that swith
And this Chanon him thanked oft sith
And toke his leue, and went forth his wey
And at third daie brought his money
And to this priest he toke this gold ayen
Whereof this priest was glad and fain
Certes (qd he) nothing anoyeth me
To lene a man a noble, two or thre
Or what thing were in my possession
Whan he so true is of condicion
That in no wise he breake woll his daie
To such a man I can neuer say naie.
What qd this Chanon, should I be untrue
Naie, that were thing fallen of new
Trouth is a thing that I woll euer kepe
Unto the daie, in which I shall crepe
Into my graue, or els God forbede
Beleeueth this as siker as your crede
God thanke I, and in good time be it sated
That there nas neuer man yet euill apaied
For gold ne siluer that he to me lent
Ne neuer falshede in mine harte I ment.
And sir (qd he) now of my priuite
Sens ye so goodliche haue been to me
And kith to me so great gentilnesse

Somwhat

Somwhat to quite with your kindnesse
I woll you shewe, if ye woll it lere
(I shall it shew to you anon right here)
How I can werche in Philosophie
Taketh good hede, ye shal it se with your ye
That I woll done a maistrie ser I go.
Ye sir (qd the priest) and woll ye so
Mary therof I praie you hartely.
At your commaundement sir truely
(Qd the Chanon) and els God forbede
Lo how this these couth his seruice bede
Full sooth it is that such profered seruice
Stinketh, as witnesseth the old wise
And that full sone I woll it verifie
In this Chanon, rote of all trecherie
That euermore delite hath and gladnesse
Such fendly thoughtes in his hart empresse
How Christes people he may to mischif brig
God kepe vs from his false dissimuling.
What wist this priest with who that he delt
Ne of his harme comming nothing he felt
O sely priest, O sely innocent
With couetise anon thou shalt be blent
O graceles full blind is thy conceite
Nothing art thou ware of his disceite
Which that this Fox hath shapen to thee
His wilie wrenches thou maiest not flee
Wherefore to go to the conclusion
That referreth to thy confusion
Unhappie man, anon I woll me hie
To tell thine vnwitte ne thy folie
And eke the falsnesse of that other wretche
As ferforth as my conning woll stretche.
This Chanō was my lord ye would wene
Sir hoste in faith, and by the heauen Quene
It was an other Chanon, and not he,
That can an hundred folde more subtelte
Ye hath betrayed folke many a time
Of his falsnesse it doleth me to rime
Euer whan I speake of his falshede
For shame of him, my chekes waxen rede
Algates they beginnen for to glowe
For rednesse haue I none, right well I know
In my vilage, for fumes diuerse
Of metals, which ye haue heard me reherse
Consumed and wasted hath my rednesse
Now take hede of this Chanōs cursednesse.
Sir (qd he) to the priest, let your man gon
For quicksiluer, that we it had anon
And let him bring vnces two or three
And whan he cometh, as fast shull ye see
A wonder thing, which ye saw neuer er this
Sir (qd the priest) it shal be doen ywis.
He bad his seruaunt fetch him this thing
And he all redy was at his bidding
And went him forth, and came anon again
With this quicke siluer, shortly for to sain
And toke these vnces thre to the Chanoun
And he hem laied well and faire adoun
And bad the seruaunt coles for to bring
That he anon might go to his werking.
The coles right anon were set
And this Chanon toke out a crosselet
Of his bosome, and shewed it to the priest
This instrumēt (qd he) which that thou seest
Take in thy hond, and put thy selfe therein
Of this quicksiluer an vnce and begin
In ỹ name of Christ to were a Philosopher
There be full fewe, which I would it profer
To shewe hem so much of my science
For here shull ye se by experience
That this quicksiluer I woll mortifie
Right in your sight anon without en lie
And make it as good siluer and as fine
As there is any in your purse or mine
Or els where, and make it malliable
And els hold me false and vnstable
Emonges folke euer to appere.
I haue a pouder, that cost me dere
Shall make all good, for it is cause of all
My conning, which I you shewe shall
Voideth your man, and let him be thereout
And shet the dooze, whiles we been about
Our priuete, that no man vs espie
Whiles that we werken in our Philosophie.
All as he bad, fulfilled was in dede
This like seruaunt anon out yede
And his maister shet the dooze anon
And to her labour spedily they gon.
This priest at this cursed Chanōs bidding
Upon the fire anon set this thing
And blewe the fire, and bessied him full fast
And this Chanon into this crosset cast
A pouder, I not whereof it was
Imade, either of chalke, yearth, or glasse
Or somwhat els, was not worth a flie
To blind with this priest, and bad him hie
These coles for to couchen all aboue
The crosselet, for in token that I thee loue
(Qd this Chanon) thine hondes two
Shal werke all thing that here shal be do.
Graūtmercy (qd the priest) & was full glad
And couched coles, as the Chanon bad
And whyle he besie was, this fendly wretche
This false Chanon the foule fende him fetch
Out of his bosome toke a Bechen cole
In which full subtelly was made an hole
And therein was put of siluer limaile
An vnce, and stopped was without faile
The hole with waxe, to kepe the limaile in

And vnderstandeth that this false gin
Was not made there, but it was made bifore
And other thinges that I shall you tell more
Hereafter, which that he with him brought
Er he came there, to begile him he thought
And so he did, or they went a twinne
Till he had tourned him, could he not blinne
It dulleth me, whan that I of him speke
On his falshede, fain would I me wreke
If I wist how, but he is here and there
He is so variaunt, he bideth no where.
But taketh hede sirs now for Gods loue
He toke his cole, of which I spake aboue
And in his hond he bare it priuely
And whiles the priest couched belily
The coles, as I told you er this
This Chanon saied, frende ye doen amis
This is not couched as it ought to be
But sone I shall amend it (qd. he)
Now let me medle therewith but a while
For of you haue I pite by sainct Gile
Ye been right hotte, I se well how ye swete
Haue here a cloth and wipe away the wete
And while the priest him wiped hace
This Chanon toke the cole, I shrew his face
And laied it abouen apon the midward
Of the crosselet, and blew well afterward
Till that the coles gan fast bren.
Now yeue vs drinke, qd. this Chanon then
As swithe as shall be well I vndertake
Sit we doune, and let vs merry make
And whan this Chanons Bechen cole
Was brent all, the limaile out of the hole
Into the crosselet anon fell adoun
And so it must nedes by reasoun
Sens it so euen abouc couched was
But thereof wist the priest nothing, alas
He demed all the coles liche good
For of the sleight, nothing he vnderstood.
And whan this Alkamister saw his time
Reiseth vp sir priest (qd. he) and stondeth by me
And for I wote well ingot haue I none
Goth walketh forth, and bring a chalke stone
For I woll make it of the same shappe
That an ingot is, if I may haue happe
And bring eke with you a bolle or a panne
Full of water, and ye shall se than
How that our belines shall hap and preue
And yet for ye shall haue no misbeleue
Ne wrong conceit of me in your absence
I woll not been out of your presence
But go with you, and come with you again
The chamber doore, shortly to sain
They opened and shet, and wet forth her wey
And forth with hem they caried the key
And comen ayen withouten any delay
What should I tary all the long day
He toke the chalke, and shope it in the wise
Of an yngot, as I shall you deuise.
I say he toke out of his owen sleue
A teine of siluer, iuell mote he cheue
Which that was but an vnce of weight
And taketh hede now of his cursed sleight
He shope his yngot, in length and in brede
Of the teine, withouten any drede
So slily that the priest it not aspide
And in his sleue again he gan it hide
And from the fire toke vp his matere
And into the yngot it put with mery chere
And into the water vessell he it cast
Whan that him list, and bad the priest as fast
Loke what there is, put in thin hond & grope
Thou shalt find there siluer as I hope
What diuell of hell should it els be?
Shauing of siluer, siluer is parde.
He put in his hond, and toke vp a teine
Of siluer fine, and glad in euery vaine
Was this priest, whan he saw it was so
Gods blessing and his mothers also
And all Hallowes, haue ye sir Chanon
Saied this priest, and I her maison
But and ye vouchsafe to teach me
This noble craft and this subtelte
I woll be yours, in all that euer I may
Qd. the Chanon, yet woll I make assay
The second time, that ye mow take hede
And been expert of this, and in your nede
An other day assay in mine absence
This discipline, and this crafty science
Let take an other vnce (qd. he) tho
Of quicksiluer, withouten wordes mo
And doen therwith, as I haue doen er this
With that other, which that now siluer is
The priest him belieth in all that he can
To doen as this Chanon, this cursed man
Commaunded him, and fast blew the fire
For to come to the effect of his desire
And this Chanon, right in the meane while
All redy was, this priest eft to begile
And for a countinaunce in his hond bare
An halow sticke, take kepe and beware
In thende of which a n vnce and no more
Of siluer limaile put was all before
Was in his cole, and stopped with ware wele
For to kepen in his limaile euery dele
And whiles this priest was in his businesse
This Chanon with his sticke gan him dresse
To him anon, and his pouder cast in
As he did erst, the diuell out of his skin
Him torne, I pray to God for his falshede

For

For he was euer false in thought and dede
And with his sticke, aboue the crosselet
That was ordained with that false iet
He stirreth the coles, till all relent gan
The waxe again the fire, as euery man
But he a foole be, wote well it mote nede
And all that in the hole was, out yede
And into the crosselet hastely it fell

The Priest supposed nothing but well
But belied him fast, and was wonder fain
Supposyng nought but trouth, soth to sain
He was so glad, that I cannot expresse
In no maner his mirth and his gladnesse
And to the Chanon he profered eft sone
Body and good: ye (qd. the Chanon) anone
Tho I be poore, crafty thou shalt me find
I warne thee yet is there more behind

Is there any Coper here within saied he
Ye sir (qd. the Priest) I trow there be.
Els go buy some, and that alwithe,
Now good sir go forth thy way and hithe.

He wēt his way, & with the coper he came
And this Chanon in his hond it name
And of that coper waied out but an vnce
All to simple is my tong to pronounce
As to minister of my wit the doublenesse
Of this Chanon, rote of all cursednesse
He semed frendly, to hem ỹ knew him nought
But he was fendly, both in werke & thought
It werieth me to tell of his falsenesse
And natheles, yet woll I it expresse
To the entent that men may beware therby
And for none other cause truely.

He put his vnce of coper into the crosselet
And on the fire as swithe he hath it set
And cast in pouder, & made the priest to blow
And in his working for to stoupe low
As he did erst, and all nas but a iape
Right as him list, the priest he made his Ape
And afterward in the yngot he it cast
And in the panne put it at the last
Of water, and in he put his owne hond
And in his sleue, as ye biforehond
Heard me tell, he had a siluer teine
He slily tooke it out, this cursed heine
Unwiting this priest of his false craft
And in the pannes botome he hath it laft
And in the water rombleth to and fro
And wonder priuely tooke vp also
The coper teine, not knowing this priest
And hid it, and hent him by the brest
And to him spake, and thus said in his game
Stoupeth adoune, by God ye be to blame
Helpeth me now, as I did you whilere
Put in your hond, and loketh what is there.

This priest tooke vp this siluer teine anon
And than saied the Chanon, let vs gon
With these thre teines, which we han wrought
To some Goldsmith, and wete if it be ought
For by my faith, I nold for my hood
But if it were siluer fine and good
And that as swithe proued shall be.

Unto the Goldsmith, with these teines thre
They went, and put them in assay
To fire and hammer, might no man say nay
But they wer as them ought for to be.

This slotted priest, who was gladder thā he
Was neuer bird gladder ayenst the day
Ne Nightingale, ayenst the season of May
Was neuer none, that list better to sing
Ne lady lustier in carolling
And for to speake of loue and womanhede
Ne knight in armes, to doen a hardy dede
To stonden in grace of his lady dere
Than had this Priest, this craft to lere
And to the Chanon, thus he spake, and said
For the loue of God, that for vs all deid
And as I may deserue it vnto you
What shall this receit cost, telleth me now.

By our lady (qd. this Chanon) it is dere
I warne you well, saue I and a Frere
In England, there can no man it make.

No force (qd. he) now sir for Gods sake
What shall I pay, tell me I you pray.

I wis (qd. he) it is full dere I say
Sir at one word, if that ye list it haue
Ye shall pay fourty pound, so God me saue
And nere the frendship that ye did er this
To me, ye should pay more iwis.

This priest ỹ somme of fourty pound anon
Of nobles fet, and told hem euerichon
To this Chanon, for this like receit
All his working was fraud and deceit.

Sir priest he said, I kepe for to haue no loos
Of my craft, for I would it wer kept cloos
And as you loue me, kepeth it secre
For and men know all my subtelte
By God men would haue so great enuy
To me, because of my Philosophy
I should be dedde, there wer non other way

God it forbid (qd. the priest) what ye say
Yet had I leuer spend all the good
Which that I haue, and els waxe I wood
Than that ye should fall in soch mischefe:
For your good will haue ye right good preue
(qd. the Chanon) and farewell graunt mercy
He went his way, & neuer the priest him sey
After that day: & whā that this priest should
Waken assay, at soch time as he would
Of this receit, farwell it nold not be

Lo thus beiaped and begyled was he
Thus maketh he his introduction
To bring folke to her destruction.
Considereth sirs how in ech estate
Betwixt men and gold is debate
So ferforth, that vnnethes there is none
This multiplying blindeth so many one
That in good faith, I trow that it be
The greteste cause of such scarsite
These philosophers speken so mistily
In this craft, that men can not come thereby
For any wit that men haue now a daies
Thei may well chattre & iangle as do ỳ iayes
And in her termes, set her lust and paine
But to her purpose shull they neuer attaine
A man may lightly lerne, if he haue ought
To multiply, and bring his good to nought
Lo, such a lucre is in this lustie game
A mans mirth it wul turne all to grame
And empten also great and heuy purses
And maken folke to purchase curses
Of hem that han also her good elente
O fie for shame, they that han be brente
Alas, can they not flie the fires hete
Ye that it vsen, I rede that ye it lete
Lest ỳ ye lesen all, for better than neuer is late
Neuer to thriue, were to long a date
Though ỳ ye prolle aye, ye shall it neuer find
Ye ben as bold as is bayard the blind
That blondreth forth, & perill casteth he none
He is as bold to renne ayenst a stone
As for to go beside in the way
So faren ye that multiplien I say
If that your eien can not sene a right
Loketh that your mind lacke not his sight
For though ye loke neuer so brode and stare
Ye shall not winne a mite in that chaffare
But wast al that ye may repe and renne
Withdraw the fire lest that it to fast brenne
Medleth with that arte no more I mene
For if ye done, your thrift is gone ful clene
And right as swithe I woll you tellen here
What the Philosophers saien in this matere
Lo thus saith Arnold of the new toun
As his rosarie maketh mencioun
He saith right thus, withouten any lie
There may no man Mercurie mortifie
But if it be with his brothers knowleging
Lo how that he, which first said this thing
Of philosophers father was, Hermes
He saith how the dragon doutles
Ne dieth not, but if he be slaine
With his brother: And this is for to saine
By the dragon Mercury, and none other
He vnderstood ỳ brimstone was his brother
That out of Sol and Luna were idrawe
And therfore said he, take heed to my sawe
Let no man bese him this arte for to seche
But he that the intencion and speche
Of philosophers vnderstonde can
And if he do, he is a leud man
For this science, and this cunning (qd. he)
Is of the secre of the secres parde.
Also there was a disciple of Plato
That on a time said his maister to
Is his booke Memor woll bere witnes
And this was his demaund in sothfastnes
Tell me the name of the prime stone.
And Plato andwerd vnto him anone
Take the stone that Titanos men name.
Which is that (qd. he) Magnatia is ỳ same
Said Plato: ye sir and is it thus?
This is ignotum per ignotius
What is Magnatia good sir I you pray
It is a water that is made I say
Of elements four (qd. Plato)
Tell me the roche good sir (qd. he tho)
Of that water, if it be your will.
Nay nay (qd. Plato) certaine that I nill
The philosophers were ilworne echone
That they should discouer it vnto none
Ne in no booke it write in no manere
For vnto Christ it is so lefe and dere
That he woll not that it discouered be
But where it liketh to his deite
Man to enspire and eke for to defend
When that him liketh, lo this is his end.
Than conclude I thus, sens ỳ god of heuen
Ne will not that the philosophers ne men
How that a man shal come vnto this stone
I rede as for the best, let it gone
For who so maketh God his aduersary
As for to werche any thing in contrary
Vnto his wil, certes neuer shall he thriue
Though that he multiply terme of his liue
And there a point, for ended is my tale
God sende euery true man bote of his bale.

¶ Here endeth the tale of the Chanons yeman, and here followeth the Doctour of phisikes Prologue.

WHan this yeman his tale ended had
Of this false Chanon, whiche was so bad
Our hoste gan say, truely and certaine
This priest was begiled, soth for to saine

He wening for to be a Philosopher
Till he right no gold left in his cofer
And sothly this priest had all their iape
This cursed Chanon put in his hood an ape
But al this passe I ouer as now
Sir doctor of phisick, yet I pray you
Tel vs a tale of some honest matere
It shal be done, if that ye wol it here
Said this doctor, and his tale began anon
Now good men (qd. he) herkeneth euerichon.

¶ Here endeth the doctour of Phisikes Prologue, and here begynneth his tale.

THere was, as telleth vs Titus Liuius
A knight, that cleped was Virginius
Fulfilled of honour and of worthines
And strong of friends and of riches.
A doughter he had by his wife
And neuer had he mo in all his life
Faire was this maid in excellent beaute
Aboue euery wight that man may se
For nature hath with soueraine diligence
Formed her in so great excellence
As though she would say, lo I nature
Thus can I forme and paint a creature
Whan that me list, who can me counterfete
Pigmalion not, though he alway forge & bete
Or graue or paint, for I dare well saine
Appelles, or Zeuxis, should werche in vaine
To graue or paint, or forge or bete
If they presumed me to counterfete
For he that is the fourmer principall
Hath made me his vicar generall
To fourme and paint erthly creaturis
Right as me list, for all thing in my cure is
Vnder the moone, that may waue and waxe
And for my werke, nothing wol I axe
My lord and I ben fully of acord
I made her to the worshipe of my lord
So do I all mine other creatures
Of what colour they be, or of what figures
Thus semeth me that nature would say.
This maid was of age xii. yere and tway
In which that nature hath such delite
For right as she can paint a lilly white
And rody as rose, right with such painture
She painted hath this noble creature
Er she was borne, vpon her limmes fre
Where als bright as soch colours should be
And Phebus died had her tresses grete
Like to the stremes of his burned hete
And if that excellent were her beaute
A thousand fold more vertuous was she
In her ne lacketh no condicion
That is to preise, as by discrecion
As wel in body as in gost, chaste was she
For which she floured in virginite
With all humilitie and abstinence
With all attemperance and pacience
With mesure eke, and bering of aray
Discrete she was in answering alway
Tho she were wise as Pallas, dare I saine
(Her faconde eke, full womanly and plaine)
No counterfeited termes had she
To seme wise, but after her degre
She spake, and all her words more and lesse
Sowning in vertue and in gentlenes
Shamefast she was, in maidēs shamefastnes
Constant in hert, and euer in busines
To driue her out of all slogardry
Bacchus had of her mouth no maistry
For wine and youth doth Venus increce
As men in fire woll cast en oyle or grece
And of her owne vertue vnconstrained
She hath full oft her sicke ifained
For that she would flie the company
Where likely was to treten of folly
As is at festes, at reuels, and at daunces
That ben occasions of daliaunces
Such things maken children for to be
To sone repe and bold, as men may se
Which is full perilous, and hath ben yore
For all to sone may she lerne lore
Of boldnes, whan she is a wife.
And ye maistresses in your olde life
That yonge doughters han in gouernance
Ne taketh of my word no displesance
Thinke that ye be set in gouernings
Of lordes doughters, onely for two things
Either for you han kept your honeste
Either ye han fall in freelte
And knowen well enough the old daunce
And conne forsake fully mischaunce
For euermore, therfore for Christes sake
Kepeth wel that ye vndertake.
A theefe of venison that hath forlaste
His lykerousnesse and all his theues crafte
Can kepe a forest best of any man
Now kepeth hem well, for and ye woll ye can
Loketh well, to no vice that ye assent
Lest ye be dampned for your euill intent
For who so doth, a traitor is certaine
And taketh kepe of that I shall you saine
Of all treason soueraine pestilence

Is, when a wight betraieth innocence
Ye fathers, and eke ye mothers also
Though ye han children, be it one or mo
Yours is the charge of all her sufferance
Whiles they ben in your gouernaunce
Beth ware, that by ensample of your liuing
Eyther by your negligence in chastising
That they ne perishe: for I dare well say
If that they don, ye shall full sore obay
Under a shepherd softe and negligent
The wolf hath many a shepe & lambe to rent
Sufficeth one ensample now as here
For I mote turne ayen to my matere.
This maide of which I tel my tale expresse
She kepte her selue, she neded no maistresse
For in her liuing maidens might rede
As in a boke, euery good worke and dede
That longeth to a maide vertuous
She was so prudent and so bounteous
For which out spronge on euery side
Both of her beaute and of her bounte wide
That thorow ye londe they preised her echon
That loued vertue, saue enuy alone
That sory is of other mennes wele
And glad is of her sorow, and vnhele
The doctour maketh this discriptioun
This maide went on a day into the toun
Towarde the temple, with her mother dere
As is of yonge maidens the manere.
Now was there a iustice in the toun
That gouernour was of that regioun
And so befell, this Justice his eyen cast
Upon this maid, auising her full fast
As she came soberly, theras the Judge stode
Anon his hert changed and his mode
So was he caught with beute of this maide
And to himself full preuely he saide
This maide shall be mine for any man
Anon the fend into his hert ran
And taught him sodainly, by what sleight
The maide to his purpose winne he might
For certes, by no force, ne by no mede
Him thought he was not able for to spede
For she was stronge of frendes, and eke she
Confirmed was in such soueraine beute
That wel he wist he might her neuer winne
As for to make her with her body sinne
For which with great deliberacioun
He sent after a client into the toun
The which he knew full subtel & full bold
This iudge vnto this cliēt his tale hath told
In secrete wise, and made him to ensure
He should tell it vnto no creature
And if he did, he should lese his hede
When assented was this cursed rede
Glad was the iudge, and made good chere
And yaue him giftes precious and dere.
When shapen was all this conspiracie
Fro point to point, how ye his lecherie
Parfourmed should be full subtilly
As ye shullen after here openly
Home goeth this client ye hight Claudius
This false iudge, that hight Appius
So was his name, for it is notable
But knowen for an historicall thing notable
The sentence of it soth is out of dout
This false iudge goeth now fast about
To hasten his delite, all that he may
And so befell, ye sone after on a day
This false iudge, as telleth vs the storie
As he was wonte, sate in his consistorie
And yaue his domes vpon sondrie caas
This false client came forth a full gret paas
And sated lorde, and if it be your will
Is doth me right vpon this pitous bill
In which I plaine vpon Virginius
And if he woll say it is not thus
I wol proue it, and finde good witnesse
That soth is, that my bill woll expresse
The iudge answerd, of this in his absence
I may not yeue diffinite sentence
Let doe him call, and I woll gladly here
Thou shalt haue right, and no wronge here
Virginius came to wet the iudges will
And right anon was radde this cursed bill
The sentence of it, was as ye shall here.
To you my lorde Appius so dere
Sheweth your pore seruaunt Claudius
How that a knight called Virginius
Ayenst the lawe, and ayenst all equite
Holdeth expresse ayenst the will of me
My seruant, which that is my thral by right
Which from mine hous was stole on a night
Whiles she was full yong, I wol it prue
By witnesse lorde, so that ye you not greue
She is not his doughter, what so he say
Wherefore my lord iustice I you pray
Yeld me my thrall, if it be your will
Lo this was all the sentence of the bil.
Virginius gan vpon the client beholde
But hastely, er he his tale tolde
He would haue defended it, as should a knight
And by witnesse of many a credue wight
That all was false, that said his aduersary
This cursed iudge would no lenger tary
Ne here a worde more of Virginius
But yaue his iudgement, and said thus:
I deme anon this client his seruant haue
Thou shalt no lenger her in thine house saue
Go bring her forth, and put her in our warde

This clerk shal haue his thrall, thus I award
And when this worthy knight Virginius
Through the assent of the Judge Appius
Must by force his dere doughter yeuen
Unto the iudge, in lechery to liuen
He gothe him home, and set him in his hall
And lette anon his dere doughter call
And with face deed as ashen colde
Upon her humble face he gan beholde
With fathers pite, sticking through his hert
Al would he not from his purpose conuert.
Doughter (qd he) Virginia by thy name
There ben two wayes, either deth or shame
That thou must suffer, alas ỳ I was borne
For neuer thou deseruest wherefore
To dien, with a sworde or with a knife
Oh dere doughter, comfort of my life
Which I haue fostred vp with such plesaunce
That thou ne were out of my remembraunce
O doughter, which that art my last wo
And in my life my laste ioy also
O icmme of chastite, in pacience
Take thou thy deth this is my sentence
For loue & not for hate thou must be deed
My pitous honde mote smite of thine heed
Alas that euer Appius thee sey
Thus hath he falsely iudged thee to dey
And tolde her all the case, as ye before
Han herd, it nedeth not to tell it more.
O mercy dere father (qd this maide)
And with that word, both her armes laide
About his necke, as she was wont to do
The teeres brast out of her eyen two
And saied, O good father shall I die?
Is there no grace, is there no remedie?
No certes dere doughter mine (qd he)
Than yeue me leaue father mine (qd she)
My death to complaine a litel space
For parde, I epte yaue his doughter grace
For to complaine, er he her slough, alas
And God it wot, nothing was her trespas
But that she ranne her father first to se
To welcome him, with great solempnite
And with that word she fel a swoune anon
And after whan her swouning was gon
She riseth vp and to her father saide
Blessed be God that I shall die a mayde
Yeue me my deth, er that I haue a shame
Doth with your child your wil a gods name
And with that word she praieth him full ofte
That with his sword he should smit her softe
And with that word, a swoune doune she fell
Her father with sorowfull hert & fell
Her hede of smote, and by the toppe it hente
And to the iudge he it yaue in presente
As he sat in dome in consistorie.
Whan the iudge it sawe, as saith the storie
He bad take him, and hong him also fast
But right anon all the people in thrast
To saue the knight, for routh and for pite
For knowen was the iudges iniquite
The people anon had suspect in this thing
By maner of this clients chalenging
That it was by the assent of Appius
They wist well that he was lecherous
For which vnto Appius they gon
And kesten him in prison right anon
Where as he slewe him selfe, and Claudius
That seruaunt was vnto this Appius
Was domed for to be honged vpon a tre
But Virginius, of his great pite
So prayed for him, that he was exiled
And els certes he had ben begyled
The remnaunt were honged, more and lesse
That consented were to this cursednesse.
Here may men see how sin hath his merite
Beware, for no man wot how god wol smite
In no degree, ne in no maner wise
The worme of conscience wol arise
Of wicked life, though it so priuy be
That no man wote of it but God and he
Whether he be leude man or lered
He not how sone he may ben afered
Therfore I rede you this counsaile take
Forsake sinne, er sinne you forsake.

¶ Here endeth the doctour of Phisikes tale, and foloweth the wordes of the hoste.

Our Host gan swere as he were woode
Harowe (qd he) by nayles and by bloode
This was a falce theefe, and a cursed iustice
As shamefull deth as herte may deuise
Come to the iustice and her aduocas
Algate this sely maiden is slaine, alas
Alas to dere abought she her beaute
Wherefore I say, that all men may se
That yeftes of fortune, or of nature
Ben cause of dethe of many creature
Her beautie was her dethe, I dare wel saine
Alas so pitously as she was slaine
But thereof woll I not procede as nowe
Men haue full oft more harme than prowe
But truely mine owne maister dere
This is a pitous tale for to here
But nathelesse, passe ouer is no force

I pray

I pray to God to saue thy gentle cors
And thy brinals, and thy iordanes
Thine ypocras, and eke thy galianes
And euery boxe full of letuarie
God blesse hem and our lady saint Marie
So mote I the, thou art a proper man
And like a prelate by saint Runian
Saue that I can not speke wel in terme
But wel I wote, thou dost mine hert to yerne
That I haue almost ieraught a cardiacle
By corpus domini, but I haue triacle
Or elis a draught of moist corne ale
Or but I here anon another mery tale
My hert is lost, for pite of this maid
Thou belamy, thou John pardoner he said
Tell vs some mery tale or iape right anon.
It shall be done (qd. he) by saint Runion
But first (qd. he) here at this ale stake
I wol both drinke, and eate of a take
But right anon, these gentels gan to cry
Nay, let him tell vs of no ribaudry
Tel vs some mozall thing that we mow lere
Some wit and than woll we gladly here
I graunt (qd. he) twis, but I mote thinke
On some honest thing, whiles ỹ I drinke.

¶Here endeth the words of the host, and here followeth the prologue of the Pardoner.

Lordings (qd. he) in chyrch whan I preche
I paine me to haue an hautein speche
And ring it out, as rounde as doth a bell
For I can all by roote that I tell
My theme is alway, and euer was
(Radix omnium malorum est cupiditas)
First I pronounce fro whence I come
And then my bis I shew all and some
Our liege lord seale on my patent
That shew I first, my body to warrent
That no man be so bold, preest ne clerke
Me to disturbe, of Christes holy werke
And after that, I tell forth my tales
Bulles of popes and of Cardinales
Of Patriarkes and of Bishops I shewe
And in latine I speke words a fewe
To sauour with my predicacion
And for to stere men to deuocion
Than shew I forth my long christal stones
Ycrammed full of clouts, and of bones
Relikes they ben, as wene they echone
Than haue I in laten a sholder bone
Which that was of an holy iewes shepe.
Good men say I, take of my wordes kepe
If that this bone be washen in any well
If cow or calfe, shepe, or oxe swell
That any worme hath eten, or hem stong
Take water of this well, and wash his tong
And it is whole anon: and farthermore
Of pockes, and of scabbes, and euery sore
Shall shepe be whole, that of this well
Drinketh a draught, take kepe of that I tell.
If the good man that beasts oweth
Wol euery day, er the cocke croweth
Fasting drinke of this well a draught
As thilke holy iewe our elders taught
His beasts and his store shall multiply,
And lers, also it healeth ielousy
For though a man be fall in ielous rage
Let make with this water his potage
And neuer shall he more his wife mistrist
Though he m sooth the defaut by her wist
All had she take preists two or three
Here is a mittaine eke, that ye may se
He that his hand woll put in this mittaine
He shall haue multiplying of his graine
When he hath sowen, be it wheate or otes
So that he offer good pence or grotes.
And men and women, one thing I warne you
If any wight ben in this church now
That hath done sinne horrible, that he
Dare not for shame of it shriuen be
Or any woman, be she yong or old
That hath made her husband cokewold
Such folke shul haue no power ne no grace
To offer to my relikes in this place
And who so findeth him out of such blame
Commeth vp and offer in gods name
And I assoile him by the auctorite
Such as by bull was graunted to me.
By this gaud haue I won euery yere
An hundred marke sithen I was pardonere
I stond like a clerke in my pulpet
And the lewd people ben doune iset
I preche so as ye haue ierd here before
And tell an hundred iapes more
Than paine I me to stretch forth my necke
And est and west, vpon the people I becke
As doth a doue, sitting vpon a berne
My hondes and my tong gon full yerne
That it is ioy to se my busines:
Of auarice and of such cursednes
All my preching is, for to maken hem fre
To yeuen her pence, and namely vnto me
For mine intent is not but for to winne
And nothing for correction of sinne

I ꝛecke neuer whan that they ben buried
Though her soule gon a blacke buried
For certes many a predicacion
Cometh oft time of euil intencion.
Some for pleasaunce of folke, & for flattery
To ben auaunced by hypocrisy
And some for vaingloy, and some for hate
For whan I dare not other waies debate
Than will I sting hem with my tong smerte
In preching, so that he shall not astert
To ben diffamed falsely, if that he
Hath trespassed to my brethern or to me
For though I tell not his propre name
Men shall well know that it is the same
By signes, or by other circumstaunces
This quite I folke, ỹ doth vs displesaunces
Thus put I out my venim vnder hewe
Of holinesse, to semen holy and trewe
But shortly mine entent I will deuise
I preche of nothing but of couetise,
Therefore my theme is yet, and euer was
Radix omnium malorum est cupiditas.
Thus can I prech ayenst the same vice
Which that I vse, and that is auarice
But though my selfe be gilty in that sinne
Yet can I maken other folke to winne
From auarice, and sore hem to repent
But that is not my principall entent
I preche nothing but for couetise
Of this matere, it ought inough suffise
Than tell I hem ensamples many one
Of old stories, long time agone
For lewd people loven tales old
Which things they can well report and hold
What trow ye: whiles that I may preche
And winne gold and siluer for to reche
That I will liue in pouert wilfully:
Nay nay, I thought it neuer truely
For I wol prech and begge in sondry londes
I will not do no labour with my hondes
Ne make baskets and liue thereby
Because I will not begge idelly
I wol none of the apostles countrefete
I will haue mony, mault, chese, and whete
All were it yeuen of the porest page
Or of the porest widow in a village
Though her children should sterue for famine
Nay, I wol drinke the licour of the vine
And haue a ioly wench in euery toun
But herkeneth lordings my conclusioun
Your liking is that I should tell a tale
Now I haue dronken a draught of corny ale
By God I hope I shall tell you a thing
That shall by reason ben at your liking
For though my selfe be a full vicious man
A moral tale yet I you tell can
Which I am wont to preche, for to winne
Now hold your peace, my tale I wol begin.

¶ Here endeth the Pardoners prologue, and here foloweth his tale.

IN Flanders whilom there was a company
Of yong folke, that haunted folly
As hasard, riot, stewes, and tauernes
Where as with harpes, lutes, and getternes
They daunce and plaien at dice night & day
And eten also, ouer that her might may
Through which they don the deuill sacrifice
Within the deuils temple, in cursed wise
By superfluite abominable
Her othes ben so great and so damnable
That it is grisly for to here hem swere
Our blessed lordes body they all to tere
Hem thought Iewes rent him not inough
And eche of hem at others sinne lough.
And right anon comen in tombesteres
Fetis and small and yong fruitesteres
Singers with harpes, baudes, and wafereres
Which that ben verely the deuils officers
To kindle and blow the fire of lechery
That is annexed vnto glotony
The holy writ take I to me witnesse
That lechery is in wine and dronkennesse.
Lo how that dronken Lothe vnkindly
Lay by his daughters two vnwetingly
So dronke he was, he nist what he wrought
And therefore sore repent him ought
Herodes, who so well the stories seche
There may ye learne, and by ensample teche
When he of wine was replete at his feste
Right at his owne table, gaue his heste
To sleen Johan the Baptiste full guiltelesse
Senecke saith eke good wordes douteles
He saith he can no difference find
Betwixt a man that is out of his mind
And a man that is dronkelewe
But woodnesse that is fallen in a shrewe
Perseuereth lenger than doth dronkennesse
O glotony, full of cursidnesse
O cause first of our confusion
O originall of our damnacion
Til Christ had bought vs with his blode again
Lo how dere, shortly for to sain
Bought was first this cursid vilanie

Corrupt

Corrupt was all this world through glotnie
Adam our fore father, and his wife also
Fro Paradise, to labour and to wo
Were driuen for that vice, it is no drede
For whiles that Adam fasted, as I rede
He was in Paradise, and whan that he
Eat of the fruict, defended on the tre
Anon he was out cast to wo and pain
O glotony, on thee well ought vs to plain
Oh, wist a man how many maladies
Followeth of excesse and of glotonies
He would been the more measurable
Of his diet, sitting at his table
Alas the short throte, the tender mouth
Maketh that East & west, North & South
In yearth, in aire, in water, men to swinke
To getten a gloton deinte meat and drinke
Of this matter, o Paule well canst thou trete
Meat vnto wombe, & wombe eke vnto meat
Shall God destroy both as Paule saieth
Alas, a foule thing it is by my faieth
To say this word, and foulier is the dede
Whan men so drinketh of the white and rede
That of his throte he maketh his privé
Through thilke cursed superfluite.
The Apostle saieth, weping full pitously
There walken many, of which told haue I
I say it now weping with pitous voice
There been enemies of Christs croice
Of which the end is death, wombe is her God
O belly, O wombe, O stinking cod
Fulfilled of dong and of corruptions
At either end of the soule is the soun
How great cost and labour is to find
These cokes how they stamp, strein, & grind
And turne substaunce in to accident
To fulfill all thy likerous talent
Out of the hard bones knocken they
The mary, for they cast it not away
That may go through the gullet lake & soft
Of spicery, of leaues, barke, and rote
Shall been his sauce imade by delite
To maken him haue a newer apetite
But certes he that haunteth soch delices
Is dedde, whiles that he liueth in the vices
A lecherous thing is wine and dronkenes
It is full of striuing and of wretchednes
Oh dronken man, disfigured in thy face
Sower is thy breath foul art thou to embrace
And through thy dronken nose soundeth ỳ soun
As tho thou saidest ay, Sampson Sampson
And yet God wot Sampson dronk neuer wine
Thou fallest, as it were a stricked swine
Thy tong is lost, and all thine honest cure
For dronkennesse is very sepulture
Of mannes witte, and his discretion
In whom that drinke hath dominacion
He can no counsaile kepe, it is no drede
Now kepe you fro the white and fro the rede
Namely fro the White wine of Lepe
That is to sell in Fishstreat and in Chepe
This Wine of Spain crepeth subtelly
And other wines growing faste by
Of which ryseth soch fumositie
That whan a man hath dronk draughtes thre
And weneth that he be at home in Chepe
He is in Spain, right at the toune of Lepe
Nought at Rochell, ne at Bordeaux toun
And than wol he say, Sampsoun Sampsoun
But herkneth lordings o word, I you pray
That all the souerain actes, dare I say
Of victories in the old Testament
Through very God, that is omnipotent
Were doen in abstinence and in preiere
Loketh the Bible, and there ye mow it lere
Loketh Attila, the great conquerour
Died in his slepe, with shame and dishonour
Bleding aie at his nose in dronkennesse
A capitain should liue in sobernesse
And ouer all this, auise you right well
What was commaunded vnto Lamuel
Not Samuel, but Lamuel say I
Redeth the Bible, and findeth it expresly
Of wine yeuing to hem that haue iustice
No more of this, for it may inough suffice

And now that I haue spoke of glotony
Now will I defend you hasardry
Hasard is very mother of leesinges
And of deceipt, and cursed forswearinges
Blaspheme of Christ, manslaughter, & wast also
Of battaile of time, and of other mo
It is repreue, and contrary of honour
For to be holden a common hasardour
And euer the hier that he is of estate
The more he is holden desolate
If that a Prince vse hasardry
In all gouernaunce and policy
He is as by comen opinion
Held the lesse in reputacion
Stilbo that was hold a wise ambassadour
Was sent into Corinth with ful great honour
Fro Calidone, to maken hem alliaunce
And whan he came, happed this chaunce
That all the greatest that were of the lond
Playing at hasard he hem fond
For which, as sone as it might be
He stale him home ayen to his countre
And said, there will I not lese my name
I will not take on me so great defame

For to alie you to none hasardours
Sendeth other wiser embassadours
For by my trouth, me were lever die
Than I should you to hasardours alie
For ye that been so glorious in honours
Shall not alie you with hasardours
As by my will, ne by my treatie
This wise Philosopher, thus saied he.

Loke eke how to king Demetrius
The king of Parthes, as the boke saieth us
Sent him a paire of Dice of gold in scorne
For he had vsed hasardrie there biforne
For which he held his glory and his renoun
At no value or reputacioun
Lordes might find other maner plaie
Honest inough to drive the day awaie.

Now will I speke of othes false and great
A word or two, as other bokes entreat
Great swearing is thing abhominable
And false swearing is yet more reprovable
The hie God forbad swearing at all
Witnesse of Matthew, but in speciall
Of swearing, saieth the holy Jeromie
Thou shalt swear soth thin othes, & not lie
And swear in dome and eke in rightwisnes
But idle swearing is a cursednes

Behold and se that in the first table
Of hie Gods hestes honourable
How that the seconde heste of him is this
Take not my name in idelnes amis
Lo, he rather forbiddeth soch swearing
Than homicide, or any other cursed thing
I say as thus, by order it stondeth
This knoweth thei' his hestis understondeth
How that the second hest of God is that
And further more, I will thee tell all plat
That vengeaunce shall not part fro his hous
That of his othes is to outragious
By Goddes precious hart, and his nailes
And by the bloud of Christ, that is in Hailes
Seuen is my chaunce, and thine five and three
By Goddes armes, if thou falsly play me
This dagger shall through thine harte go
This fruit cometh of thilke bones two
Forswearing, ire, falsnesse, and homicide
Now for the love of Christ, that for vs dide
Leaveth your othes, both great and smale
For I shall tell you a marvailous tale.

These riotours three, of which I tell
Long erst or prime rong any bell
Were set hem in a Taverne to drinke
And as they sat, they herd a Bell clinke
Biforne a cors, that was caried to his grave
That one of hem gan call to his knave
Go bette (qd. he) and aske redily
What cors is this, that passeth forth by
And loke that thou report his name wele.

Sir (qd. he) it needeth never a dele
It was me told er ye came here two houres
He was parde an old felow of yours
And sodainly was he slain to night
For dronke as he sat on his bench upright
There came a privy theef, men clepen Death
That in this countrey all the people slaeth
And with his spere he smote his hart atwo
And went his way, withouten word mo
He hath a thousand slain, this pestilence
And maister, er ye come in his presence
Me thinketh that it were necessary
For to beware of such an adversary
Beth redy for to meten him evermore
Thus taught me my dame, I say no more.

By saint Mary, saied this Taverner
The child saieth soth, for he hath this yere
Hens over a mile, slain in a great village
Both man and woman, child and page
I trow his habitacion be there
To been avised, great wisdome it were
Er that he did a man dishonour.

Ye Gods armes (qd. this riotour)
Is it soch peril with him for to meete
I shall him seeke by stile and eke by strete
I make a vow, by Goddes digne bones
Herkeneth felowes, we three ben all ones
Let ech of vs hold up his hond to other
And ech of vs become other's brother
And we will slea this false traitour Death
He shall be slain, that so many slaeth
By Gods dignite, er that it be night.

Togider han these three her trouthes plight
To live and die eche of them with other
As though he were his owne brother
And up they sterten all dronken in this rage
And forth they gone, toward that village
Of which the Taverner had spoken biforne
And many a grisly oth han they sworne
And Christes blessed body they to rent
Death shall be dede, and we may him hent

When they han gone not fully a mile
Right as they would have troden over a stile
An old pore man with hem met
This old man full mekely hem gret
And saied, now lordings God you see.

The proudest of these riotours three
Answerd ayen, what churle with hard grace
Why art thou all forwrapped save thy face
Why livest thou so long in so great age?

This old man gan loken in his visage
And saied thus: for I can not find

A man, though I walked into Inde
Neither in citee, ne in no village
That would change his youth for mine age
And therefore mote I haue mine age still
As long time as it is Goddes will.
Ne death alas, nil not haue my life
Thus walke I like a restlesse caitife
And on ỹ ground, which is my mothers gate
I knocke with my staffe erliche and late
And saie, lefe mother let me in
Lo how I vanish, flesh, blood, and skin
Alas, whan shall my bones been at reste
Mother with you would I change my cheste
That in my chamber long time hath be
Ye for an heren clout to wrappe in me
But yet to me she woll not doen that grace
For which full welked is my face
But sirs, to you it is no curtesie
To speaken vnto an old man vilanie
But he trespace in word either in dede
In holy writ, ye maie your selfe well rede
Ayenst an old man, hore vpon his hede
Ye should arise, therefore I you rede
No doeth vnto an old man no harme as now
No more than ye would a man did you
In age, if that ye may so long abide
And God be with you, whether ye go or ride
I mote go theder as I haue to go
Naie old chorle, by God thou shalt not so
Saied these other hasardours anon
Thou partest not so lightly by saint John
Thou spakest right now of thilke traitor death
That in this countrey all our frendes slaeth
Haue here my trouth thou art his espie
Tell where he is, or els thou shalt die
By God and by the holy Sacrament
For sothely thou art of his assent
To slea vs yong folke, thou false theefe.
Now sirs, if it be to you so lefe
To finde death, tourne vp this croked waie
For in that groue I left him by my faie
Under a tree, and there he woll abide
Ne for your boste he nill him nothing hide
See ye yonder oke, right ther ye shall him finde
God saue you, that bought agen mankinde
And you amende, thus saied this old man.
Than eueriche of these riottours ran
Til they came to the tree, & there they found
Floreines of gold fine, ycoigned round
Well nie a seuen bushels, as hem thought
No lenger than after death they sought
But eche of hem so glad was of that sight
For that the florens so faire been & bright
That doune they sit, by the precious horde
The worst of hem spake the first worde

Brethern (qd he) take kepe what I saie
My wit is great, though I bourde or plaie
This treasure hath fortune to vs yeuen
In mirth and iolite our life to liuen
And lightly as it commeth, so woll we spende
Heie, Goddes precious harte: who wend
To day, that we should haue so faire a grace
But might this gold be caried fro this place
Home to my house, or els to ours
(For wel I wote that all this gold is ours)
Than were we in hie felicite
But truely by daie it may not be
Men would saie, that we were theues strong
And for our owne treasure doen vs hong
This treasure must yearied be by night
As wisely and as slily as it might
Wherefore I rede, let loke emong vs all
To drawe, and let se where the cutt woll fall
He that hath the shortest cut with hart blith
Shall renne to the toune, and that ful swith
To bring vs bread and drinke full priuely
And two of vs shall kepe full subtelly
This treasure well, and if he woll not tarie
Whan it is night, we woll this treasure carie
By one assent, where as vs list best
That one of hem brought grasse in his fest
And bad hem draw, & loke on whō it wold fal
And it fell on the yongest of hem all
And forth toward the toune he went anon
And al so soone as he was gon
That one of hem spake vnto that other
Thou wost well, thou art my swore brother
Thy profite woll I tell thee right anone
Thou wost well that our felowe is gone
And here is gold, and that full greate plentee
That shall departed be emong vs three
But natheless, if that I can shape it so
That it departed were emong vs two
Had I not doen a frendly tourne to thee
That other answerd, I not how ỹ might be
I woll wel that the gold were ours two
What should we doe, that it might be so.
Shall it be counsaile (saied the first shrew)
And I shall tell thee in wordes fewe
What we woll doen, and bring it well about.
I graunt (qd that other) out of doubt
That by my trouth, I woll thee not bewraie
Now (qd he) thou wost wel we been twaine
And twaine of vs shall stronger be than one
Loke whan he is set, and than anone
Arise, as though thou wouldst with him play
And I shal riue him through the sides tway
Whiles ỹ thou struggles with hi as in game
And with thy dagger, loke thou doe the same
And than shall all the good departed be

My

My dere frende, betwixt thee and me
Than may we bothe our lustes fulfill
And play at Dice, right at our owne will
And thus accorded been these thre wes twaie
To slea the third, as ye heard me saie.

This yongest, which that went to ỹ toune
Full often in his hart he rolled vp and doune
The beaute of these florens faire and bright
O Lord (qd he) if so were that I might
Haue all this treasour to my self alone
There nis no man, that liueth vnder trone
Of God, that should liue so mery as I
And at the last the fende our enemy
Put in his thought that he should poison beie
With which he might slaen his felowes twey
For why, the fende fonde hym in such liuing
That he had leue to sorowe hym to bring
For this was vtterly his entent
To slaen hem both, and neuer to repent
And forth he goth, no lẽger would he tary
Into the toune, vnto a Potecary
And praied him that he would him sell
Some poison, that he might his rattes quell
And eke there was a Polkat in his hawe
That as he saied, his Capons had ydrawe
And said, he would wreken him if ỹ he might
Of vermin, that distroyed hem by night.

The Poticarie answerd, thou shalt haue
A thing, as wisly God my soule saue
In all this world there nis no creature
That eateth or drinketh of this confecture
Not but ỹ mountenaunce of a corne of whete
That he ne shall his life anon forlete
Ye sterue he shall, and that in lesse while
Thã thou woldest gon a pace, not but a mile
This poison is so hard and so violent.

This cursed man hath in his honde hent
This poison in a box, and sithe he ran
Into the next streate vnto a man
And borowed him large botels thre
And in the two, the poison poured he
The third he kept cleane for his drinke
For all the night he shope him for to swinke
In caryng of the gold out of that place
And whan this riottour, with sory grace
Hath fild with him his great bottels thre
To his felowes ayen repaired he.

What nedeth it thereof to sermon more
For right as they had cast his death before
Right so they han him slain, and that anone
And whã this was doen, than spake that one
Now let vs sit and drinke, & make vs mery
And afterward they wolne his body bury
And after that it happed hem par caas
The one toke the botel, therin ỹ poison was
And dronke, and gaue his felow drinke also
Through which anon they sterue both two.

But certes I suppose that Auicenne
Wrote neuer in no canon, ne in no fenne
More wonder sorowes of empoisonning
Than had these wretches two in her ending
Thus ended been these homicides two
And eke the false empoisonner also.

O cursed sinne, full of all cursednesse
O traitour homicide, O wickednesse
O glotenie, luxure, and hasardrie
Thou blasphemour of Christ with vilanie
And othes great, of vsage and of pride
Alas mankinde, how may it betide
That to thy creatour, which ỹ thee wrought
And with his precious blood thee bought
Thou art so false and so vnkind, alas
Now good men, God forgeue you your trel-
And wate you fro the sinne of auarice (pas
Mine holy pardon, may you all warisbe
So that ye offer nobles or starlinges
Or ther els siluer spones, broches or ringes
Boweth your hedde vnder this Bulle
Cometh vp ye wiues, & offreth of your woll
Your names here I enter in my rolle anon
Into the blisse of heauen shull ye all gon
I you assoile by myne high powere
Ye that offren, as cleane and eke clere
As ye were borne. Lo sirs, thus I preache
And Iesu Christ, that is our soules leache
So graunt you his pardon to receiue
For that is best, I woll you not disceiue
But sirs, one worde forgate I in my tale
I haue relikes, and pardon in my male
As faire as any man in Englonde
Which were geuen me by the Popes honde
If any of you woll of deuocion
Offren, and haue myne absolucion
Cometh forth anon, and kneleth here adoun
That ye may haue part of my Pardoun
Or els taketh pardon as ye wende
All newe and fresh, at euery tounes ende
So that ye offren alway newe and newe
Nobles or pens which been good and true
It is great honour to eueriche that is here
That ye may haue a sufficient pardonere
To assoile you in countre there ye ride
For auentures, which that may betide
For peraunture there may fall one or two
Doune of her hors, and breke her neck a two
Loke which seurtie it is to you all
That I am in your felowship yfall
That may assoile you both more and lasse
Whan that the soule shal fro thy body passe
I rede that our hoste shall beginne

For

For he is most emelopt of sinne
Cometh forth sir host, and offer first anon
And thou shalt kisse the relikes euerichon
Ye for a grote, vnbokell anon thy purse.
Nay nay (qd. he) than haue I cristis curse
Let be (qd. he) it shall not be so theiche
Thou wouldest make me kisse thin old breche
And sworn it were a relike of a sainct
Though it wer with thy foundamēt depaint
But by the crosse, which sainct Helain fond
I would I had thy coilons in mine hond
In stede of relikes, or of sanctuary
Let cut hem of, I woll help thee hem to cary
They shull be shrined in an hogges tord
This Pardoner answered not a word
So wroth he was, he would no word say.
Now (qd. our host) I woll no lenger play
With thee, ne with non other angry man.
But right anon the worthy knight began
Whan that he saw that all the people lough
No more of this, for it is right mough
Sir Pardoner, be mery and glad of chere
And ye sir host, that been to me so dere
I pray you that ye kisse the Pardonere
And Pardoner, I pray thee draw thee nere
And as we did, let vs laugh and play
Anon they kissed, and riden forth her way.

¶ Here endeth the Pardoners tale and here beginneth the Shipmannes Prologue.

Now frendes saied our host so dere
How liketh you by Jhon the Pardonere:
He hath vnbokeled well the male
He hath vs told right a thrifty tale
As touching of his misgouernaunce
I pray to God yeue him good chaunce
As ye han heard, of these riottours three
Now gentill Mariner, hartely I pray thee
Tell vs a good tale, and that right anon
It shall be doen, by God and by sainct Jhon
Saied this Mariner, as well as euer I can
And right anon his tale he thus began.

¶ Here endeth the Shipmannes Prologue.

Here foloweth the Shipmannes Tale.

A Marchant whilō dwelled at sainct Denise
That rich was, for which men held him wise
A wife he had, of excellent beaute
And compinable, and reuelous was she
Which is a thing that causeth more dispence
Than worth is all the chere and reuerence
That men hem doen, at feasts and at daunces
Soch salutacions and countinaunces
Passeth, as doeth the shadow on a wall
But wo is him that pay mote for all
The sely husbond algate he mote pay
He mote vs both cloth and eke array
All for his owne worshipe, richely
In which aray we daunsen iolily
And if that he may nat, paraventure
Or els lust no soch spence endure
But thinketh, that it is wast and sloth
Than mote an other pay for our cost
And lend vs gold, and that is perilous
This noble Marchaunt held a noble hous
For which he had all day great repaire
For his largesse, and for his wife was faire
That wonder is: but herkeneth to my tale.
Emong all his gestes great and smale
There was a Monke, a faire man and a bold
I trow thurty Winter he was old
That euer in one, was drawing to that place
This yong Monke, that so faire was of face
Acquainted was with this good man
Sithens that he first knowlege began
That in his hous, as familier was he
As it is possible any frende to be
And for as moch, as this good man
And eke this Monke, of which I began
Were both two borne in one village
The Monke him claimed, as for cosinage
And he again saied not ones nay
But was as glad thereof, as foule of day
For to his hart it was a great pleasaunce
Thus been they knit with eterne aliaunce
And eke of hem gan other for to ensure
Of brotherhed, whiles her life may dure
Free was Dan Jhon, & namely of dispens
As in that hous, and full of diligence
To doe pleasaunce, and eke great costage
He forgate not to yeue the lest page
In all that hous, but after her degre
He yaue the lord, and sithen his meine
Whā that he came, some maner honest thing
For which they wer as glad of his comming
As foule is faine, when the sunne vp riseth

No

No more hereof as now, for it sufficeth.
But so befell, this Marchaunt on a day
Shope him to make redy his aray
Toward the toune of Bruges for to fare
To buy there a portion of ware
For which he hath sent to Paris anon
A messenger, and praied hath Dan Jhon
That he should come to S. Denis to plain
With him, and with his wife, a day or twain
Or he to Bruges went, in all wise
This noble Monke, of which I you devise
Hath of his Abbot, as him list licence
Because he was a man of hie prudence
And eke an officer, out for to ride
To seen her graunges, and her bernes wide
And vn to sainct Denis he cometh anon
Who was so welcome, as my lord dã Jhõ
Our dere cosin, full of curtesie
With him he brought a tubbe of Malvesie
And eke an other full of fine vernage
And volatily, as was aie his vsage
And thus I let hem both eat, drinke, and play
This marchant & this monke, a day or tway
The third day this Marchaunt vp riseth
And on his nede, sadly him aviseth
And vp into his counting hous goth he
To reken with himself, as well may be
Of thilke yere, how it with him stood
And how he spended had his good
And if that he encreased were or none
His bokes and his bagges many one
He laieth afore him, on his counter bord
Full rich was his treasour and his hord
For which full fast his counter dore he shet
And eke he nold no man should him let
Of his accomptes, for the meane time
And thus he sate till it was passed prime.
Dan Jhon was risen in the morow also
And in the garden walked to and fro
And hath his thinges saied full curtesly
This good wife come walking priuely
Into the garden, there he walked soft
And him salueth, as she hath doen full oft
A maiden child came in her companie
Which as her list, she may gouerne and gie
For yet vnder the yerd was the maied.
O dere cosin Dan Jhon, she saied
What aileth you so rath to arise?
Niece (qd. he) it ought inough suffise
Five houres for to slepen on a night
But it were for an old palied wight
As been these old wedded men, that lie & dare
As in a forme sitteth a wery Hare
All forstraught, with houndes great & smale
But dere nece, why loke ye so pale?
I trow certes, that our good man
Hath you laboured, sith this night began
That you were nede to resten hastely
And with that word he lough full merely
And with his own thought he wore all reed.
This faire wife, gan to shake her heed
And saied thus, ye God wote all (qd. she)
Nay cosin mine, it stondeth not so with me
For by that God that yaue me soule and life
In all the realme of Fraunce, is there no wife
That lesse lust hath to that sory play
For I may singen alas, and welaway
That I was borne, but to no wight (qd. she)
Dare I not tell, how it stont with me
Wherfore I thinke out of this world to wend
Or els of my self sone to make an end
So full I am of drede and eke of care.
This Monke began vpon this wife to stare
And saied alas, nay nece God forbede
That ye for any sorow, or for any drede
Fordo your selfe, but telleth me your grief
Peraventure I may in your mischief
Counsaile or helpe, and therfore telleth me
All your anoy, for it shall secre be
For on my Porthose I make an oth
That neuer in my life, for lefe ne loth
Ne shall I not of no counsaile you bewray.
The same ayen to you (qd. she) I say
By God and by this Porthose, I you swere
Though men would me all into peces tere
Ne shall I neuer, for to go to hell
Bewray o word, of thing that ye me tell
Nor for no colinage, ne for alliaunce
But verely for loue and affiaunce
Thus been they sworne, and herevpon kist
And ilke of hem told other what hem list.
Cosin (qd. she) if I had a space
As I haue none, and namely in this place
Than would I tell a legend of my life
That I suffred haue, sith I was a wife
With mine husbond though he be your cosin
Nay (qd. this Monke) by God & S. Martin
He nis no more cosin vnto me
Than is this leke, that hongeth on the tre
I clepe him so, by sainct Denis of Fraunce
To haue the more cause of acquaintance
Of you, whom I haue loued specially
Aboven all other women sikerly
This swere I you on my profession
Telleth your grief, lest he come adoun
And hasteth you, and goth your way anon
My dere loue (qd. she) O my Dan Jhon
Full lefe me were this counsaile to hide
But out it mote, it may no lenger abide
My husbond is to me the worst man

That

That euer was sith the world began
But sithen I am a wife, it sit not to me
To tellen no wight of our priuite
Neither in bed, ne in none other place
God shield I should tell it for his grace
A wife ne should not say of her husbond
But all honour, as I can understonde
Saue vnto you, thus much tell I shall
As helpe me God he is nought worth at all
In no degree the value of a flie
But yet me greeueth most his nigardy
And well ye wot, that women naturally
Desiren things sixe, as well as I
They wolden that her husbondes should be
Hardy, and wise, riche, and thereto free
And buxom to his wife, and fresh a bed
But by that ilke lord that for vs bled
For his honour, my self to aray
I sonday next, I mote needs pay
An hundred frankes, or els am I lorne
Yet were me leuer that I were vnborne
Than me were done a slaunder or a vilanie
And if mine husbond eke might it aspie
I nere but lost, and therefore I you prey
Lene me this summe, or els mote I dey
Dan John I say, lene me this hundred frankes
Parde I woll not faile you my thankes
If that ye liste to do that I you pray
For of a certaine day I woll you pay
And to done you what pleasaunce and seruice
That I may don, right as ye list deuise
And but I doe, God take on me vengeaunce
As foule as euer had Genilon of Fraunce.

This gentil monk answerd in this manere
Now truly mine owne lady dere
I haue (qd. he) on you so great routh
That I you sweare and plight my trouth,
That whã your husbõd is to Flanders fare
I woll deliuer you out of all this care
I woll bring you an hundred frankes
And with that he caught her by the flankes
And her embraced hard, and kissed her oft
Goth now your way (qd. he) all still and soft
And let vs dine as soone as euer yt may
For by my kalender it is prime of the day
Goth now, and beth as true as I shall be.

Now els God forbid sir said she
And forth she goth, as iolly as a pie
And bad the cookes that they should hem hie
So that men might dine, and that anone.
Up to her husbond is this wife gone
And knocked at his counter doore boldly
Qui est la (qd. he) Peter it am I
(Qd. she) how long woll ye faste
How long time woll ye reckon and caste
Your summes, your bokes, and your things
The deuill haue part of all such reckenings
Ye haue inough (qd. she) of gods sond
Come doun to day and let your bagges stond
Ne be ye not ashamed that Dan John
Shall fasting all this long day gone
What let vs go here masse and go dine.

Wife (qd. this man) litle canst thou deuine
The curious busines that we haue
For of chapmen, so God me saue
And by that lord that called is saint Yue
Scarsly among twenty, twelue shall thriue
Continually, lasting vnto their age
We may well make chere and good visage
And driue forth the world, as it may be
And kepe our estate in priuite
Till we be dead, or els that we play
A pilgrimage, or gone out of the way
And therefore haue I great necessite
Upon this queint world to auise me
For euermore we mote stond in drede
Of hap and fortune, in our chapmanhede

To Flaunders wol I gon to morow at day
And come ayen as soone as euer I may
For which my dere wife I thee beseke
As be to euery wife buxom and meke
And for to kepe our good be curiouse
And honestly gouerne well our house
Thou hast inough, in euery maner wise
That to a thrifty housewife may suffise
Thee lacketh none aray, ne no vitaile
Of siluer in thy purse thou maist not faile
And with the word, his counter doore he shette
And doune he goth no lenger would he lette
And hastily a masse was there said
And speedily the tables were laid
And to dinner fast they hen spedde
And richly the chapman this monke fedde.

And after dinner, Dan John soberly
This chapman toke a part all priuily
And said him thus, cousin it stondeth so
That wel I se, to Bruges yt woll go
God and saint Austen spede you and gide
I pray you cousin wisely that ye ride
Gouerneth you well also of your diete
Attemperately, and namely in this hete
Betwixt vs two needeth no straunge fare
Farewell cousin, God shild you fro care
If any thing there be by day or night
And it lie in my power or in my might
That ye me woll commaund in any wise
It shall be done right as ye wol deuise

O thing or that ye go, if that it may be
I wold pray you for to lene me
An hundred frankes for a weke or twey

For certaine bestes, that I mote nedes bey
To store with a place that is ours
God helpe me so, I would it were yours
I shall not faile surely at my day
Not for a thousand frankes, a mile way
But let this thing be secret, I you pray
For yet this night these bestes mote I bey
And fare now wele, mine owne cousin dere
Grauntmercy of your cost and your chere

This noble marchaunt gentilly anon
Answerd and said, O cousin Dan John
Now sikerly this is a small request,
My gold is yours, whan that you leste
And not onely my gold, but my chaffare
Take what you list, God shild that ye spare
But one thing is ye know it well enough
Of chapmen, that her mony is her plough
We may creaunce while we haue a name
But goodlesse for to be it is a shame
Pay it ayen, when it lieth at yourese,
After my might, faine would I you plese.

The hundreth frankes fet he forth anon
And priuily toke hem to Dan John
No wight of this world, wist of this lone
Sauing this marchaunt & Dan John alone
Thei drunke & speke, & rome a while and pley
Till that Dan John rideth to his abbey.

The morow came, & forth rid this marchãt
To Flanders ward, his prentes broght him
Til he came to Bruges, wel & merily (auãt
Now goth this Marchaunt, well and besily
About his nedes, and bieth, and creaunseth
He neither plaieth at dice ne daunceth
But as a Marchant, shortly to tell
He ledde his life, and there I let him dwell.

The sonday next ỳ this Marchant was gon
To saint Denis is comen Dan John
With croun and berd all fresh and new ishaue
In all this house, there nas so little a knaue
Ne no wight els, but he was full faine
For ỳ my lord Dan John was comen againe
And shortly to the point for to gon
This faire wife accordeth with Dan John
That for these C franks he should all night
Haue her in his armes bolt vpright
And this accord performed was indede
In mirth all night a besie life they lede
Til it was day, that Dan John rede his way
And bad the meine farewell & haue good day
For non of hem, ne no wight in the toune
Had of Dan John any suspection
And forth he rideth, home to his abbey
Or where him list, no more of him I sey.

This marchant, whan ended was ỳ faire
To saint Denis he gan for to repaire
And with his wife he maketh fest and chere
And telleth her that the chaffare is so dere
That needs must he make a chevesaunce
For he was bounden in a recoverysaunce
To pay twentie thousand shildes anon
For which this marchaunt is to Paris gon
To borow of certaine frends that he had
A certain frankes, and som with him he lad
And when he was comen into the toun
For chierte and great affection
Unto Dan John he first goth him to ply
Nought for to borow of him no money
But for to wete and se of his welfare
And for to tellen him of his chaffare
As frends don, when they ben met in fere

Dan John him maketh fest & mery chere
And he him told ayen full specially
How he had bought full well and graciously
Thonked be God, all hole his marchandise
Saue that he must in all maner wise
Maken a chevesaunce, as for his beste
And then should he be in ioy and reste
Dan John answerd, certes I am right fain
That ye in heale be comen home again
And if I were rich, as haue I blisse
Of twentie thousand shilds should ye not misse,
For yeso kindly, this other day
Lent me gold, and as I can and may
I thonke you, by God and by saint Jame
But natheless, I toke it vnto our dame
Your wife at home, the same gold againe
Upon your bench, she wote it well certaine
By certaine tokens that I can her tell
Now by your leue I may no lenger dwell
Our abbot will out of this toun anon
And in his company I mote gon
Grete well our dame, mine owne nece swete
And farewell dere cousin till we mete.
This marchant that was full ware and wise
Creaunced hath, and eke paid in Paris
To certaine Lombardes, redy in her hondes
This somme of gold, & gate of hem the bondes
And home he goth, as mery as a popingay
For wel he knewe he stood in such aray
That nedes must he winne by that viage
A thousand frankes aboue all his costage.

His wife full redy mete him at the yate
As she was wont, of old vsage algate
And all that night in mirth thei ben set
For he was rich, and clerely out of debt
Whã it was day, this marchãt gan embrace
His wife al newe, and kissed her in her face
And vp he goeth, and made it wonder tough
No more (qd she) by God ye haue inough
And wantonly ayen with him she plaid

Till

Til at the laste this marchaunt thus saide.
By God (qd he) I am a litle wrothe
With you my wife, although it be me lothe
And wote ye why? by God as I gesse
For ye haue made a maner of strangenesse
Betwixt me and my cosin Dan John
Ye should haue warned me, er I had gon
That he had you an hundred frankes paide
By redy token, and held him ful apaide
For that I to him spake of cheuesaunce
Ye semed so, as by his countenaunce
But nathelesse, by God our heuen king
I thought not to aske of him nothing
I pray the wife, ne do no more so
Tell me alway er that I fro thee go
If any dettour, hath in mine absence
Apaide thee, lest through thy negligence
I might him aske a thing that he hath paid.
This wife was not a ferde ne affraide
But boldly she said, and that anon
Mary I defie that false monke Dan John
I kepe not of his tokens neuer a dele
He toke me certain golde, I wote it well
What euil thedom on his monkes snoute
For God it wote, I wende without doute
That he had yeue it me, because of you
To don therwith mine honour & my prow
For cosinage, and eke for belle chere
That he hath had full often times here
But sith I se it stonte in such disioynte
I wol answere you shortly to the pointe
Ye haue mo slacker dettours than am I
For I wol paie you well and redely
Fro day to day, and if so be I faile
I am your wife, score it on my taile
Or els I shal paie it as sone as euer I may
For by my trueth, I haue on mine aray
And not in waste, bestowed it euery dele
And for I haue bestowed it so wele
To your honour, for goddes sake I say
As be not wroth but let vs laugh and playe
Ye shall my ioly body haue to wedde
By God I nill not pay you but a bedde
For yeue it me, mine owne spouse dere
Turneth hitherward, and make better chere.
This marchant sawe ther was no remedy
And for to chide, it was but a foly
Sithen that the thing may not amended be
Now wife he said, and I forgeue it the
But in thy life, be no more so large
Kepe bet my good, this yeue I thee in charge
Thus endeth now my tale, & God vs sende
Taling ynough, vnto our liue ende.

¶ Here endeth the Shipmans tale.

¶ Here foloweth the wordes of our Host.

Wel said by corpus domini (qd our Host)
Now long mote thou saile by the cost
Thou gentill maister, gentill marinere
God giue the Monke a thousand last quad ere
A ha felowes, beware of such a tape
The monke put in the marchãts hode an ape
And in his wiues eke, by saint Austin
Draweth no monkes more into your inne
But now passe ouer, & let vs seke about
Who shall tell now first of all this rout
Another tale, and with that word he said
As curtesly, as it had ben a maid.
My lady prioresse, by your leue
So that I wist that I shuld you not greue
I wold deme, that ye tellen shold
A tale next, if so be that ye wold
Now wil ye vouchsafe, my lady dere
Gladly (qd she) and said in this manere,

¶ Here endeth the wordes of our host, and here beginneth the Prioresses prologue.

Domine dominus noster: quam admirabile est nomen tuum in vniuersa terra.

Lorde our lord, thy name how merueilous
Is in this wide world ispradd (qd she)
For not onely thy laude precious
Perfourmed is, by men of dignite
But by the mouth of children thy bounte
Perfourmed is, for on the breest sucking
Sometime shewen they thine herieng

Wherfore in laude, as I can best & may
Of thee and of the white lily floure
Which that thee bare, & is a maide alway
To tellen a storie, I wol do my laboure
Nought that I may encrese her honoure
For she her selfe is honour and rote
Of bountie, next her sonne, of soules bote.

O Mother maiden, O maiden & mother free
O bush vnbrent, brenning in Moyses sight
That rauisshedest downe fro the deite
Through thin hũblesse, the gost ỹ in the light
Of whose vertue, whẽ he in thine hert pight

Conceiued was the fathers sapience
Helpe me to tell it in thy presence.

Lady thy bounte, and thy magnificence
Thy vertue and thy great humilite
There may no tong expresse, in no science
For sometime lady, er men pray to the
Thou goest before, of thy benignite
And gretest vs the light through thy prayere
To gyden vs vnto thy sonne so dere.

My conning is to weake, O blisfull quene
For to declare thy high worthinesse
That I ne may the weight sustene
But as a child of twelue monethe old or lesse
That can vnnethes any word expresse
Right so fare I, and therfore I you pray
Gideth my song, that I shall of you say.

¶ Here endeth the Prioresses pro-
logue, and here folowyth
her tale.

There was in Asie, in a great cite
Amonges christen folke a iewerie
Sustened by a lord of that countre
For foule vsury, and lucre of villany
Hatefull to Christ, and to his company
And through the strete men might ride or wend
For it was free, and open at euery end.

A litel schole of christen folke there stode
Doun at the farther end, in which there were
Children an hepe, comen of christen blode
That lerned in that schole, yere by yere
Such manere doctrine, as men vsen here
This is to say, to sing and to rede
As smale children done in her childhede

Amongs these children was a widowes son
A litel clergion, that vii. yere was of age
That day by day to schole was his won
And also eke, where he sey the image
Of Christes mother, had he in vsage
As him was taught, to knele adoun and say
An Aue maria, as he goth by the way.

Thus hath this widow, her litel child ytaught
Our blisfed lady, Christs mother dere
To worship aye, and he forgate it naught
For the sely child, would all day sone lere
But ay, whan I remember me on this matere
Saint Nicholas stondeth euer in my presence
For he so yong to Christ did reuerence

This litel child his litel book lerning
As he sate in schole at his primere
He (Alma redemptoris mater) herd sing
As children lered her antiphonere
And as he durst, he drew aye nere and nere
And herkened to the wordes and the note
Till he the first verse couth all by rote.

Nought wist he what this latin was to say
For he so yong and tender was of age
But on a day his felow gan he pray
To expound him the song, in his langage
Or telien him why this song was in vsage
This praide he him to construe and declare
Full oft time, vpon his knees bare

His felow, which that elder was than he
Answerd him thus, this song I haue herd say
Was made of our blessed lady fre
Her to salew, and eke her to pray
To ben our helpe and succour when we dey
I can no more expound in this mater
I lerne song, I can but small grammer

And is this song imade in reuerence
Of Christes mother, said this innocente
Now certes I woll done my diligence
To conne it all er Christemmasse be went
Though that I for my primer shall be shent
And should be beten thrise in an houre
I woll it conne, our lady to honoure.

His felaw taught him homward prively
Fro day to day, till he couth it by rote
And than he song it wel and boldely
Fro word to word, according to the note
Twise a day it passeth through his throte
To scoleward, and homeward when he went
On Christs mother set was all his entent

As I haue said throughout the iewry
This litel child as he came to and fro
Full merely than would he sing and cry
O Alma redemptoris mater, euer mo
The swetenesse hath his hert perced so
Of Christes mother, that to her to pray
He can not stint of singing by the way

Our first foe, the Serpent Sathanas
That hath in Iewes hert his waspes nest
Up swale and said, O Ebrake people alas

Is this a thing to you that is honeste
That such a boy shal walke as him leste
In your dispite, and singen of such sentence
Which is against your lawes reuerence.

Fro thenceforth, the Iewes han conspired
This innocent out of this world to chase
An homicide therefo han they hired
That in an aley, had a priuy place
And as the childe gan forby to pace
This cursed Iewe him hent, and held fast
And cutte his throte, and in a pitte him cast.

I say that in a wardrope they him threwe
Where that the Iewes purged her intraile
O cursed folke, of heraudes all newe
What may your yuel entent you auaile
Murder wol out, certes it woll not faile
And namely there ỹ honor of God shal sprede
The bloud out cryeth on your cursid dede

O mater, sowned vnto virginite
Now maist thou sing folowing euer in on
The white lambe celestiall (qd he)
Of which the great euangelist seint John
In Pathmos wrote, which saith ỹ they gon
Before this lambe, and sing a song all newe
That neuer fleshly woman they ne knewe.

This pore widowe, awaiteth al the night
After her litle childe, and he came nought
For which as soone as it was day light
With face pale for dread and busie thought
She hath at schole, and elis where him sought
Til finally, she gan so farre aspie
That he was last seene in the Jewrie.

With mothers pite, in her brest enclosed
She goth as she were halfe out of her minde
To euery place, where she hath supposed
By likelihode her childe for to finde
And euer on Christes mother, meke & kinde
She cried, and at last thus she wrought
Among the cursid Iewes she him sought.

She kneeleth and she praieth pitously
To euery Iewe that dwelleth in this place
To tellen her, if her childe went there by
They say nay, but Jesu of his grace
Yaue in her thought, within a litle space
That in that place, after her sonne she criede
Where he was cast in a pitte beside.

O great God, that performest thy laude
By mouth of innocence, lo here thy might
This Iemme of chastite, this Emerande
And eke of martirdome the rubie bright
There he with throte ycorue lay vpright
He (Alma redemptoris) gan to sing
So loude that all the place gan to ring.

The christen folke, ỹ through the strete wet
Iu comen, for to wonder on this thing
And hastely they for the Prouost sent
He came anone, without tarying
And herieth Christ, that is of heuen king
And eke his mother, honour of mankinde
And after that, the Iewes let he binde

This childe with pitous lamentacion
Was vp taken, singing his song alway
And with honour, and great procession
They carien him to the next abbey
His mother swouning by the bere lay
Vneth might people that were there
This newe Rachell bring fro his bere.

With turment & with shameful deth ilke one
This Prouost doth the false Iewes for to sterue
That of this murdre wiste, and that anone
He nolde no such cursednesse obserue
Yuel shal he haue, that euil woll deserue
Therfore with wild horse he did hem drawe
And afterward he hong hem by the lawe.

Upon his bere aye, lyeth this innocent
Before the chefe aulter, whiles ỹ masse last
And after that, the abbot with his conuent
Hem spedde, for to bury him as fast
And when they holy water on him cast
Yet spake ỹ child, whē sprint was holy water
And song, O alma redemptoris mater.

This abbot, which that was an holy man
As monkes ben, or els ought to be
This yong childe to coue he began
And saide: O dere childe, I halse thee
By vertue of the holy Trinite
Tell me what is thy cause for to sing
Sithens thy throte is cutte to my seeming.

My throte is cutte, vnto my nekke bone
Said this childe, as by way of kinde
I should haue deyed, ye long time agone
But Jesu Christ, as ye in bokes finde
Woll that his glory last and be in minde
And for the worship of his mother dere
Yet may I sing (O alma) loude and clere.

This wel of mercy, Christes mother swete

I loued alway, as after my conning
And when that I my life should forlete
To me she came, and badde me for to sing
This antem verely in my dying
As ye han herde, and when that I had songe
Me thought she layd a graine vpō my tonge

Wherefore I sing, and sing mote certaine
In honour of the blisfull maiden fre
Til fro my tonge, of taken is the graine
And after that, thus she said to me
My litle childe, now wol I fetche the
When that the graine is fro thy tong ytake
Be not agaste, I wol thee not forsake.

This holy monke, this abbot him mene
His tong out caught, & toke away the graine
And he yaue vp the goste ful softly
And when this abbot had this wonder seyne
His salte teres trickled doune as reyne
And grofle he fel all flat to the grounde
And still he lay, as he had ben ybounde.

The couent lay eke vpon the pament
Wepyng and heryng Christes mother dere
And after that they risen, and forth ben went
And toke away this martir fro the bere
And in a tombe of marble stones clere
Enclosen they his litle body swete
There he is now, God lene vs for to mete.

O yong Hewe of Lincolne slaine also
With cursed Jewes, as it is notable
For it is but a litel while ago
Praie eke for vs, we sinfull folke vnstable
That of his mercy, God be merciable
On vs, his great mercy multiply
For the reuerence of his mother Mary.

¶Here endeth the Prioresse tale. And here folowith the wordes of the Hoste to Chaucer.

WHen ended was this miracle, euery man
As sobre was, as wonder was to see
Till that our hoste to japen began
And than at erste, he loked vpon me
And said thus: what man art thou (qd he)
Thou lokest, as thou wouldest finde an hare
For euer vpon the ground I see thee stare.

Approche nere, and loke vp merely
Now ware you sirs, & let this mā haue place
He in the waste is shapen as well as I
This were a popet in armes to embrace
For any woman, small and faire of face
He semeth elfish by his countenance
For vnto no wight doth he daliance

Say now (who what, sir) the other folke han said
Tel vs a tale of mirth and that anon
Hoste (qd he) ne be not ful apaide
For other tale certes can I none
But of a rime, I lerned yore agone.
Ye that is good (qd he) we shullen it here
Some deinte thing, me thinketh by thy chere.

¶Here endeth the wordes of the Hoste and here foloweth the rime of sir Thopas.

LIstneth lordinges in good intent
And I woll tell verament
Of Mirthe and of solas
All of a knight was faire and gent
In bataylle and in turnament
His name was sir Thopas.
Yborne he was in ferre countre
In Flaunders, all beyonde the see
At Popering in the place.
His father was a man full fre
And a lorde he was of that countre
As it was goddes grace.
Sir Thopas was a doughty swaine
White was his face as paine maine
His lippes reed as rose
His rudde is like scarlet in graine
And I you tell in good certaine
He had a semely nose.
His heer, his berde was like safroun
That to his girdel raught adoun
His shone of cordewane.
Of Bruges were his hosen broun
His robe was of cheklatoun
That cost many a jane
He couthe hunt at the wilde dere
And ride an haukyng for by the riuere
With grey goshauk on honde
Thereto he was a good archere
Of wrastling was there none his pere
There any Ram should stonde.
Full many a maide bright in boure
They mourne for him paramoure
When hem were bet to slepe.

But

But he was chaft and no lechoure
And swete as is the Bramble floure
That bearcth the redde hipe.
And so befell vpon a daie
Forsoth, as I youre tell maie
Sir Thopas would out ride.
He worth vpon his stede graie
And in his honde a launce gaie
A long swoorde by his side.
He pricketh through a faire forest
Therein was many a wilde beest
Yea both Bucke and Hare.
And as he pricked North and Este
I tell you, him had almeste
Betide a foule care.
There springen herbes great and small
The Licores and the Setuall
And many a cloue Gelofer
And Nutmigges, to put in ale
Whither it be new or stale
Or for to lie in cofer.
The birdes singen, it is no nale
The Sperhauke and the Popingale
That ioie it was to here.
The Throstell eke made his tale
The Wodrooke vpon the spraie
She song full loude and clere.
Sir Thopas fell in loue longing
And whan he heard the Throstell sing
He pricketh as he were wood
His faire stede in his pricking
So swette, that men might him wring
His sides were all blood.
Sir Thopas eke so wearie was
For pricking on the soft grass
So fiers was his corage
That doune he laied him in that place
To maken his stede some solace
And gaue him good forage.
Oh, saint Mary, benedicite
What ayleth this loue at me
To binde me so sore.
Me dreamed all this night parde
An elfe quene shall my lemman be
And slepe vnder my gore.
An Elfe Quene will I loue ywis
For in this worlde no woman is
Worthy to be my make in toune
All other women I forsake
And to an Elfe Quene I me take
By dale and eke by doune.
Into his sadell he clombe anone
And pricked ouer stile and stone
An Elfe Quene for to espie.
Till he so long hath ridden and gone
That he fonde in a privie wone
The countre of Fairie. (so wilde
For in that countre nas there none
Neither wife ne childe
Till him there came a great Giaunt
His name was called sir Oliphaunt
A perillous man of deede.
He saied childe, by Termagaunt
But if thou pricke out of my haunt
Anon I slea thy stede with mace
Or euer I go out of this place.
Here is the Quene of Fairie
With Harpe and Pipe, and Simphonie
Dwelling in this place.
The childe saied, als so mote I thee
To morowe will I meten thee
Whan I haue mine armoure.
And yet I hope par ma foie
That thou shalt with this launce gaie
Abien it full sore: Though thy mawe
Shall I pierce, if I maie
Or it be fully prime of the daie
For here thou shalt be slawe.
Sir Thopas drowe abacke full fast
This Gyaunt at him stones cast
Out of a fell staffe sling.
But faire escaped sir Thopace
And all was through Gods grace
And through his faire bering.
Yet listeneth lordings to my tale.
Merier than the Nightingale
For now I will ye roune,
How sir Thopas, with sides smale
Pricking ouer doune and dale
Is comen ayen to toune.
His merry men commaunded he
To maken him bothe game and gle
For nedes must he fight.
With a Gyaunt, with heddes three
For paramoures and iolite
Of one that shone full bright.
Doe come he saied my minstrales
And iestors, for to tellen vs tales
Anon in mine arming.
Of Romaunces that been royals
Of Popes and of Cardinals
And eke of loue longing.
They set him first the swete wine
And Meede eke in a Mazeline
And royall spicerie.
Of Ginger bread that was full fine
Of Licores and eke Comine
With Suger that is trie.
He did next his white lere
Of cloth of lake fine and clere

A brecche and eke a sherte.
And next his shert an haketon
And ouer that an haberion
For perring of his herte.
And ouer that a fine hanberke
Was all ywrought of Jewes werke
Full strong it was of plate.
And ouer that his cote armoure
As white as is the Lilly floure
In which he would debate.
His shilde was all of gold so redde
And there in was a Bores hedde
A carbocle by his side.
And there he swore on ale and bread
How that the Geaunt should be dead
Betide what betide.
His iambeux were of cure buly
His swerde shethe of Iuorie
His helme of Laton bright.
His sadell was of rued bone
His brydle as the Sunne shone
Or as the Moone light.
His speare was of fine Cypres
That bidden warre, and nothing peace
The hedde full sharpe ygrounde.
His stede was all dapple graie
He goth an aumble by the waie
Full softly and round in londe.
Lo Lordes mine, here is a fit
If ye will any more of it
To tellen it will I fonde.

NOw hold your mouth for charite
Both knight and Ladie fre
And herkeneth to my spell.
Of battaile and of chevalrie
And of Ladies loue drerie
Anon I will you tell.
Men speken of Romaunces of pris
Of Horne child, and of Ipotis
Of Bevis, and of sir Gye
Of sir Libeaux, and Blaindamoure
But sir Thopas, he beareth the floure
Of royall chevalrie.
His good stede he bestrode
And forth vpon his way glode
As sparke out of the bronde.
Upon his creste he bare a toure
And therein stycked a Lilly floure
God shilde his cors fro shonde.
And for he was a knight auentrous
He nolde slepen in none hous
But ligge in his hood.
His bright helme was his wanger
And by him fedde his destrer,
Of herbes fine and good.
Himselfe dronke water of the well
As did the knight sir Perciuell
So worthie under wede.
¶Here endeth the rime of sir Thopas,
and beginneth the wordes
of our Hoste.

NO more of this for Goddes dignite
(Qd our hoste) for thou makest me
So wearie of thy verie lewdenesse
That also wisely God my soule blesse
Mine eares aken of thy draftie speache
Now such a rime, the deuill I beteache
This may well be clepe rime Dogrell (qd he)
Why so (qd I) why wolt thou let me
More of my tale, than any other man
Sens that it is the best rime that I can
By God (qd he) plainly at o worde
Thy draftie rimyng is not worth a torde
Thou doest nought elis but spendest time
Sir at one word, thou shalt no lenger rime
Let se whither thou canst tell ought in gest
Or tell in prose somwhat at the lest
In which there may be some mirthe or doc-
trine
Gladly (qd I) by Gods sweete pine
I will you tell a little thing in prose
That ought like you, as I suppose
Or elis ye be certes to daungerous
It is a moral tale vertuous
All be it told sometime in sondrie wise
Of sondrie folke, as I shal you deuise
As thus, ye wote that euery Euangelist
That telleth vs the paine of Jesus Christ
Ne saith not all thing as his fel[lowe] doth
But natheless her sentence is all soth
And all acordeth in her sentence
All be there in her telling difference
For some of hem sain more, and some lesse
Whan they his pitous passion expresse
I mean of Marke, Mathew, Luke, & John
But doubtlesse her sentence is all one
Therfore lordings, I you beseche
If that you thinke I varie in my speche
As thus, though I tell somwhat more
Of prouerbes, than ye han heard bifore
Comprehended in this little treatise here
To enforcen with the effect of my matere
And though I not the same wordes saie
As ye han heard, yet to all you I praie
Blameth me not, for in my sentence
Shull ye not finde mochel difference
Fro the sentence of this treates lite

After

After the which, this merie tale I write
And therefore herkeneth what I shal saie
And let me tell my tale I you praie.

¶ Here endeth the wordes of our hoste, and here beginneth Chaucers Tale of Melibeus.

A Long man called Melibeus, mightie and riche, begate vpon his wife that called was Prudence, a doughter which that called was Sophie.

Upon a daie befell that he for his disport is went into the feldes him to playe: His wife and eke his doughter hath he lefte within his hous, of which the doores were fast yshet. Foure of his old foos han it aspied, & setten ladders to the walles of his house, and by the windowes been entred, and bet his wife, & wounded his doughter with fiue mortall woundes, in fiue sundry places: That is to saie, in her feete, in her handes, in her eares, in her nose, and in her mouth, and lefte her for ded, and wenten her waie.

Whan Melibeus returned was into his hous, and see all this mischiefe, he like a mad man rending his clothes, gan to wepe & crie.

Prudence his wife, as ferforth as she durst besought him of his weping for to stint: But not for thy, he gan to wepe and crie euer lenger the more.

This noble wife Prudence remembred her vpon the sentence of Ouide, in his boke that cleped is the remedy of loue, whereas he saith he is a foole that disturbeth the mother to wepe, in the death of her childe, till shee haue wept her fill, as for a certaine time: and than shall a man doen his diligence with amiable wordes, to recomfort and praie her of her weping for to stinte. For which reason this noble wife Prudence, suffered her husbande to wepe and crie, as for a certaine space: and whan she sawe her time, she saied him in this wise: Alas my Lorde (qd she) why make ye your selfe to be like a foole? Forsoth it appertene th not vnto a wise man, to maken such a sorowe. Your doughter with the grace of God shall warish and escape. And all were it so that she right nowe were ded, ye ne ought not as for her death your selfe destroy. Seneck saith, the wise manne shall not take to greate discomfort for the death of his children, but certes he should suffer it in pacience, as wel as he abideth the death of his own proper perso.

This Melibeus answered anon and said: What man (qd he) should of his weping stint, that hath so great a cause for to wepe: Jesus himselfe our Lorde, wept for the death of Lazarus his frende. Prudence answered, certes well I wote, a temperate weping is nothing defended, to him that sorowfull is, emong folke in sorow, but it is rather graunted him to wepe. The Apostle Poule vnto the Romanes writeth, men should reioyce with him that maketh ioye, and wepe with such folke as wepen. But though a temperate weping be graunted, certes outragious weping is defended. Measure of weeping should be considered, after the lore that teacheth vs Seneck: Whan that thy frend is dedde (qd he) let not thine iyen to moist been of teres, ne to much drie: although teres comen to thine iyen, let hem not fal. And whan thou hast forgon thy frende, doe diligence to get an other frende: and this is more wisedome than for to wepe for thy frende, which thou haste lorne, for therein is no bote. And therefore if ye gouerne you by sapience, put away sorowe out of your harte. Remembreth you that Jesus Sirake saieth, a man that is ioyous and glad in hart it him conserueth florishing in his age: But sothely a sorowfull harte maketh his bones drie. He saieth eke thus, that sorowe in harte slayeth full many a manne. Salomon saieth that right as moughthes in the shepes fleese anoyeth the clothes, and the small wormes the tree, right so anoieth sorowe the harte of man, wherfore vs ought as well in the death of our children, as in the losse of our temporal goods, haue pacience.

Remember you vpon pacient Jobe, whan he had lost his children and his temporall substaunce, and in his body endured and receiued full many a greuous tribulation, yet saied he thus: Our Lorde it sent to mee, our Lorde hath biraft it me, right so as our Lord would, right so it be don, yblessed be the name of our Lord. To these forsaide things Melibeus vnto his wife Prudence answerd: All thy wordes (qd he) been true, and therto profitable, but truly mine harte is troubled with this sorowe so greuously, that I not what to do. Let call (qd Prudence) your true frends al and thy linage, which that been wise, & telleth to hem your case, & herkeneth what they saie in counsailing, and gouerne you after her sentence. Salomō saith, werke al thy things by counsaile,

counsaile and thou shalt neuer rue. Than by counsaile of his wife Prudence, this Melibeus, let cause a greate congregation of people, as Surgiens, Phisicions, olde folke and young, and some of his olde enemies reconciled (as by her semblance) to his loue and to his grace: and therwithal there came sum of his neighbours that did him reuerence more for dreade than for loue, as it happeth ofte. There comen also full many subtill flatterers, and wise Aduocates lerned in the lawe. And whan these folkes togeders assembled were, this Melibeus in sorowfull wise, shewed hem his case, and by the manner of his speache, it semed that in harte, he bare a cruel ire, redy to doen vengeaunce vpon his foos, and sodainly he desired that warre should begin, but natheless yet asked he counsaile vpon this matter. A Surgien by licence and assent of such as were wise vp rose, and vnto Melibeus saied, as ye shall heare.

Sir (qd he) as to vs Surgiens appartaineth, that we do to euery wight the best that we can, whereas wee been withholden, and to our paciente that wee doen no dammage: wherfore it happeth many time and oft, that whan two men haue euerich wounded other, one Surgien healeth hem bothe, wherefore vnto our art it is not pertinent to nourish warre, ne parties to supporte. But certes, as to the warishing of your doughter, al be it so that perilously shee be wounded, we shall doe so tentike businesse fro day to night, that with the grace of GOD, she shall been whole and sounde, as soone as is possible. Almost right in the same wise the Phisiciens answerde, saue that they saiden a fewe woordes more: That right as maladies been by her contraries cured, right so shall man warishe warre by peace. His neighbours full of enuie, his fained frendes that semed reconciled, and his flatterers, maden semblance of weeping, and empaired and agrutched much of this matter, in prailing greatly Melibe, of might, of power, of richesse, and of frendes, dispising the power of his aduersaries: and saied vtterly, that he anon should wreken him on his foos, and begin warre.

Up rose than an Aduocate that was wise, by leaue and by counsaile of other that were wise, and saied: The nede for the which wee been assembled in this place, is full heauie thing, & a great matter, bicause of the wrong and of the wickednesse that hath be doen, and eke by reason of great damages, that in time comming been possible to fallen for the same and eke by reason of the great riches and power of the parties bothe, for the which reasons, it were a full great peril to erren in this matter. Wherfore, Melibeus this is our sentence, we counsaile you abouen al thing, that right anon thou doe thy diligence, in keping of thy proper person, in such a wise that thou ne wante none espie ne watche, thy body for to saue: And after that, wee counsaile that in thine hous thou set sufficient garrison, so as they maie as well thy bodie as thy hous defende: but certes to mouen warre, or to doen sodainly vengeaunce, we maie not deme in so little time, that it were profitable, wherefore we aske leiser and space, to haue deliberacion in this case to deme, for the common prouerbe saith thus: He that sone demeth sone shall repent. And eke men sain, thilke Judge is wise that sone vnderstondeth a matter, & iudgeth by leiser: For all be it tarying bee noyfull, algate it is not to be reproued in yeuing of iudgement, ne in vengeaunce taking, whan it is sufficient and reasonable. And that shewed our lord Jesu Christ by ensample, for whan the woman was taken in auoutrie, and was brought in his presens to knowē what shuld bee done of her person, all be it that he wiste well himself what he would answer, yet ne would he not answere sodenly, but he woulde haue deliberation, & in the grounde he wrote twise, and by this cause we aske deliberatiō: and we shall than by the grace of God counsaile you that thing that shall be profitable.

Up sterte than the yong folke at ones, and the most part of that company haue skorned this olde wise man, and begon to make noyse and said: Right so as whiles that iron is hot men should smite, right so men should wrekē her wronges while that they ben freshe and newe, & with loude voice they cryed, warre, warre. Up rose the one of the olde wise, and with his hond made countenaunce that they should holden hem still, & yeuen him audiēce. Lordings (qd he) there is ful many a manne that crieth warre, warre, that wote full lite what warre amounteth. Warre at his beginning hath so great an entring & so large, that euery wight may enter whā him liketh and lightly find warre: but certes what ende thereof shall fall, it is not lightly to knowe. Whan that warre is ones begon, there is ful many a child vnborn of his mother, that shall sterue yong, bicause of thilke warre, other els liue in sorow, or dien in wretchednesse: And there-

therefore or that any warre be bigon, menne must haue great counsaile and good deliberacion. And whan this old manne wend to enforcen his tale by reson, well nie all at ones bigon for to rise, for to breaken his tale, and bidden him full oft his woordes to abredge: For certes he that preacheth to hem that lust not to heare his wordes, his sermon hem annoieth. For Jesus Sirake saieth, the weping in Muske is a notous thing. This is as moch to say, as moch auaileth it to speake biforne folke to whiche his speach annoieth, as it is for to singen biforne hem that wepe. And whan this wise man, saw that him wanted audience, all shamfast he set him adoun ayen. For Salomon saith: there as thou maist not haue audience, enforce thee not to speake. I se well (qd. this wiseman) that the common prouerbe is soth, that good counsaile wanteth, whan it is most nede.

Yet hadde this Melibeus in his counsaile many folke, that priuely in his eare counsailed him certaine thinges, and counsailed him the contrary in generall audience. Whã Melibeus had heard that the greatest part of his counsaile, were accorded that he should make warre, anon he consented to her counsailing and fully affirmed her sentence. Than dame Prudence, whan that she saw her husbond thope him for to awreke him on his enemies, and to begin warre: she in full humble wise, whan she saw her time, saied to him these woordes. My Lord (qd. she) I you beseech as hartily as I dare or can, ne haste you not to fast and for all guerdons yeue me audience. For Peter Alphons saieth. Who so doeth to thee good or harme, haste thee not to quite it, for in this wise thy frend woll abide, and thine enemy shall the lenger live in dread. The Prouerbe saieth, he hasteth well that wisely can abide: And in wicked haste is no profite.

This Melibe answerd to his wife Prudence: I purpose not (qd. he) to werke by thy counsaile, for many causes and reasons, for certes euery wighte would hold me than a foole. This is to say, if I for thy counsailing would chaunge thinges that been ordained and affirmed by so many wise. Secondly, I say that all women been wicked, and none good of hem all. For of a thousand men saith Salomon, I found one good man; but certes, of all women found I neuer none. And also certes, if I gouerned me by thy counsaile, it should seme that I had yeue thee ouer me the maistry: and God forbid that it so were. For Jesus Sirake saieth, that if the wife haue maistry, she is contrarious to her husbond. And Salomon saieth: Neuer in thy life, to thy wife, ne to thy child, ne to thy frend, ne yeue no power ouer thy selfe, for better it were that thy children, aske of thee things that hem nedeth, than thy selfe to be in the hands of thy children. And also if I woll werch by thy counsaile, certes my counsaile must be sumtime secret, till it were time that it must ben knowen: and this ne may not be, if I should be counsailed by thee. Whan dame Prudence full debonairly and with great patience, had heard all that her husbond liked for to say, than asked she of him licence for to speak, and saied in this wise. My lord (qd. she) as to your first reson, it may lightly been answerd. For I say that it is no folly to chaunge counsaile whan the thing is chaunged, or els whan the thing semeth otherwise than it semed afore. And moreouer I say, though that ye haue sworne & behight to performe your empryse, and by iust cause ye doe it not: men should not say therfore ye were a lier and forsworne. For the booke saith, that the wise man maketh no lesing, whan he tourneth his corage for the better. And albeit that your empryse bee established, and ordeined by great multitude of folke, yet dare you not accomplish thilke ordinance but you liketh: for the trouth of thinges, and the profite been rather founden in few folke that been wise and full of reason, than by great multitude of folke, there euery man crieth and clattereth what him liketh: sothly soch multitude is not honest. And as to the second reason, where as ye say, that all women been wicked: saue your grace, Certes ye dispise all women in this wise, and he that all dispiseth, as saith the boke, all displeaseth: And Senecke saieth, that who so woll banc sapience, shall no man dispraise, but he shall gladly teach the science that he can, without presumption or pride: and such thinges as he nought ne can, he shal not been ashamed to learne hem, and to enquire of lesse folke than himselfe. And that ther hath ben many a good woman, may lightly be proued: for certes sir our lorde Jesu Christ nolde neuer han dissended to be borne of a woman, if al women had be wicked. And after that, for the great bounte that is in womẽ, our lorde Jesu Christ, whan he was risen fro death to life, appered rather to a woman, thã to his Apostles. And though that Salomon saied, he founde neuer women good, it followeth not therefore that all

women

women be wicked: for though ỹ he ne found no good woman, certes many an other man hath found many a woman full good and true. Or els peraventure the entent of Salomon was this, that in soverain bounte he found no woman, this is to say: that there is no wight that hath parfite bounte saue God alone, as he himselfe recordeth in his Euangely. For there nis no creature so good, that him ne wanteth somwhat of the perfection of God that is his maker. Your third reason is this, ye say that if that ye governe you by my counsaile, it should seme that ye had yeue me the maistry and the lordship of your person. Sir saue your grace it is not so, for if so were that no man should be counsailed but onely of hem that han lordship and maistry of his person, men nold not be counsailed so oft. For sothly thilke man that asketh counsaile of a purpose, yet hath he fre will whither he woll doe after that co unsaile or none. And as to your fourth reason, there as ye saine that the tangiery of women can hide things that they wote not, as who so saieth, that a womã can not hide that she wote. Sir, these words been understond of women that been tangelers and wicked, of which women men saine that thre thinges dryuen a manne out of his hous, that is to say, smoke, dropping of rain, and wicked wives. And of soch women Salomon saieth, that a man were better dwell in desert, than with a woman that is riottous. And sir by your leaue it am not I, for ye haue full oft assaied my great sikēce and my great pacience, and eke how well that I can hide and heale thinges, that men oughten secretly to hiden. And sothly as to your fift reason, where as ye say that in wicked counsaile women venquish men: God wot that thilke reson stant here in no stede: for understonderh now ye asken counsaile for to doe wickednes: And if ye would werken wickednesse, & your wife restraineth thilke wicked purpose, and ouercome you by reason and by good counsaile, certes your wife ought rather to be praised than blamed. Thus should ye understond the Philosopher that saieth, in wicked counsaile women venquesh her husbondes. And there as ye blame al women and her reasons, I shall shew you by many ensamples, that many women haue be full good, and yet been, and her counsaile wholsome and profitable. Eke some men han saied, that the counsaile of women is either to dere, or to little worth. But albeit so that full many women be bad, and her counsaile vile and nought worth, yet han menne found full many a good woman, and full discreet and wise in counsailing. Lo Jacob through the counsaile of his mother Rebecke, wan the benison of his father, and the Lordship of all his brethern. Judith thorow her good counsaile, deliuered the cite of Bethule, in which she dwelt, out of the hond of Holofern that had it all besieged, & would haue destroied it Abigaile deliuered Naball her husbond, fro Dauid the king, that would haue slaine him, and appeased the ire of the king by her wit, and by her good counsaile. Hester by her counsaile enhaunced greatly the people of God, in the reigne of Assuerus the king. And the same bounty in good counsailing of many a good woman may men rede and tell. And furthermore, whan that our Lord had created Adam our former father, he saied in this wise: It is not good to bee a manne alone: make we an helper to himselfe semblable. Here may ye see that if that women were not good, and her counsaile good and profitable, our Lord God of heauen ne would neither han wrought hem, ne called hem the helper of man, but rather confusion to man. And there saied a clerke ones in two verses: What is better than gold? Jasper. What is better than Jasper? Wisedome. And what is better than Wisedome? Woman. And what is better than a good woman? That is a good man. And what is better than a good man? Nothing. And sir, by many other reasons may ye seene, that many women been good, and eke her counsaile good and profitable. And therefore sir, if that ye woll trust to my counsaile, I shall restore you your doughter hole and sound, and eke that I wol doe you so moch, that ye shall haue honour in this case.

Whan Melibe had heard the words of his wife Prudence, he saied thus. I see well that the words of Salomon be soth. For he saith the woordes that be spoken discretly by ordinaunce, been Honie combes, for they yeuen swetenesse to the soule, and holsomnesse to the body. And wife bicause of thy swete wordes and eke for I haue proued & assaied thy great Sapience and thy great trouth: I woll governe me by thy counsaile in all thing.

Now sir (qd. dame Prudence) and sithens that ye vouchsafe to be governed by my counsaile, I will enforme you how that ye shall governe your selfe, in choising of your counsailours. Ye shall first in all your werke, meekely beseching

beſeching to the hie God that he woulde be your counſaillour, and ſhapeth you to ſuch entent that he yeue you counſayle and comforte, as taught Thobie his ſonne. At all times thou ſhalte bleſſe God, and prate him to dreſſe thy waies, and loke eke that thy counſailes been in him euermore. Saint James ſaieth, if anye man of you haue nede of ſapience, aſke it of God. And afterwarde, than ſhullen ye take counſaile in youre ſelfe, and examine well your owne thoughtes, of ſuche thinges as you thinken that been beſte for your profite. And then ſhall you driue fro your herte thinges that bee contrarious to good counſaile: that is to ſaye, ire, couetiſe, and haſtineſſe.

Firſte he that aſketh counſaile of himſelfe, certes he muſte be withouten ire and wrath in himſelfe, for many cauſes. The firſte is this: He that hath great ire and wrath in hunſelfe he weneth alwaye that he may doe thinges that he may not do. And Secõdly, he that is yrous and wrothfull, he may not well deme: And he that may not well deme, maye not well counſaile. The third is this, he that is yrous and naught as ſaieth Seneke, may not ſpeake but blamefull thinges, and with thilke vicous wordes he ſtirreth other folke to angre and to ire. And eke ſir ye muſte driue couetiſe out of your herte. For the Apoſtle ſaieth, that couetiſe is the rote of all harmes And truſteth right well that a couetous man ne can not deme ne thinke but onely to fulfill the ende of his couetiſe: and certes that ne may neuer be accompliſhed, for euermore, the more habundaunce that he hath of richeſſes, the more he deſireth. And ſir ye muſt alſo driue out of your hert haſtineſſe: For certes ye may not deme for the beſt a ſodain thought that falleth in your hert, but ye muſt auiſe you on it full oft: For as ye haue herd here biforе, the comen Proverbe is this: He that ſone demeth, ſone repenteth.

Sir, ye ne be not alwaye in like diſpoſicion, for certes ſome thing that ſemeth ſomtime to you that is good for to do, an other time he ſemeth to you the contrary.

And whan ye han taken counſaile in your ſelfe, and han demed by good deliberacion ſuch thing as you ſemeth beſt, than rede I you that ye kepe it ſecret. Bewray ye not your counſaile to no perſon, but if ſo be that ye wene likerly that through your bewrayeng, your condicion ſhall be to you the more profitable. For Jheſus Sirake ſaith: neyther to thy foe ne to thy frende, diſcouer not thy ſecret, ne thy foly: for they woll yeue you audience and loking, and ſuppoztacion in your preſence, and ſcorne you in your abſence. Another Clerke ſaieth, that ſcarſly ſhall you find any perſon that may kepe counſayle ſecretly. The boke ſaieth, while that thou kepeſt thy counſaile in thine hert, thou kepeſt it in thy priſon: and whan thou bewrayeſt thy counſaile to any wight, he holdeth the in his snare. And therefore yu is better to hide your counſaile in your hert, than to pray him to whom ye haue bewrayde your counſaile, that he woll kepe it cloſe ſtill. For Seneca ſaieth: If ſo be that thou maiſt not thine owne counſaile hide, how darſt thou pray any other wight thy counſaile ſecret to kepe. But natheleſſe if thou wene likerly that the bewrayinge of thy counſaile to a perſon woll make thy condicion ſtond in the better plight, than ſhalt thou tell him thy counſaile in this wiſe. Firſt thou ſhalt make no ſemblant whether the were leuer peace or warre, or this or that, ne ſhew him not thy will ne thine entent: for truſt well that comenly theſe counſaillours ben flatterers, namely the counſaillours of great lords, for they enforce hem alway rather to ſpeke pleaſaunt wordes enclinyng to the lordes luſt, than wordes that ben trew or profitable, and therfore men ſay that the rich man hath ſelde good counſaile, but if he haue it of himſelfe. And after that thou ſhalt conſider thy frendes and thine enemies. And as touching thy frendes, thou ſhalt conſider which of hem ben moſt faithfull and moſt wiſe, and eldeſt, and moſt approued in counſailing: and of hem ſhalt thou aſke thy counſaile, as the caſe requireth.

I ſay, that firſt ye ſhall call to your counſaile your frendes that ben trew. For Salomon ſaieth: that right as the hert of a man deliteth in ſauour that is ſote, right ſo the counſaile of trew frendes yeueth ſwetneſſe to the ſoule. And he ſaieth alſo, there may nothing be likened to the trew frende: For certes golde ne ſiluer be not ſo much worth as the good will of a trewe frende. And alſo he ſaith that a trew frende is a ſtrong defence, who ſo that it findeth hath a great treaſure. Than ſhall ye alſo conſider if that your true frendes be diſcrete & wiſe: for the boke ſaith, aſke alwaye thy counſaile of them that be wiſe. And by this ſame reaſon ſhall ye call to your counſaile your frendes that ben of age,

uch as seeme and been expert in many thinges, and been approued in counsailing. For the booke saieth, that in olde menne is sapience, and in longe time the prudence. And Tullius saieth, that greate things been not aye accomplished by strength, ne by deliuernesse of bodie, but by counsaile, by authoritie of persons, and by science: the which three thinges ne been not feable by age, but certes they enforce and encrease daye by daye, and than shall ye keepe this for a generall rule: Firste shall ye call to your counsayle a fewe of your frendes that been especiall, For Salomon saieth, manie frendes haue thou, but among a thousande choose thee one to be thy counsailour: For all be it so that thou firste, ne tell thy Counsaile but to a fewe, thou mayste afterwarde tell it to moe folke if it be neede. But looke alwaie that thy counsailers haue those condicions that I haue sayd before, that is to saye, that they be true, wise, and of olde experience. And werke not alway in euery nede by one Counsailer alone: for sometime behoueth it to bee counsailed by manie. For Salomon sayeth, saluacion of thinges is where as there be many counsaylers.

Nowe haue I tolde you of which folke ye shall be counsailed: nowe woll I tell you which counsaile ye ought to eschue. First ye shall eschue the counsailing of fooles. Salomon saieth, take no counsaile of a foole: for he woll counsaile but after his owene lust and his affection. The booke saieth, that the propertie of a foole is this: He troweth lightly harme of euery man, and lightly troweth all bountie in himselfe. Thou shalt eschue the counsailing of all flatterers, which as enforcen hem rather to praise your person by flattery, than for to tell you the soothfastnesse of thinges. Wherefore, Tullius saieth, among all the pestilence that been in frendship, the greatest is flattery. And therefore it is more neede that thou eschue and drede flatterers, than any other people. The boke saith, thou shalt rather flee fro the sweete wordes of flattering and prailing, than fro the egre wordes of thy frendes that saieth the sothes. Salomon saieth, that the wordes of a flatterer is a snare to catche innocence. He saieth also, he that speaketh to his frende wordes of flatterie and of pleasance, he setteth his net before his feete to catche him. And therefore Tullius sayeth, Encline not thine eares to flatterers, ne take no counsaile of flatterers. And Caton saieth: Auise thee wel, and eschue the wordes of sweetnesse and of pleasaunce. And eke thou shalt eschue the counsailing of thine olde enemies that been reconciled. The booke saieth, that no wight returneth safely into the grace of his olde enimie. And Isope saieth, ne trust not to hem, to which thou hast sometime had warre or ennitie, ne tell hem not thy counsaile. And Seneck telleth the cause why it may not be, for he saieth, there as great fire hath long time endured, that there dwelleth some vapour of heat. And therfore saith Salomon, in thine olde foe trust thou neuer. For sikerly though thine enemie be reconciled, & make the signe of humilitie, and loute to thee with his heed, trust him neuer: for certes hee maketh thilke fained humilitie more for his profite than for any humilitie, or for any loue of thy person, because that he demeth to haue victorie ouer thy person by such fayned countenaunce, the which victorie hee might not haue by strife or warre. And Petrus Alphons saieth, make no felowship with thine olde enemies, for if thou do hem bountie, they wollen peruert it to wickednesse. And eke thou must eschue the counsailing of hem that been thy seruauntes, and beren thee great reuerence: for peraventure they faine it more for drede than for loue. And therfore saith a Philosopher in this wise: There is no wight parfitly true to him that he dreadeth. And Tullius saith, there is no might so great of any Emperour that long may endure, but he haue loue of the people and drede. Ye shall eschue also the counsailing of folke that been dronkelew, for they ne can no counsaile hide. For Salomon saieth, there nis no priuitie there as reigneth dronkennesse. Ye shall haue also in suspect the counsailing of such folke as counsaile you one thing priuily, and counsaile you ỳ contrarie openly. For Calliodore saith, that it is a matter of sleight to hinder his enemie when he sheweth to done a thing openly, and werketh priuely the contrary. Thou shalt haue also in suspecte the counsaylinge of wicked folke, that be alwaie full of fraude. And Dauid saieth, that blissfull is the manne that hath not followed the counsaylinge of shrewes. Thou shalt also eschue the counsayling of yong folke, for her counsailing is not ripe, as Salomon saieth.

Nowe sir, sithens I haue shewed you of such folke as ye shall be counsailed of, and folowe it: now woll I teche you howe ye shall examine your counsayle, After the doctrine

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of Tullius, in examining of your counsailours, ye shall consider many things.

First thou shalt consider thilke thing that thou purposest, and vpon that thing that thou wolt haue counsaile, that very trueth he said and conserued, this is to say, tell truly thy tale for he that saieth false, may not well be counsailed in that case, of which he lieth. After this thou shalt consider the thinges that accorden to that thou purposest for to doe by thy counsailours, if reason accord thereto, and eke if thy might may attaine therto: and if the more part and the better part of your counsailours accorden thereto or no. Than shalt thou consider what thing shall folow of her counsailing: As hate, peace, warre, grace, profite, or domage, and many other thinges: and in all thinges thou shalt chose the best, and weyue all other things. Than shalt thou consider of what rote is engendred the matter of thy counsaile, and what fruite it may conceiue and engender. Thou shalt eke consider all the causes, from whence they be sprong. And when thou hast examined thy counsaile, as I haue said, and which party is the better and more profitable, and hast approued it by many wise folke and old, than thou shalt consider, if thou maist performe it and make of it a good end. For certes reason will not that any man shall beginne a thing, but if he might performe it as him ought: ne no wight should take vpon him so heuie a charge, but that he might bere it. For the prouerbe saith, he that to much embraceth distraineth liteli. And Caton saith, assay to do such thinges as thou hast power to done, lest the charge oppresse the to sore, that the behoueth weme thing that thou hast begonne. And if so be that thou be in doute, whether thou maist perfourme a thing or none, chose rather for to suffer than to begynne. And Peter Alphons saieth, if thou hast might to do a thing, of which thou must repent, it is better hold thy tongue still than for to speke. Than maist thou vnderstond by stronger reasons, that if thou hast power to performe a werke of which thou shalt repent thee, than is it better thou suffer than begin. Well saine they that defenden euery wight to assay a thing of which he is in dout whether he may performe it or none. And after when ye haue examined your counsaile (as I haue said before) and knowe well that ye may performe your empryse: conferme it than sadly till it be at an end.

Now it is reason and time that I shew you, whan and wherfore that ye may chaunge your counsaile, without reproue. Sothly a man may chaunge his purpose and his counsaile, if the cause ceaseth, or whan a new case betideth. For the law saith, that vpon thinges that newly betideth, behoueth new counsaile. And Seneke saieth, if thy counsaile is come to the eares of thine enemies, chaunge thy counsaile. Thou maist also chaunge thy counsaile, if so be thou find that by errour or by any other cause, harme or damage may betide. Also if thy counsaile be dishoneste, other els come of dishoneste cause, chaunge thy counsaile. For the law saieth, that all behestes that be dishoneste, ne ben of no value: And eke, if so be that it be impossible or may not gladly be performed or kept.

And take this for a generall rule, that euery counsaile that is enfourmed so strongly, that it may not be chaunged for no condition that may betide, I say that like counsaile is wicked.

MElibeus, when he had heard the doctrine of his wyfe Dame Prudence, answerde in this wise. Dame (qd. he) as yet vnto this time ye han well taught me, as in gouernaile how I shall gouerne me in the choising and in the withholding of my counsaile: But now would I faine that ye would condiscend in speciall, how that ye semeth by our counsaylours that we haue chose in this present nede.

My lord (qd. she) I beseth you in all humblesse, that ye will not wilfully replie ayenst my resons, ne distemper your hert though I speke thing that you displese, for God wot as in mine entent, I speke it as for your best and for your honour and profite eke, and sothly I hope that your benignite will take it in pacience. And trusteth me wel that your counsaile in this case ne should not (as to speke properly) be called a counsailing, but a mocion or a mouing of foly, in which counsaile ye haue erred in many a sondry wise.

First ye haue erred in the assembling of your counsailours: For first ye should haue cleped a few folke to your counsaile, and after ye might haue shewed it to mo, if it had be nede. But ye haue cleped to your counsaile a great multitude of people, full chargeous and full noyous for to here. Also ye haue erred, for there as ye should haue onely cleped to your counsaile your trew frendes, old and

wolle, ye haue cleped straunge folke, yong folke, falle flatterers, and enemies reconsiled, and folke that done you reuerence withouten loue. And eke ye haue erred, for ye haue brought with you to your counsaile, ire, couetise, and hastinesse, the which thre thinges ben contrary to euery good counsaile, honest and profitable, the which thre thinges ye haue not discoyed neither in your selfe ne in your counsailours, as ye ought. Ye haue erred also for ye haue shewed to your counsayloures your talent and your affectiõs to make warre anon, and for to doe vengeaunce, and they haue espide by your wordes, to what thing ye ben enclined: and therefore han they rather counsailed you to your talent, than to your profite. Ye han erred eke, for it semeth that you sufficeth to haue bee counsailed by these counsailours onely, and with litle auisement, where as in so hie and in so great a nede, it had been necessary mo counsailours, and more deliberacion to performe your empryse. Ye han erred also, for ye haue not examined your counsaile in the forsayd mat.rs, ne in dewe manr as the cale requireth. Ye haue erred also, for ye made no diuision betwene your trew frendes and your fayned counsailours: ne ye haue not knowen the will of your trew counsailours and frendes, old, and wise, but ye haue cast all her wordes in an hochepot, and enclined your hert to the more part and to the gretter nombre of fooles than of wise men. And therfore the counsaylinges that been at congregacions and multitudes of folke, there as men take more regarde to the nombre than to the sapience of persons, ye sene well, that in such counsaylinges, fooles han the maistry. Melibe answerd and said ayen: I graunt well that I haue erred, but there as thou hast told me here biforne, that he nis not to blame that chaungeth his counsaile in certaine case, and for certaine and iust cause, I am all redye to chaunge my counsailours right as thou woldest deuise. The prouerbe saith, for to done sinne is mannish, but certes for to perseuer longe in sinne, is werke of the diuell.

To this sentence answereth anon dame Prudence and said: Examineth (qd. she) well your counsayle, and let vs se which of hem hathe spoke most reasonably, and taught you best counsaile. And for as much as the examinacion is necessary, lette vs begin at Surgens and Phisiciens, that first spake of this mater. I say that Phisiciens and Surgiens haue saide you in your counsayle discretly, as hem ought: and in her speche said full wisely, that to the office of hem appertaineth to donne to euery wighte honoure and profite, and no wight to anoy, and after her craft to done great diligence vnto the cure of hem, which they haue in her gouernaunce. And sir, right as they haue answerd wisely and discretly, right so rede I that they ben hicly and souerainly guerdoned for her noble speche, and eke for they shull more done their ententife besinesse in the curacion of your doughter, for all be it so they been your frendes, therfore shullen ye not suffre, that they serue you for naught, but ye ought thereafter guerdon hem, and pay hem her largesse. And as touching the prepolicion, which the Phisiciens entreteden in this cale, this is to saine, that in maladies is, that contrary is warished by an other contrary: I wold faine know how ye vnderstond thilke text, and what is your sentẽce. Certes (qd. Melibeus) I vnderstond it in this wise. Right as they han do me a contrary, so should I done hem an other, for right as they han venged hem vpon me, and done me wrong, right so woll I venge me vpon hem, and done hem wrong, and than haue I cured one contrary by an other.

Lo lo (qd. dame Prudence) how lightly is euery man enclined to his own desire and his owne pleasaunce. Certes (qd. she) the wordes of the Phisiciens ne should not ben vnderstond in that wise, for certes wickednesse is not contrary to wickednesse, ne vengeaunce is not contrary to vengeaunce, ne wrong to wrong, but euery of hem encreseth and engendreth other. But certes the words of the Phisiciens should be vnderstond in this wise, for good and wickednesse ben two cõtraries: and peace and warre, vengeaunce and sufraunce, discord and accord, and many other things: But certes wickednesse shalbe warished with goodnes, discord by accord, warre by peace, and so forth in other thinges. And therto accordeth saint Paule the Apostell in many places: he saith, ne yeld not harme for harme, ne wicked speech for wicked speche, but do well to hem that don to the harm, and blesse hem that saith thee harme. And in many other places he admonisheth peace & accord But now woll I speke of the counsaile which was ipeue vnto you by menne of Law, and the wise folke, and olde folke, that sayden all

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by one accord as ye herde beforne, that ouer all things ye shall done your beste and diligence to keepe your person, and to warnestore your house: And they saide also, that in this case ye ought to werchen full wisely and with great deliberation. And sir, as to the first point, that toucheth the keping of your person: ye shal vnderstonde that he that hath warre, shall euer deuoutly & meekely praien, beforne all thinges, that Jesu Christ of his mercy woll haue him in his protection, and to be his souereine helper at his neede: For certes in this world there nis no wight that may be counsailed & ykept sufficiently without the keping of our lorde Jesu Christ. To this sentence accordeth the Prophet Dauid that saieth: If God ne kepte the citie, in ydel waketh he that it keepeth. Nowe sir, than should he commit the keeping of your person to your true frendes, that been approued and yknowe, and of hem should ye aske help, your person to keepe. For Caton saieth: If thou haue neede of helpe aske it of thy frendes, for there nis none so good a Phisicion as thy true frende. And after this than shall ye kepe you fro all straunge folke, and fro lyers, and haue alwaie in suspecte her companie. For Peter Alphons saieth: Ne take no company by the waie of no straunge man, but if so be that thou hast knowen him of lenger time: And if so be that he fall into thy companie, paraventure withouten thine assente and good will, enquire than as subtelly as thou canste of his conuersation, and of his life beforne, and faine thy waye, saying thou woldest go thider as thou woit not goe, and if he beare a speare, holde thee on the right side of him, and if he beare a sword, hold thee on the lefte side of him. And than shall ye keepe you wisely from all maner of such people as I haue saide you here beforne, and hem and her counsaile eschue. And after this than shall ye kepe you, in such manner, that for any presumption of your bodely strength, that ye despise not ne account not the might of your aduersarie so lite, that ye lette the keeping of your person for your presumpcion, for euery wise man dredeth his enemy. And Salomon saith: A very foole is he that of al hath drede: But certes he that thorow hardnesse of his hert and through the hardinesse of him selfe, hath to great presumpcion, him shall yuell betide. Than shall ye euermore encounterwaite, enbushementes, and all espiaile. For Seneke saieth: The wise man that dredeth harmes, eschueth harmes: Hene falleth in to no perilles, that perill eschueth. And all be it so that thou seme, that thou be in secret place, yet shalt thou alwaie done diligence in keping of thy person, this is to saie, ne be not negligent to keepe thine owne person, not onely for thy greatest enemy, but also for thy leste enemy. Seneke saith, a man that is wel aduised, he dredeth his leste enemie. Ouide saieth, that the litel wesell wol slea the great Bull and the wilde Herte. And the prouerbe saieth, that a littel thorne woll greue a king full sore, and a littel hounde woll holde the wilde Bore. But natheless I say not thou shalt be so cowarde, that thou doute where as is no drede. The booke saieth, that some men haue great luste to deceiue, but yet they drede to be deceiued. And kepe thee fro the companie of scorners: For the booke sayeth, with scorners ne make no company, but flie her wordes as venim.

Nowe as to the Seconde point, where as youre wyse Counsaylours counsayled you to warnestore your house with great diligence. I woulde faine knowe howe ye vnderstonde thilke wordes, and what is your sentence.

Melibeus answerd and said, certes I vnderstonde it in this wise, that I shal warnestore mine house with toures, such as haue castels and other maner edifices, and armure and archeries, betweene which thinges I may my person and my house so keepe and defend, that mine enemies shullen be in drede mine house to approche. To this sentence answerd anon Prudence. Warnilding (qd she) of hie toures and of hie edifices, is with great costages and with great trauaile, and whan that they ben accomplished, yet ben they not worth a straw, but if they ben defended with trewe frendes, that been olde and wise. And vnderstondeth well, that the greteste and the strongest garnison that riche men may haue, as well to kepen her person as her goods is, that they be beloued with her subiectes, and with her neighbours. For thus saieth Tullius, that there is a maner garrison, that no man may vanquish ne discomfite, and that is a lorde to be beloued of his citizens, and of his people.

Nowe sir, as to the Thirde point, where as your olde and wise Counsailours saied, that ye ought not sodainly ne hastely procede in this nede, but that ye oughten purueyen and aparayle you in this case, with greate

diligence and deliberation. Uerely I trowe that they saied right truely and right soth. For Tullius saith: In euery dede er thou begin it, apparaile thee with great diligence. Than saie I, in vengeance taking, in warre, in battaile, and in warnestoring, or thou begin I rede that thou aparaile the therto and do it with great deliberation. For Tullius saith: The long apparailing tofore the battaile, maketh short victory. And Cassiodorus saieth: The garrison is stronger, whan it is long time aused. But nowe let vs speake of the Counsaile that was accorded by youre neighbours, such as don you reuerence withouten loue, your olde enemies reconciled, your flatterers, that counsailed you certaine things priuely, and openly counsayled you the contrary. The ponge folke also, that counsailed you to venge you, and to make warre anon. Certes sir, as I haue saide before, ye haue greatly erred to clepe suche maner of folke to your counsaile, which counsailours ben ynough repryoued by the reasons aforesaide. But natheless let vs now discend to the speciall. Ye shull first proceede after the doctrine of Tullius. Certes the trouthe of this matter or of this counsaile, nedeth not diligently to enquire, for it is well wiste, which they ben that han don you this trespas and villanie, and how many trespassours, and in what maner they haue done all this wronge to you, and all this villany. And after this, than shull ye examine the seconde condition, which Tullius addeth in this matter. For Tullius putteth a thing, which that he clepeth consenting: this is to saie, who ben thei, and which ben they, and howe manie, that consenten to thy counsaile in thy wilfulnesse, to done hastie vengeaunce. And let vs consider also who ben they, and how manie they ben that consented to your aduersaries. As to the first point, it is well knowen whiche folke they be, that consented to your hastie wilfulnesse. For truely all tho that counsaile you to maken sodaine warre, ne be not your frendes. Let se nowe which bene they that ye holden so greatly your frendes, as to your person: For albeit so that ye be mightie and riche, certes ye been but a lone: for truely ye ne haue no childe but a doughter, ne ye haue no brethren ne Cosins Germaines, ne none other nie kinrede, wherefore your enemies should stinte to plede with you, ne to destroye your person. Ye know also that your richesse mote bee dispended in diuerse parties, And whan that euery wight hath his part, they wollen take but litteli regard to venge your death. But thine enemies are three, and they haue many brethren, children, cosins, and other nie kinred: and though so were, that thou haddest slaine of hem two or three, yet dwelleth there ynowe to reuenge his death, and to slee thy person. And though so be that your kinred be more stedfast and siker than the kinne of your aduersaries, yet neuer the lesse your kinrede is but after kinrede, for they ben but litle sibbe to you, and the kinne of your enemies been nie sibbe to hem. And certes as in that, her condicion is better than is yours. Than let vs consider also of the counsailing of hem, that counseiled you to take sodaine vengeaunce, whether it accord to reason or non: And certes ye know wel nay, for as by right and reason, ther may no man take vengeaunce of no wight, but the iudge that hath iurisdiction of it, when it is graunted him to take vengeance hastelie, or attemperatly as the Lawe requireth. And yet more ouer of thilke worde that Tullius clepeth consenting, thou shalte consent, if that thy mighte and thy power may consente and suffise to thy wilfulnesse, and to thy counsailours: And certes thou maiste well saie naye, for sikerlie as for to speake properly, we may doe nothinge but such thinge as we maie done rightfully: and certes rightfully ye may take no vengeaunce, as of your own proper auctority. Than may ye se that your power ne consenteth not ne accordeth not with your wilfulnesse. Now let vs examine the thirde point, that Tullius clepeth consequence. Thou shalt vnderstond that the vengeaunce that thou purposest for to take is consequent, and therof foloweth an other vengeaunce, peril, and warre, and other damages withouten number, of which we be not ware, as at this time. And as touchinge the fourth point, that Tullius clepeth engendring, thou shalt consider, that this wrong, which that is don to thee, is engendred of y hate of thine enemies, and of the vengeance taking vpon hem, that would engender another vengeance, and muchell sorow and wasting of richesse, as I saide erc. Nowe sir, as touching the fift pointe, that Tully clepeth causes, which is the laste pointe, thou shalt vnderstonde, that the wrong that thou hast receiued hath certaine causes, which that clerkes callen ozyen, and efficien, and causa longinqua, and causa propinqua, that

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is to saie, the ferre cause, and the nigh cause. The ferre cause is almightie GOD, that is cause of all thinges. The nere cause is the three enemies. The cause accidentall was hate. The cause material, ben ỹ fiue woundes of thy doughter. The cause formall, is the maner of their werkīg that brought ladders and clambe in at thy windowes. The cause finall was for to slea thy doughter, it letted not in as much as in them was. But for to speake of the ferre cause, as to what end they should coine, or finally what shall betide of them in this case, ne can I not deme, but by coniecting and supposing: For wee shall suppose that they shall come to a wicked end, because that the boke of decrees sayth: Seld or with great paine, been causes brought to a good end, whan they been badly begonne.

Now sir, if men would aske me, why that God suffered menne to doe you this villanie. Truly I cannot wel answere, as for no sothsaimesse. For the Apostle saieth, that the sciences, and the iudgements of our lorde God almightie been full depe, there may no man comprehend ne search hem. Natheless by certaine presumpcions and coniectinges, I hold and beleue, that God which that is full of Iustice and of righteousnesse, hath suffered this betide, by iust cause reasonable.

Thy name is Melibee, this is to saie, a mā that drinketh Honie. Thou hast dronke so much honie of sweete temporell richesse, and delices of honours of this worlde, that thou art dronke, and haste forgotten Jesu Christe thy creatour: Thou ne hast not doen to him such honour and reuerence as thee ought, ne thou ne hast not taken kepe to the wordes of Ouide, that sayeth: Under the Honie of the goodes of thy bodie, is hid the venime that slayeth the soule.

And Salomon saieth: if it so be that thou hast found honie, eate of the same honie, that that sufficeth: for if so be that thou eate of the same honie out of measure, thou shalt spewe, and also be nedie and poore. And parauenture Almightie God Jesu Christ, hath thee in dispite, and hath tourned awaye fro thee his face, and his eares of misericorde and mercie. And also he hath suffred and giue licence, that thou thus shouldest bee punished and chastised, in the maner that thou hast trespased & offended. Thou haste done sinne against our Lorde Christe, for certes the three enemies of mankinde, that is to saie: the flesbe, the fend, and the worlde, thou hast suffered hem entre into thine harte wilfully, by the windowes of thy bodie, and hast not defended thy selfe sufficiētly ayenst their assaultes, & their temptacions, so that they haue wounded thy soul in fiue places, this is to saie: the dedly sinnes that been entered into thy harte by thy fiue wittes. And in the same maner our Lorde Christ hath would and suffred, that thy three enemies been entered into thy house, by the windowes, and haue wounded thy doughter in the forsaid maner.

Truely (qd Melibee) I see well that ye enforce you much by wordes to ouercome me, in such maner, that I shall not venge me on mine enemies, shewing me the perilles and the euils that might fall of this vengeaunce, but who so would consider in all vengeaunces, the perilles and euils that might sue of vengeance taking, a man would neuer take vengeaunce, and that were harme: for by the vengeance taking, been the wicked men discouered fro ỹ good men. And they that haue will to do wickednesse, restraun their wicked purpose, when they see the punishing & chastising of the trespassours: and yet say I more that right as a singuler person sinneth, in taking vengeaunce of an other man, right so sinneth the iudge, if he doe no vengeaunce of hem that haue deserued. For Seneke saieth thus: That maister he saieth is good, that preueth shrewes. And as Cassiodor saieth: A man dredeth to do outrages, whan he wote & knoweth, that it displeaseth to the Judges & soueraines. And an other saieth: the Judge ỹ dredeth to do right, maketh men shrewes. And sainct Poule the Apostle sayeth in his Epistle, whan he writeth vnto the Romans, that the Judge beare not the speare without cause, but they beare it to punish ỹ shrewes and misdoers, and for to defende the good menne.

If ye woll than take vengeaunce of your enemies, ye shull returne and haue your recourse to the Judge, that hath the iurisdiction vpon hem, and he shall punish hem, as the law asketh and requireth.

A ha, saied Melibee, this vengeaunce liketh me nothing, I bethinke me now, and take heede how that fortune hath nourished me fro my childhode, & hath holp me to passe many a stronge paas: Now I would assaie her, trowing with Gods help, that shee shall helpe me my shame for to auenge.

Truely saied Prudence, if ye woll werke by my counsaile, ye shall not assaie for-

tune by no wyse: ne ye shal not lene or bowe vnto her, after ỹ word of Seneke. For things that been foolishly done, and that been done in hope of fortune, shall neuer come to good ende. And as the same Seneke saieth: the more clere and the more shining that fortune is, the more brittle and the sooner broke sher is. Trusteth not in her, for she is not stedfaste ne stable. For whan thou trowest to be moste sure & stedfast of her helpe, she woll faile & disceiue thee. And where as ye saye, that fortune hath nourished you fro your childhode. I say that in so much ye shall the lesse trust in her, and in her witt. For Seneke saith: what man that is nourished by fortune, she maketh him a great foole. Now than sith ye desire & aske vengeaunce, and the vengeaunce that is don after the lawe, and before the iudge, ne liketh you not, and the vengeaunce that is done in hope of fortune, is perillous and vncertaine, than haue ye none other remedie, but for to haue your recourse vnto the soueraine iudge, that vengeth all villanies and wrongs. And he shall venge you, after that himself witnesseth, whereas he saith: leaue the vengeaunce to me, and I shall doe it.

Melibe answerde, if I ne venge me of the villanie, that men haue done to mee, I sommon or warne hem, that haue don to me that villanie, and all other, to doe me another villanie. For it is written: if thou take no vengeance of an olde villanie, thou sommonest thine aduersaries, to doe thee a newe villanie: and also for my sufferaunce, men woulde doe me so much villanie, that I might neither beare it ne sustaine it, and so should I be put and holden ouer lowe. For men saine, in mikell suffring shall many thinges fall vnto thee, which thou shalt not mowe suffre.

Certes (qd Prudence) I graunt you, that ouer much suffraunce is not good, but yet ne foloweth it not thereof, that euery person, to whom men doe villanie, should take of it vengeaunce: for that appertaineth and longeth all only to Iudges, for they should venge the villanies and iniuries: And therefore those two auctorities, that ye haue saiede afore, been onely vnderstonde in the Iudges: For whan they suffer ouer much the wrongs and villanies to be done, without punishmente, they sommon not a man all onely for to doe newe wronges, but they commaunde it. Also a wise man saith, that the Iudge that correcteth not the sinner, commaundeth & biddeth him doe sinne. And the Iudges and soueraines, might in their londe so much suffer of the shrewes and misdoers, that they should by such sufferance, by processe of time, were of such power & might, that thei should put out the Iudges & the Soueraines from their places, and at last, make hem lese her Lordships.

But let vs now suppose, that ye haue leue to venge you: I saie ye be not of might and power, as nowe to venge you, for if ye woll make comparison vnto the might of your aduersaries, ye should find in many thinges, that I haue shewed you er this, that their condicion is better than yours, and therefore saie I, that it is good as now, that ye suffer & be pacient.

Furthermore, ye know wel that after the common sawe, it is a woodnesse, a mamme to striue with a stronger, or a more mighty man than he is himself, & for to striue with a man of euen strēgth, that is to saie, with as strong a man as he is, it is perill: and for to striue with a weaker man, it is folie, and therefore should a mamme flie striuing, as mikell as he might. For Salomon saieth: It is a greate worship to a man, to keepe him fro noise and strief: and if it so befall and hap, that a man of greater might & strength than thou art, doe thee greuaunce: studie and busie thee rather to still the same greuaunce, than for to venge thee. For Seneke saieth, that he putteth him in great perill, that striueth with a greater man than he is himselfe. And Caton saieth, if a man of higher estate or degree, or more mighty than thou, do thee anoy or greuaunce, suffer him: for he that ones hath greued thee, may an other time releue thee and helpe thee. Yet set I case ye haue licence for to venge you, I saie that there been full manie things, that shall restraine you of vengeaunce taking, and make you for to encline to suffre, and for to haue pacience in the wrongs that haue been done to you. First and formest, if ye woll consider the faultes that been in your owne person, for which faultes God hath suffred you haue this tribulacion, as I haue saied to you here before. For the Poet saieth, that we ought pacientlȳ take the tribulations that come to vs, whan that wee thinke and consider, that wee haue deserued to haue them. And saint Gregorie saith, that whan a man considereth well the nomber of his defaultes and of his sinnes, the paines and the tribulations that he sufferеth, it eme the lesse vnto him. And in as much as him

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thinketh his sinnes more heuy and grieuous in so much semeth his paine the lighter and the easier vnto him. Also ye owe to encline and bow your heart, to take the patience of our Lord Jesu Christ, as saith saint Peter in his Epistles. Jesu Christ he saith hath suffered for vs, and yeuen ensample to euery man to follow and sue him, for he did neuer sinne ne neuer came there a villanous word out of his mouth. whan men cursed him, he cursed hem not. And whan men bete him he manaced hem not. Also the great patience, which Saincts that been in Paradise, haue had in tribulacion that they haue suffered, without her deserte or gilte, ought much stirre you to patience. Furthermore, ye shull enforce you to haue patience, considering that the tribulations of this worlde but little while endure, and soone passen been and gone, and the ioy that a man seketh to haue by patience in tribulation is perdurable, after that the Apostle saieth in his Epistle: The ioy of God he saieth, is perdurable, that is to say, euerlasting. Also troweth and beleeueth stedfastly, that he is not well nourished and wel taught, that can not haue patience, or woll not receiue patience. For Salomon saieth, that the doctrine and witte of a man is knowen by patience. And in another place her saieth, that he that is patient, gouerneth him by greate prudence.

And the same Salomon saith, The angry and wrothfull man maketh noises, and the patient man attempreth and stilleth hem. He saith also, it is more worth to be patient than to be right strong. And he that may haue the Lordship of his owne heart is more to praise, than he that by his force or strength, taketh great cities. And therefore saith saint James in his Epistle, that patience is a great vertue of perfection.

CErtes (qd. Melibee) I graunt you dame Prudence, that patience is a great vertue of perfection, but euery manne may not haue the perfection that ye seeke, ne I am not of the number of right perfite men. For mine heart may neuer be in peace, vnto the time it be auenged. And albeit, so that it was great perill to mine enemies, to doe me a villany, in taking vengeaunce vpon me, yet toke they no heede of the perill, but fulfilled her wicked will and her corage: and therefore me thinketh men ought not repreue me, though I put me in a little perill, for to auenge me, and though I doe a great excesse, that is to say: that I venge one outrage by another.

Ah (qd. dame Prudence) ye say your will as you liketh: but in no case of the world, a man should not do outrage ne excesse, for to venge him. For Cassiodor saieth, that as cruell doth he, that vengeth him by outrage, as he that doth the outrage. And therfore ye shall venge you after the order of right, that is to say, by the Lawe, and not by excesse ne by outrage. And also if you woll venge you of the outrage of your aduersaries, in other maner thā right commaundeth, ye sinne. And therefore saieth Seneke: that a man shal neuer venge shrewdnesse by shrewdnes. And if ye say that right asketh to defende violence by violence, and fighting by fighting: certes ye say soth, whan the defence is done without interual, or without tarrying or delay, for to defend him, and not for to venge him. And it behoueth that a man put such attemperaunce in his defence, that men haue no cause ne matter to repreue him, that defendeth him of outrage and excesse, for els were it against reason. Parde ye know well, that ye make no defence as now, for to defend you, but for to venge you: and so sheweth it, that ye haue no will to do your deed attemperately, and therefore me thinketh that patience is good. For Salomon saith, that he that is not patient, shall haue great harme.

CErtes saide Melibe, I graunt you, that whan a man is impacient and wroth, of that which toucheth him not, and that appertaineth not vnto him, though it harme him it is no wonder. For the lawe saith, that he is culpable, that entermeleth or medleth with such things, as appertaineth not vnto him. And Salomon saieth, that he that entermeleth of the noise and strife of an other manne, is like to him that taketh a straunge hound by the eares: For right as he that taketh a straunge hound by the eares, is other while bitten by the hond, right so in the same wise, it is reason that he haue harme, that by his impacience, medleth him of the noise of an other man, whereas it appertaineth not vnto him. But ye know well that this deede, that is to say, my grieue and my disease, toucheth me right nigh. And therefore though I be wrothe and impacient, it is no marueile: and sauing your grace, I can not see that it might greatly harme me, though I toke vengeaunce, for I am richer and more mighty, than

than mine enemies bee: And well know yee that by money and by hauing great possessions, been all things of this world gouerned. And Salomon saith, all these things obey to money.

Whan Prudence had heard her husbond, auaunte him of his richesse and his money, dispraising the power of his aduersaries, she spake and saied in this wise. Certes deare sir, I graunt you that ye be riche and mightie, and that the richesse is good to hem that haue well gotten hem, and that well can vse them. For right as the bodie of a manne maie not liue without the soule, no more maie it liue without the temporall goodes, and by richesse maie a man get him greate friendes. And therefore saith Pamphilus, If a Nerthes doughter he saieth be rich, shee maie chese of a thousande menne, whiche she woll take to her husbond: for of a thousande one woll not forsake her ne refuse her. And this Pamphilus saith also: If thou be right happie, that is to say, if thou bee riche, thou shalte finde a great nomber of fellowes and frendes. And if thy fortune chaunge, farewell friendship and fellowship, for thou shalt be alone without any company, but if it bee the company of poore folke. And yet saieth this Pamphilus moreouer, that they that been bond and thrall of linage, shall be made worthie and noble by the richesses. And right so as by the richesses there come many goodnesses, right so by pouertie come there many harmes and euilles, for greate pouertie constraineth a manne to doe many euilles. And therefore calleth Cassiodor pouertie, the mother of ruine, that is to say, the mother of ouerthrowing or of falling downe. And therefore saieth Peter Alfonce: One of the greatest aduersities of this world, is whan a fre man by kinde or of birth, is constrained by pouertie, to eate the almose of his enemie. And the same saieth Innocent, in one of his bookes: He saith, that sorowfull and misbappie is the condicion of a poore beggar, for if he aske not his meate, he dieth for hunger, and if he aske he dieth for shame: and algates necessite constraineth him to aske. And therefore saieth Salomon, that better is to die, than for to haue soch pouertie. And as the same Salomon saieth: Better it is to die of bitter death, than for to liue in soche wise. By these reasons that I haue saied vnto you, and by many other reasons that I coude say, I graunt you that richesses been good, to hem that hem well getten, and to hem that well vsen tho richesses: And therefore woll I shew you how yee shall behaue you in gathering of richesses, & in what maner she shullen vse hem.

First, ye shall gette hem withouten great desire, by good leisure, sokingly and not ouer hastely, for a manne that is to desiring to get richesse, habandoneth him first to theefte and to all other euilles. And therefore saieth Salomon: he that hasteth him to busily to were riche, he shall be none innocent. He saieth also, that the richesse that hastily commeth to a man, soone and lightly goeth and passeth from a manne, but that riches that commeth little and little, wexeth alway and multiplyeth. And sir, ye shall get riches by your witte and by your trauaile, vnto your profite, and that without wrong or harme doing to any other person. For the Lawe saieth, there maketh no manne him selfe riche, if hee doe harme to another wight: this is to say, that nature defendeth and forbiddeth by righte, that no manne make himselfe riche, vnto the harme of another person. And Tullius saith that no sorowe ne no dreade of death, ne nothing that may fall vnto a man, is so much ayenst nature, as a man to increase his owne profite, to the harme of another manne. And though the great and mightie menne, gette richesses more lightly than thou, yet shalte thou not bee idle, ne slowe to doe thy profite, for thou shalt in al wise flie idlenesse. For Salomon saieth, that idlenes teacheth a man to doe many euilles. And the same Salomon saieth, that hee that trauailleth and busieth him to tilthe his londe, shal eat breed: but he that is idle, and casteth him to no businesse ne occupacion, shall fall into pouertie, and die for hunger. And he that is idle and slowe, can neuer find conenable time for to doe his profite. For there is a versifier saieth, that the idle man excuseth him in Winter, because of the great colde, and in Sommer because of the heate. For these causes saieth Caton, waketh and enclune you not ouer moche for to slepe, for ouer much rest nourisheth and causeth many vices. And therefore saith saincte Hierome, doe some good deedes that the deuil whiche is our enemie, ne finde you not vnoccupied, for the deuill ne taketh not lightly vnto his werking, such as he findeth occupied in good werkes.

Than thus, in getting richesses ye must flie idlenesse. And afterwarde ye shull vse the richesses, which ye haue gote by your witt and

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by your trauaile, in such manner, that men holde you not to scarce, ne to sparing, ne foole large, that is to saie, ouer large a spender: for right as men blame an auaricious man, because of his scarcitie and chinchcrie, in the same wise is he to blame, that spendeth ouer largely. And therefore saith Caton: vse (saith he) the richesses that thou hast gotten in such maner, that menne may haue no matter, ne cause to call thee nother wretche ne chinche: For it is a great shame to a man, to haue a poore harte, and a riche purse. He saieth also, the goodes that thou hast gote, vse them by measure, that is to saie, spende measurably, for they that foolishly waste and dispende the goodes that they haue, whan they haue no more proper of her own, than they shape hem to take the goodes of an other manne. I saie than that ye shall flie auarice, vsing your richesse in such manner, that men saie not that your richesses been buried, but that ye haue hem in your might, and in your welding. For a wise man reproeueth the auaricious man, and saieth thus in these verses two: Whereto and why burieth a manne his goodes by his great auarice, and knoweth well, that nedes he must die, for death is the end of euery man, as in this present life? And for what cause or encheson ioyneth he him, or knitteth he him so fast vnto his goods, that all his wittes mowe not discouer him, ne departe him fro his goodes, and knoweth well, or ought to knowe, that whan he is deed, he shal nothing beare with him out of this worlde.

And therefore saieth saint Augustine, that the auaricious manne is likened vnto helle, that the more it swalloweth, the more desire it hath to swalowe and deoure. And as wel as ye would eschue, to bee called an auaricious manne or chinche, as well should ye kepe and gouerne you in such a wise, that menne call you not foole large. Therfore saith Tullius: The goods of thine hous, ne should not be hid ne kept so close, but that they might be opened by pitie and debonairte, that is to saie to yeue hem parte that haue great neede. Ne thy goodes should not be so open, to be euery mannes goodes. Afterwarde in getting of your richesses, and in vsing hem, ye shall alwaie haue three thinges in your harte, that is to saie, our lorde God, conscience, and good name. First, ye shall haue God in your harte, And for no richesse ye shoulde doe any thing, which maie in any maner displease GOD your creatour & maker. For after the worde of Salomon, it is better to haue a little good with the loue of GOD, than to haue much good and Treasoure, and lese the loue of his Lorde God. And the Prophete saieth, that better it is to be a good manne, and haue little good and Treasoure, than to be holden a shrewe, and haue greate richesse. And yet I saie ferthermore, that ye should alwaie doe your businesse to gette you richesse, so that ye get hem with good conscience. And the Apostle saith, that there nis thing in this worlde, of which wee should haue so greate ioye, as whan our conscience beareth vs good witnesse. And the wise manne saieth: That the substaunce of a man is full good, whan sinne is not in mannes conscience. Afterwarde in getting of your richesses, and in vsing of hem ye must haue great businesse, and greate diligence, that your good name be alwaie kept and conserued. For Salomon saieth, that better it is, and more it auayleth a man to haue a good name, than for to haue many richesses: And therefore he saieth in an other place. Doe greate diligence saieth Salomon, in keping of thy frendes, and of thy good name, for it shall lenger abide with thee, than any treasoure, be it neuer so precious. And certes he should not bee called a greate gentleman, that after God & good conscience all thinges left, ne doeth his diligence and businesse, to keepe his good name. And Cassiodor saith, that it is a signe of a gentle harte, whan a manne loueth and desireth to haue a good name. And therefore saieth saint Augustine, that there been two thinges that beene right necessarie and also needefull: and that is good conscience, and good loue, that is to saie: good conscience to thine own person inwarde, and good loue for thy neighbour outwarde. And he that trusteth so much in his good conscience, that he despiseth and setteth at nought his good name or lose, & recketh not though he kepe not his good name, nis but a cruell churle.

Sir, now haue I shewed you how ye shuld doe in getting richesses, and how ye should vse hem: and I see well that for the trust that ye haue in your richesses, ye woll moue warre and battaile. I counsaile you that ye begin no warre, in truste of your richesses, for they ne suffise not warres to maintaine. And therfore saieth a Philosopher: That manne that desireth and would algates haue warre, shal neuer haue suffisaunce: for the richer that he is, the greater dispences must he make, if hee

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woll haue worshíp and victorie. And Salomon saith, that ỳ greater richesse that a man hath the more despẽdours he hath. And therfore, sir, albeit so that for your riches, ye may haue much folke, yet behoueth it not: ne it is not good to begin warre, where as ye may in other maner haue peace, vnto your worshíp and profite: For the victorie of battailes that been in this worlde, lyeth not in great nomber or multitude of people, ne in the vertue of man, but it lyeth in the will, and in the hond of our lord God almightie. And therefore Iudas Machabeus, which was Gods knight, whan he should fight against his aduersarie, that had a greater nomber, & a greater multitude of folke, & stronger than was his people of Machabe, yet he recomforted his little companie, and saied right in this wise: Also lightly saied he, may our Lord God almightie, yeue victorie to a fewe folke, as to many folke, for the victorie of a battaile, commeth not by the great nomber of people, but it cõmeth from our Lord G O D of heauen. And deare sir, for as much as there is no man certaine, if it be worthie that God yeue him victorie or not, after that Salomon saith, therefore euery man should greatly drede warres to begin: and because that in battailes fall many perils, and happeth other while, that as soone is the great man slaine, as the little man. And as it is written in the second booke of Kinges: The deedes of battailes been aduenturous, and nothing certain, for as lightly is one hurte with a Speare, as an other: and for there is great peril in warre, therefore should a man flie and eschue warre in as much as a man maie goodly. For Salomon saieth, he that loueth peril, shall fall in peril.

After that Dame Prudence had spoken in this maner, Melibe answerde and said. I see well dame Prudence, ỳ by your faire wordes and your reasons, that ye haue shewed mee, that ỳ warre liketh you nothing, but I haue not yet heard your counsaile, how I shall doe in this nede.

Certes (saied shee) I counsaile you that ye accorde with your aduersaries, and that ye haue peace with hem. For saint Iames saieth in his Epistle: That by concorde and peace, small riches were greate: and by debate and discorde, riches decaie. And ye knowe well, that one of the greatest and moste soueraine thing that is in this world, is vnitie & peace. And therefore saieth our Lorde Jesu Christe to his Apostles, in this wise: wel happy been they, that loue and purchase peace, for they be called the children of God. Ah, saied Melibe, now see I well, that ye loue not mine honour ne my worshíp. Ye know well that mine aduersaries, haue begon this debate and brige by their outrage. And ye see well that they ne require ne praie me of peace, ne they aske not to be reconciled. Woll ye than that I go meke me, and obey me to hem, and crye hem mercie? Forsoth that were not my worshíp. For right as men saie, ouer great humblenes engendreth dispraising, so fareth it by to greate humilitie or mekenesse.

Than began dame Prudence to make semblaunce of wrathe, and saied: Certes sir, saue your grace. I loue your honour and profite, as I doe mine owne, and euer haue do: ye ne none other neuer see the contrary. And yet, if I had saied, that ye should haue purchased peace and reconciliation, I ne had much mistake me, ne saied amisse. For the Wise man saieth: the discention beginneth by an other man, and the reconciling beginneth by thy selfe. And the Prophet sayeth: flie shrewdnes and doe goodnesse, seeke peace and folowe it, in as much as in thee is. Yet saie I not, that ye should rather pursue to your aduersaries for peace, than they should to you: for I know well that ye been so hard harted, that ye woll doe nothing for me. And Salomon saieth: he that hath ouer harde an harte, he at last shall mishap or misbetide.

Whan Melibe had heard dame Prudence make semblaunce of wrathe, he saied in this wise. Dame I praie you, that ye be not displeased of thing that I saie, for ye know well that I am angrie and wrothe, and that is no wonder: and they that been wrothe, wot not well what they do, ne what they saie. Therefore the Prophete saieth: that troubled eyen haue no cleare sight. But saie and counsaile me as you liketh, for I am readie to do right as ye woll desire: And if ye repreue me of my folie, I am the more holden to loue and praise you. For Salomon saith, that he that repreueth him that doeth folie, he shall finde greater grace, than he that discreiueth him by swete wordes.

Than saied Dame Prudence, I make no semblant of wrath ne of anger, but for your great profite, for Salomon saith: he is more wrothe, that repreueth or chydeth a foole for his folie, shewing him semblaunt of wrath, than he that supporteth him and praiseth

him

him in his mistoying, and laugheth at his folie. And this same Salomon saieth afterwarde: That by the sorowfull visage of a manne, that is to say, by the sory and heuy countenaunce of a manne, the sole correcteth and amendeth him selfe.

Than said Melibe, I shall not conne answere vnto so many faire reasons as ye put to me and shew: say shortly your will and your counsaile, and I am all redy to performe and fulfill it.

Than Dame Prudence discouered all her will vnto him and said. I counsaile you (said she) aboue all thinges, that ye make peace betwene God and you, and be reconsiled vnto him and to his grace, for as I haue said you here before, God hath suffred you to haue this tribulacion and disease for your sinnes: and if ye doe as I say you, God will send your aduersaries vnto you, and make hem fal at your fete, redy to do your will and your commaundement. For Salomon saieth, whan the condicion of man is pleasaunt and liking to God, he chaungeth the hertes of the mans aduersaries, and constraineth hem to beseech him of peace and of grace. And I pray you let me speke with your aduersaries priuely, for they shall not know that it be of your will or your assent: And than whan I know theyr will and their entent, I may counsaile you the more surely.

Dame said Melibe, doeth your will and your liking, for I put me holly in your disposicion and ordinaunce.

Than dame Prudence, whan she saw the good will of her husbond, delibered and toke aduise in her selfe, thinking how she might bring this nede vnto a good conclusion and to a good end: And whan she saw her time, she sent for these aduersaries to come vnto her in a priue place. And shewed wisely vnto hem the great goodes that come of peace, and the great harmes and perils that ben in warre, and said to hem in a goodly maner: how that hem ought haue great repentaunce of the iniury and wrong, that they had done to Melibeus her lord, and vnto her and to her doughter.

And whan they herd the goodly wordes of Dame Prudence, they were so surprised and rauished, and had so great ioy of her, that wonder was to tell.

Ah, lady (said they) ye haue shewed vnto vs the blessing of swetnesse after the saiyng of Dauid the Prophet. For the reconsilling which we be not worthy to haue in no manere. But we ought require it with great contricion and humilite, that ye of your goodnesse haue presented vnto vs. Now se we wel, that the science and conning of Salomon is full trew, for he saith: That swete wordes multiply and encreace frendes, and maketh shrewes to be debonaire and meke.

Certes (said they) we put our deed and all our matter and cause, all holy in your good will, and been redy to obey at the commaundement of our lord Melibeus. And therfore dere and benigne lady: we pray and beseech you, as mekely as we can and may, that it like vnto your great goodnesse, to fulfill in dede, your goodly wordes. For we consider and know, that we haue offended and greued our Lord Melibeus out of measure: so ferforth that we be nat of power to make him amendes. And therfore we oblige and bind vs and our frendes, for to doe all at his will and commaundement: but peraventure he hath such heuinesse, and such wrath to vs warde, bycause of our offence, that he will enioyne vs such a paine, as we mowe not beare ne sustayne. And therefore noble lady, we beseche your womanly pite, to take such aduisement in this nede, that we ne our frendes be nat disherited ne distroied, through our folly.

Certes (said Prudence) it is an hard thing and right perillous, that a man put him all vtterly in arbitracion and iudgement, and in the might and power of his enemy. For Salomon saith: Ieueth me, and yeueth credence to that I shal say: Ne yeueth neuer the power ne gouernaunce of thy goods, to thy son, to thy wife, to thy frende, ne to thy brother: ne yeue thou neuer might ne maistrye ouer thy body whyle thou liuest. Now, sith he defendeth that a man should nat yeue to his brother ne to his frende, the might of his body. By a stronger reason he defendeth and forbideth a manne to yeue himselfe to his enemy. And natheless I counsaile you that ye mistrust nat my lord: for I wote well and know verely, that he is debonaire and meke, large, curteis, and nothing delitous ne couitous of goodes ne richesse. For there is nothing in this world that he desireth, saue only worship and honour. Furthermore I know, and am right sure, that he shall nothing doe in this nede, without my counsaile: and I shall so werke in this case, that by the grace of our lord God, ye shall be reconsiled vnto vs.

Than said they with one voice, worshipful lady we put vs & our goodes all fully in your will and disposicion, and been redy to come, what day that it liketh vnto your noblesse to limite vs or assine vs for to make our obligacion and bond, as strong as it liketh vnto your goodnesse, that we mow fulfil the will of you and of my lord Melibe.

When dame Prudēce had herd the answer of these men, she bad hem goe ayen prively and she returned to her lord Melibe, and told him howe she founde his aduersaries full repentaunt, knowleging full lowly her sinnes and trespas, and how they were redy to suffer all paine, requiring and praying him of mercy and pite.

Than said Melibe, he is well worthy to haue pardon and forgevenesse of his sinne, that excuseth not his sinne, but knowlegeth and repenteth him, asking indulgence. For Sencke saith, there is the remission and forgevenesse, where as the confession is: for confession is neighbour to innocence. And therefore I assent and confirme me to haue peace, but it is good that wee doe nought without the assent and will of our frendes.

Than was Prudence right gladde and ioifull, and saide: Certes sir, ye haue well and goodly answerde: for right as by the counsaile, assente, and helpe of your frendes, ye haue be steered to benge you and make war: Right so, without her counsayle shall ye not accorde you, ne haue peace with your aduersaries. For the law saieth: there is nothing so good, by way of kind, as a thing to be vnbound by him that it was bound.

Than dame Prudence, without delay or taryng, sent anone her messanger, for her kinfolke and her olde frendes, which that were trewe and wise: and tolde hem by order, in the presence of Melibe, all the matter, as it is aboue expressed and declared. And prated hem that they would saye their aduise and counsaile, what best were to do in this nede. And when Melibeus frendes had taken her aduise and deliberacion of the forsaide mater, and had examined it by great besinesse and diligence. They yaue full counsaile for to haue peace and rest, and that Melibe should receiue with good hert his aduersaries, to forgevenesse and mercy.

And when dame Prudence had herde thassent of her lorde Melibe, and the counsaile of his frendes accorde with her will and her entencion, she was wonderly glad in her hert, and said. There is an olde prouerbe (saide she) That the goodnesse that thou mayst doe this day, doe it, and abide it not, ne delay it nat till the nexte daye. And therefore I counsayle, that ye sende your messengers, such as be discrete and wise, vnto your aduersaries: telling hem on your behalfe, that if they woll treate of peace and accorde, that they shape hem without delay or taryng, to come vnto vs: whiche thinge performed was in dede. And when these trespassours, and repenting folke of her folies, that is to saye, the aduersaries of Melibeus, had herde what these messengers saide vnto hem, they were right gladde and ioyfull, and answerde full mekely and benignely, yeldinge grace and thankes to her lorde Melibee, and to all his companie: and shope hem without delaye to go with the messengers, and obeyed the commaundement of her lorde Melibeus. And right anone they toke her waye to the court of Melibe, and toke with hem some of their true frendes, to make faith for hem, and for to be her borowes: And whan they were comen to the presence of Melibe, he said to hem these wordes. It stondeth thus, said Melibe, and sothe it is, that causeless and without skill and reason, ye haue done great iniuries and wronges to me and my wife Prudence, and to my doughter also, for ye haue entred in to my house by violence, and haue don such outrage, that all men know well that ye haue deserued dethe. And therefore woll I knowe and wete of you, whether ye woll put the punishing and the chastising and the vengeaunce of this outrage, in the will of me and of my wife, or ye woll not.

Then the wisest of hem thre answerde for hem all, and said. Sir (said he) we knowe well that we ben unworthy to come to the courte of so great a lorde and so worthy as ye be, for we haue so greatly mistaken vs, and haue offended and agilted in such wise againe your high lordeship, that truely we haue deserued the dethe, but yet for the great goodnesse and debonairte, that all the worlde witnesseth of your person, we submitte vs to the excellence and benignite of your gracious lordeshippe, and ben redy to obey to all your commaundementes, beseching you, that of your merciable pite ye woll consider our great repentaunce, and lowe submission, and graunte vs forgevenesse of our outragious trespasse and offence: For well we know, that your liberall grace and mercy stretcheth further into the

goodnesse

goodnesse, than doen our outragious giltes and trespasses into the wickednesse. Al be it that cursedly and dampnably we haue agilted against your high lordship.

Than Melibe toke hem vp fro the ground full benignely, and receiued her obligacions and her bondes, by her othes vpon her pledges and borowes, and assigned hem a certaine day to returne vnto his court for to receiue and accept sentence and iudgement, that Melibeus would commaund to be don on hem, by the causes aforsaid, which things ordained, euery man returned to his house.

And when dame Prudence sawe her time, she fained and asked her lorde Melibe, what vengeaunce he thought to take on his aduersaries.

To which Melibe answerde, & said: Certes (said he,) I thinke and purpose me fully to disherite hem of al that euer thei haue, and for to put them in exile for euer.

Certes saied dame Prudence, this were a cruell sentence, and much ayenst reason. For ye be riche ynough, and haue no nede of other mennes riches. And ye might lightly in this wise gete you a couetous name, which is a vicious thing, and ought be eschewed of euery good man. For after the saying of the apostel: Couetise is rote of all harmes. And therfore it wer better to you to lese so much good of your owne, than for to take of their good in this maner. For better it is to lese good with worshipp, than to winne good with villanie and shame. And euery man ought to do his diligence and his busines, to get him a good name. And yet shall he not onely busie him in keeping his good name, but her shall also enforce him alwaie to doe some thinge, by which he maye renewe his good name. For it is written, that the olde good loke of a manne, or good name, is soone gon and past, whan it is not renewed. And as touching, that ye saie that ye woll exile your aduersaries: that thinketh me much ayenst reason and out of measure, considering the power that they haue yeue you vpon themselfe. And it is writte: that he is worthy to lose his priuilege, that misuseth the might and power that is giuen him. And I sette case, ye might enioyne hem that paine by right and lawe, which I trowe ye may not doe: I saie, ye might not put it to execution, for paraunture than it were like to turne to the warre, as it was before. And therfore if ye woll that men do you obeisaunce, ye must demeane you more courteisly, that is to saye: ye must yeue more easie sentences and iudgement. For it is written: he that most curteisly commaundeth, to him men most obey. And therefore I pray you, that in this necessitie & in this need ye cast ye to ouercome your hert. For as Senek saieth: he that ouercometh his hert, ouercometh twise. And Tully saieth: there is nothing so cõmendable in a great lord, as whe he is debonaire and meke, and apeseth him lightly. And I pray you that ye wol now forbere to do vengeaunce in such a maner, that your good name may be kept and conserued, and that men may haue cause and matter to praise you of pitie & mercy: and that ye haue no cause to repent you of thing that is done. For Seneke saith: he ouercometh in an yuel manere, that repenteth him of his victorie. Wherefore I pray you, let mercie be in your hert, to theffect & entent, that God almightie haue mercie vpon you in his last iudgement. For saint James saith in his Epistel: iudgement without mercy shal be do to him, that hath no mercie of another wight.

Whan Melibe had herde the great skilles and reasons of dame Prudence, and her wise informacions and teachings, his herte gan encline to the will of his wife: considerunge her true entent, confirmed him anon and assented fully to worke after her counsaile: and thanked God, of whome procedeth all goodnesse and vertue, that him had sent a wife of so great discretion. And whan the day came that his aduersaries shuld apeare in his presence, he spake to hem goodly, and saide in this wise.

Albeit so, that of your pride and high presumpcion and folie, and of your negligence and vnconning, ye haue misborne you, and trespassed vnto me, yet for as mikell as I see and behold your great humilitie, and that ye be sorie and repentaunt of your giltes, it constraineth me to do you grace & mercy: Wherfore I receiue you to my grace, and forgiue you wholly all the offences, iniuries, and wronges, that ye haue done ayenst mee and mine, to theffecte and ende, that God of his endlesse mercy woll at the time of our dying forgeue vs our giltes, ꝑ wee haue trespaced to him in this wretched world. For doutlesse if we bee sorye and repentant for the sinnes and giltes, which we haue trespaced in the sight of our lord God: he is so free and so mer-

ciable, that he wol forgiue vs our gilles, and bring vs to the blisse that neuer shall haue ende. Amen.

¶ Here endeth the tale of Chaucer, & here foloweth the Monks Prologue.

WHan ended was ỹ tale of Melibee
And of Prudence, & her benignite
Our hoste saide, as I am faithfull man
And by the precious corps Madrian
I had leuer than a barel of ale
That good lefe my wife had herde this tale
For she nothing is of such pacience
As was this Melibeus wife Prudence.
By goddes bones, when I bete my knaues
She bringeth me the great clubbed staues
And cryeth, slee the dogges euerichone
And breke both backe and euery bone.
And if that any neighbour of mine
Woll not in church to my wife encline
Or be so hardy, to her trespace
whã she comes home, she rampeth in my face
And cryeth false coward wreke thy wife
By corpus domini, I wol haue thy knife
And thou shalt haue my distafe, & go spinne
Fro day til night, she woll thus beginn.
Alas she saith, that euer she was shape
To wedde a milksop, a coward ape
That wol be ouerleide with euery wight
Thou darst not stond by thy wiues right.
This is my life, but if that I woll fight
And out at doze, anon I mote me dight
And els I am loste, but if that I
Be like a wilde Lyon, sole hardy.
I wot well she woll do me slee some day
Some neighbour, and than go my way
For I am perilous with knife in honde
Al be it that I dare not her withstonde
For she is bigge in armes by my faith
That shall he finde, that her misdoth or saith
But let vs passe away from this mattere
My lord he said, sir Mõke, be mery of chere
For ye shall tell vs a tale truely.
Lo Rochester stondeth here fast by
Ride forth myn owen lord, breke not our game
But by my trouth I know not your name
Wheder I shal cal you my lorde dan John
Or dan Thomas, dan Robert, or dan Albon
Or of what house be ye, by your father kin
I vowe to God, thou hast a full faire chin
It is a gentle pasture there thou gost
Thou art not like a pinaunt or a ghost.
Upon my faith thou art some officere
Some worthie Sexten, or some Celerere
For by my fathers soule, as to my dome
Thou art a maister, when thou art at home
No poore cloisterer, ne no poore nouise
But a gouernour ware and wise
And therwith of brawne and of bones
A well faring person for the nones
I praie to God yeue him confusion
That first thee brought into religion
Thou wouldest be a trede foule aright
Hadst thou as great leue as thou hast might
To performe al thy lust in ingendrure
Thou haddest begotten many a creature
Alas, why werest thou so wide a cope
God yeue me sorowe, and I were Pope
Not onely thou but euery mighty man
Though he were shore high vpon his pan
Should haue a wife, for al this world is lorne
Religion hath take vp all the corne
Of tredyng, and borel men ben shrimpes
Of feble trees there cometh wretched impes
This maketh that our heires be so slender
And feble, that they may not wel engender
This maketh that our wiues woll assay
Religious folke, for they may better pay
Of Venus paiments, than mowe we
God wote no lullebirdes paie ye
But be not wroth my lord, though I play
Ful ofte in game a sothe haue I herde say.
This worthy Monke toke al in pacience
And said, I woll do my diligence
As ferre as sowneth into honeste
To tell you a tale, yea two or three
And if ye liste to herken hitherwarde
I wol you saine, the life of saint Edwarde
Or els tragidies first I wol tell
Of which I haue an hundred in my cell.
Tragedy is to tell a certaine storie
As olde bookes maken memorie
Of hem that stode in great prosperite
And be fallen out of hie degre
Into misery, and ended wretchedly
And they ben versified comenly
Of sixe feete, which men call exametron
In prose eke ben endyted many on
And in metre, many a sondry wise
Lo, this ought ynough to suffise
Now herkeneth, if you liste for to here
But first I beseche you in this matere
Though I by order tell not these thinges
Be it of Popes, Emperours, or Kinges

After

After her ages, as men writen finde
But tellen hem, some before & some behinde
As it commeth now to my remembrance
Haue me excused of mine ignorance.

¶ Here endeth the Monkes prologue, and here beginneth his tale.

I Will bewaile in maner of tragedie
The harme of hem that stoden in hie degre
And fill, so that there nas no remedie
To bring hem out of her aduersite
For certaine, when that fortune list to flie
There may no man of her ꝑ course withholde
Let no man trust on blind prosperite
Beth ware by this ensample young and olde.

Lucifer.

At Lucifer, though he an angel were
And not a man, at him will I beginne
For though fortune may not angel dere
From hie degre, yet fell he for his sinne
Downe into hell, where he is yet inne
O Lucifer, brightest of angels all
Now art thou Sathanas, ꝑ maist not twin
Out of misery, in which thou art fall.

Adam.

Lo Adam, in the field of Damascene
With goddes owne finger wrought was he
And not begotten of mans sperm vncleene
And welte al paradise sauing a tree
Neuer worldly man had so hie degre
As Adam, til he for misgouernaunce
Was dримen out of his high prosperite
To labour and to hell, and to mischaunce.

Sampson.

Lo Sampson, which that was annunciate
By the angel, long or his natiuite
And was to God almightie consecrate
And stode in nobles while he might se
Was neuer such another, as was he
To speke of strength and thereto hardinesse
But to his wines told he his secre (nesse
Through which he slough him for wretched-

Sampson this noble and mighty champion
Without weapon, saue his hands twey
He slough and al to rente the lion
Toward his wedding, walking by the wey
His false wife could him so please and pray
Til she his counsaile knewe, and she untrewe
Vnto his foes his counsaile gan bewray
And him forsoke, and toke another newe.

An hundred foxes toke Sampson for ire
And al her tailes he togither bonde
And set the foxes tailes all on fire
For he m euery taile hath put a bronde
And they brent all the cornes in that londe
And her oliues, and her vines eke
A thousand men eke he slough with his honde
And had no weapon, but an asse cheke.

Whan they were slain, so thirsted him ꝑ he
Was well ne lorne, for which he gan to pray
That God would of his pain haue some pite
And send him drinke, or elis mote he dey
And of this asse cheke that was so drey
Out of a wange tooth sprang anon a well
Of which he dronke inough, shortly to sey
Thus halpe him God, as Iudicum can tell

By verey force, at Gasa on a night
Maugre the Philistians of that citc
The gates of the toune, he hath vp plight
And on his backe, ycaried hem hath he
High on an hill, where as men might hem se
O noble mighty Sampson, lefe and dere
Had thou not told to women thy secre
In all this world ne had be thy pere.

This Sampson neither ale ne wine
Ne on his head came rasour none ne shere
By precept of the messenger diuine
For all his strength in his haires were
And fully twenty yere by yere
Of Israel, he had the gouernaunce
But after soone shall he wepe many a tere
For women shall bring him to mischaunce.

Vnto his lemman Dalida he tolde
That in his heres all his strength lay
And falsely to his foes she him solde
And sleping in her barme vpon a day
She made to clippe or shere his heres away
And made his fomen all his craft espien
And whan that they him found in such aray
They bound him fast and put out his eyen.

But er his heres were clipped or shaue
There was no bond that might him bind
But now is he put in prison in a caue
Where as they made him at the querne grind
O noble Sampson, strongest of mankind
O whilome iudge in glory and richesse
Now maist thou wepe with thine eyen blind

Sith thou art feō wele fal into wretchednes.

The end of this caitife was, as I shall sey
His women made a feast vpon a day
And made him as their fole before hem ply
And this was in a temple of great aray
But at last he made a foule a fray
For he two pillers shoke, and made hem fall
And doune fell the temple all, and there it lay
And slough himselfe, and eke his women all.

This is to say, the princes euerichone
And eke thre thousand bodies were there slain
Whych falling of the great temple of stone
Of Sampson woll I no more sain
Beth ware by this ensample old and plain
That no men tell her counsaile to her wives
Of such thing as they would haue secret fain
If that it touch her limmes or her lives.

Of Hercules.

Of Hercules the soueraine conqueroure
Syngen his werkes, laud, and hie renoun
For in his time of strength he bare the floure
He slough and rafte the skin of the lion
And of the Centaurs, laude the boste adoun
He Harpias slewe, the cruell birds fell
He the golden apples rafte fro the dragon
He dewe out Cerberus the hound of hell.

He slewe the cruel tiraunt Busirus
And made his horse to frete him flesh and bone
He slough the very serpent venemous
Of Achelous two hornes, brake he that one
And he slewe Cacus in a caue of stone
He slough the giaunt Antacus the strong
He slough the grisly Boye, and that anon
And bare his head vpon his spere long.

Was neuer wight, sith the world began
That slough so many monsters as did he
Through the wide world his name ran
What for his strength and his bounte
And euery realme went he for to se
He was so strong, that no man might him let
And at both worlds ends, he Trophe
In stead of bounds, of brasse a pillour set.

A lemman had this noble champion
That hight Deanire, as fresh as May
And as clerkes make mencion
She hath him sent a shirt fresh and gay
Alas this shirt, alas and well a way
Enuenomed was subtilly withal
That ere he had weared it halfe a day
It made his flesh all fro his bones fal.

But nathaleste, some clerkes her excusen
By one that hight Nessus, that it maked
Be as be may, I will her not accusen
But on his body, the shirt he ware all naked
Till the flesh was with the venime flaked
And when he saw none other remedie
In hote coles he hath himselfe raked
For with no venime dained he to die.

Thus fierce this worthy mighty Hercules
Lo, who may trust in fortune any throwe
For him that followeth all this world of pres
Or he beware, is oft laid full lowe
Full wise is he that himselfe can knowe
Beware, for when that fortune list to glose
Than waiteth she, her man doune to throwe
By such a way, as he would leste suppose.

Nabuchodonosor.

The mighty trone, the precious tresore
The glorious sceptre, and royal maieste
That had the king Nabuchodonosore
With tongue vneth may discriued be
He twise wanne Hierusalem, that cite
The vessel of the temple he with him lad
At Babylon was his soueraine se
In which his glory and his delight he had.

The fairest children of the blood royall
Of Hierusalem, he did do geld anone
And make eche of hem to ben his thrall
Among all other Daniel was one
That was the wisest of euerichone
For he the dremes of the king expouned
Whereas in Caldee clerkes were there none
That wist to what fine his dreme sowned.

This proud king let make a statu of gold
Sixty cubits long, and seuen in brede
To which image both yong and old
Commaunded he to loute, and haue in drede
Or in a furnace, full of flames rede
He should be dead, that would not obey
But neuer would assent to that dede
Daniel, ne his yong fellowes twey.

This king of kings, proud and elate
Wend God, that sitteth in maieste
Ne might him nat bireue of his estate
But sodainly he loste his dignite
And like a beast him semed for to be
And ete hay as an oxe, and lay therout
In raine, with wild beastes walked he
Till a certaine time was come about.

And like an Egles fethers were his heeres

And his nelles like birdes clawes were
God releued him at certain yeres
And yaue him wit, & than with many a tere
He thonked God, and all his life in fere
Was he, to doe amille, or more trespace
And ere that he laied was on his bere
He knew that God was full of might & grace

Balthaser.

HIs sonne, which that hight Balthasare
That held ỹ reign after his faders day
He by his fader could not beware
For proud he was of hart, and of array
And eke an Idolastre was he ate
His high estate, allured him in pride
But fortune cast him doun, and there he lay
And sodainly his reigne gan deuide.

A feast he made vnto his lordes all
Upon a time, he made him blith be
And than his officers gan he call
Goth bring forth the vessels (qd. he)
Which that my father, in his prosperite
Out of the temple of Hierusalem bireft
And to our Goddes thonken we
Of honour, that our elders with vs laft.

His wife, his lordes, and his concubines
Ate dronken, whiles her appetites last
Out of this noble vessels, sondry wines
And on a wall, this king his eyen cast
And saw an hond armelesse, that wrote fast
For feare of which he quoke, and sighed sore
This hond that Balthasar made so sore agast
Wrote (Mane techel phares) and no more.

In all that lond, Magicien was ther non
That coud expoune what this letter ment
But Daniel expouned it anon
And saied, king, God thy father sent
Glory and honour, reign, tresour, & rent
And he was proud, & nothing God he drad
And therefore great wrath God vpō him sent
And him bireft the reigne that he had.

He was out cast of mannes company
With Asles was his habitacion
And eat Hay as a beast, in weat and dry
Till that he knew, by grace and by reason
That God of heauen hath dominacion
Ouer euery reigne, and euery creature
And than had God of him compassion
And him restored his reigne and his figure.

Eke thou that art his sonne, art proud also
And knowest all these thinges priuely
And art rebell to God, and his fo
Thou dranke eke of his vessels boldly
Thy wife eke, and thy wenches lustfully
Dronke of the same vessels sondry wines
And heryed falle Goddes curstedly
Therefore to thee shapen great pain is.

This hond was sent fro God, ỹ on the wal
Wrote (Mane techel phares) trust me
Thy reigne is doen, thou wotest not all
Deuided is thy realme, and it shall be
To Medes and to Perciens (qd. he)
And that same night, the king was slaw
And Darius occupied his dignite
Though he therto had neither right ne law.

Lordinges, here ensample mow ye take
How that in lordship is no sikernelle
For whan that fortune woll a man forsake
She beareth away his reigne, & his richelle
And eke his frendes, both more and lesse
And what man hath frends, through fortune
Mishap woll make him enemies I gesse
This prouerbe is full soth, and ful commune.

Zenobia.

ZEnobia of Palmery Quene
(As writeth Perciens of her noblesse)
So worthy was in armes, and so kene
That no wight passed her in hardinesse
Ne in limage, ne in none other gentilnesse
Of kinges blood of Perce she is discended
I say that she had not most fairenesse
But of her shap she might not be amended

From her childhode I find that she fled
Office of woman, and to wood she went
And many a wild Hartes blood she shed
With arrowes broad, that she to hem sent
She was so swift, that she anon hem hent
And whan that she was elder, she would kill
Lions, Libardes, and Beeres all to rent
And in her armes welde hem at her will.

She durst wild beastes dennes seke
And renne in the mountaines all the night
And slepe vnder a bush, and she could eke
Wrastell by very force, and by very might
With any yong man, were he neuer so wight
There might nothing in her armes stond
She kept her maidenhed from euery wight
To no man dained she to be bond.

But at last, her frendes hath her maried
To Odenat, a Prince of that countre

All were it so, that she hem long taried
And ye shall vnderstond, how that he
Had soch fantasies as had she
But nathelesse, whan they were knit vnfere
They lived in ioy and in felicite
For ech of hem had other lefe and dere.

Save one thing, she nolde neuer assent
By no way, that he should by her lie
But ones, for it was her plain entent
To haue a child, the world to multiplie
And also sone as she might aspie
That she was not with child with that dede
Than would she suffer him to do his fantasie
Eftsones, and not but ones out of drede.

And if she were with child at that ask
No more should he play that game
Till fully fourty daies were past
Than would she ones suffer him the same
All were this Odenat wild or tame
He gate no more of her, for thus she saied
It was to wives lechery and shame
In other case, if men with hem plaied.

Two sonnes by this Odenat had she
The which she kept in vertue and lettrure
But now vnto our tale tourne we
I say that so worshipfull a creature
And wise therwith, and large with measure
So penible in warre, and curteis eke
Ne more labour might in warre endure
Was non, though al this world we wold seke

Her rich aray, ne might not be told
As well in vessell as in her clothing
She was all cladde in pierry and in gold
And eke she left not for none hunting
To haue of sondry tongues folke knowing
Whan that she leiser had for to entend
To learne bookes was all her liking
How she in vertue her life might dispend

And shortly of this story for to treat
As doughty was her husbond as she
So that they conquered many reignes great
In the Orient, with many a faire cite
Appertenaunt vnto the Maieste
Of Rome, and with strength held them fast
Ne neuer might her foemen doe her flee
All the while that Odenates daies last.

Her battailes, who so list hem for to rede
Again Sapor the king, and other mo
And how all thise proces fill in dede
[illegible]

why she conquered, & what title she had therto
And after of her mischief and of her wo
How that she was besieged, and take
Let him to my maister Petrarke go
That writeth inough of this, I vndertake.

Whan Odenat was dedde, she mightily
The realmes held, and with her owne hond
Ayenst her foes she fought truely
That ther was no prince ne king, in all ỹ lond
But were glad, if they that grace fond
That she ne should vpon his lond warrey
With her they made alliaunce by bond
To be in peace, and let hem ride and pley.

The Emperour of Rome Claudius
Ne him before, the Romain Galien
Ne durst neuer be so corragious
Ne non Armen, ne non Egipcien
Ne Surrien, ne none Arabien
Within the field, that durst with her fight
Lest that she would hem with her bondes slen
Or with her meine, put hem to flight.

In kings habite went her sonnes two
As the heires of her realmes all
And Herennio and Timalle
Her names were, as Pertens hem call
But al fortune, hath in her hony gall
This mighty Quene, may no while endure
Fortune out of her reigne made her to fall
To wretchednesse, and to misauenture.

Aurelian, whan that the gouernaunce
Of Rome came in his honds twey
He shope vpon this quene to doe vengeaunce
And with his legions, he toke his wey
Toward Zenobia, and shortly for to say
He made her flie, and at last her hent
And fettered her, and eke her children tway
And wan the lond, & home to Rome he went.

Emong other things that he wan
her chare, that of gold was wrought & pierre
This great Romaine, this Aurelian
Hath with him lad, that for men should se
Before his triumph walked she
With golden chaines on her necke hanging
Crouned she was, as after her degre
And full of pierre charged her clothing.

Alas fortune, she that whilom was
Dredfull to kinges, and to Emperoures
Now gaureth all the people on her, alas
And she that helmed was in starke stoures

And

And wan by force tounes strong, and toures
Shall on her hedde now were autremute
And she that bare the sceptre full of floures
Shall beare a distaffe, her cost for to quite.

Nero.

ALthough that Nero were as vicious
As any fende, that lyeth full low adoun
Yet he, as telleth vs Suetonius
All this worlde had in subiection
Bothe East and West, and Septentrion
Of Rubies, Saphers, and of Perles white
Were all his clothes broudred vp and doun
For he in gemmes greatly gan delite.

More delicate, more pompous of arraie
More proud, was neuer Emperour, than he
That like clothe that he had weared o daie
After that time, he nolde it neuer se
Nettes of gold threde had he great plente
To fishe in Tiber, whan him list to plaie
His lustes were as lawe, in his degre
For fortune as his frende would him obaie.

He Rome brent for his delicacie
The Senatours he slue vpon a daie
To heare how her wines would wepe & crie
And slowe his brother, & by his sister laie
His mother made he in a pitous araie
For he her wombe let slitte, to beholde
Where he conceiued was, so welawaie
That he so little of his mother tolde.

No teares out of his eyen, for that sight
Ne came, but said, a faire woman was she
Greate wonder is, that he could or might
Be domisman, of her dedde beautie:
The wone to bring him commaunded he
And dranke anon, none other wo he made
Whan might is ioyned vnto cruelte
Alas, to depe will the venime wade.

In youth a maister had this Emperour
To teache him lettrure, and curtelie
For of moralite he was the floure
As in his time, but if his bookes lie
And whyles his maister had of him maistrie
He made him so conning and so souple
That long time it was or tyrannie
Or any vice, durst in him vncouple.

Seneck his maister was, of which I deuise
Bicause Nero had of him such drede
For he for his vices would him chastise
Discretly as by worde, and not by dede
Sir he would saie, an Emperour mote nede
Be vertuous, and hate tyrannie
For which he made him in a bathe to blede
On bothe his armes, till he must die.

This Nero had eke of a customaunce
In youth, ayenst his maister to rise
Which afterwarde, him thought great grevaunce
Because he ost would him chastise
Therefore he made him die in this wise
To chose in a bathe to die in this manere
Rather than to haue an other turmentise
And thus hath Nero slaine his maister dere.

Now fel it so, that fortune list no longer
The high pride of Nero to cherishe
For tho he were strong, yet was she stronger
She thought thus, by God I am to nice
To set a man, that is fulfilled of vice
In hie degre, and an Emperour him call
By God out of his seate I woll him trice
Whan he least weneth, soonest shall he fall.

The people rose vpon him on a night
For his defaute, and whan he it aspied
Out of his doores anon he hath him dight
Alone, and there he wende haue been alied
He knocked fast, and aye the more he cried
The faster shette they the doores all
Tho wist he well, he had himselfe begyled
And went his waie, no lenger durst he call.

The people cryed & rombled vp and doun
That with his eares he heard how they said
Where is this false tyraunt, this Neroun
For feare full nere out of his wit he braied
And to his Goddes, right pitously he praied
For socour, but it might not betide
For drede of this, him thought that he deide
And ran into a gardein, him to hide.

And in this gardaine, found he chorles twey
Sitting by a fire great and redde
And to the chorles two he gan to prey
To slea him, and to girde of his hedde
That to his body, whan he were dedde
Were no despite done, for his defame
Himselfe he slough, he could no better redde,
Of which fortune lough and had game.

Holofernes.

WAs neuer captain vnder a king
That reignes mo, put in subiection
Ne stronger was in field, of all thing
As in his time, ne greater of renoun

Ne

No more pompous in high presumpcioun
Than Holoferne, which fortune aye kisse
And so licorously lad him vp and doun
Till that he dedde was er that he wisse.

Not onely that this world had of him awe
For leding of richesse and liberte
But he made euery man venie his lawe
Nabuchodonosor was lorde, saide he
None other God should honoured be
Ayenst his hest, there dare no wight trespace
Saue in Bethulia, a strong cite
Where Eliachim was priest of that place.

But take kepe of the death of Holoferne
Amid his hoste, he dronke laie all night
Within his tent, large as is a berne
And yet for all his pompe, and all his might
Judith, a woman, as he laie vpright
Sleping, his hedde of smote, and fro his tent
Full priuely she stale, from euery wight
And with his hedde, vnto her toun she went.

Antiochus.

What nedeth it of king Antiochus
To tell his high and royall maieste
His great pride, his werke benemus
For such an other man nas neuer as he
Redeth what that he was in Machabe
And redeth the proude words that he saied
And why he fell from his prosperite
And in an hill, how wretchedly he died.

Fortune him had enhaunsed so in pride
That verily he wende he might attaine
Unto the sterres, vpon euery side
And in a balaunce, to wey eche mountaine
And all the floudes of the se restraine
And Goddes people had he most in hate
Hem would he slea, in torment and in paine
Wening that God ne might his pride abate

And for that Nichanore and Timothe
By Jewes were vanquished mightily
Unto the Jewes such an hate had he
That he bad greithe his chare full hastely
And swore and saied, full dispitously
Unto Hierusalem he would eftsone
To wreke his ire on it full cruelly
But of his purpose was he let full sone.

God for his manace him sore smote
With inuisible wounde, aye incurable
That in his guttes carfe so and bote
That his paines was importable
And certainly the wreche was reasonable
For many a mannes guttes did he pain
But from his purpose, cursed and dammable
For all his smert, he nolde hem not restrain.

But bade anon, aparaile his hoste
And sodainly, er he than was ware
God daunted all his pride, and all his boste
For he so sore fell out of his chare
That all his limmes and his skin to tare
So that he ne might go ne ride
But in a chaire, men about him bare
All forbruised both backe and side.

The wreche of God him smote so cruelly
That in his body wicked wormes crept
And therwithall he stanke so horribly
That none of all his meine, that him kept
Whether that he woke or els slept
Ne might not of him the stinke endure
And in his mischiefe he waxled and eke wept
And knewe God, Lord of euery creature.

To all his hoste, and to himselfe also
Full lothsome was the stinke of his caraine
No man might him beare to ne fro
And in his stinke, and in his horrible pain
He sterfe full wretchedly on a mountain
Thus hath this robbour, and this homicide
That many a man made to wepe and plain
Such guerdon, as belongeth to pride.

Alexander.

The storie of Alexander is so commune
That euery wight that hath discrecioun
Hath herd somwhat or all, of his fortune
This wide worlde, as in conclusion
He wan by strength, and for his renoun
They were glad for peace vnto him sende
The pride of man, and boste he laied adoun
Where so he came, vnto the worldes ende.

Comparison might yet neuer be maked
Betwixt him, and an other conquerour
For al this world for dred of hi hath quaked
He was of knighthode, & of fredom flour
Fortune him made ỹ heire of high honour
Saue wine & wom̃, nothing might aswage
His high entent in armes and labour
So was he full of louing corage.

What price wer it to him, though I you told
Of Darius, and of a hundred thousand mo
Of princes, Erles, and knights bold
Which he conquered, and brought to wo

I say as ferre as a man may ride or go
the world was his, what shuld I more deuise
For though I wrote and told you euer mo
Of his knighthood, it might not suffise.

Twelue yere he reigned as I rede in Macabe
Philips sonne of Macedone he was
That first was king of Greece, that countre
O worthy gentill Alexander, alas
That euer shuld thee fall such a caas
Enpoisoned of thy folke thou were
Thy flee, fortune hath turned into an ace
And yet for thee ne wept she neuer a tere.

Who shall yeue men teres to complain
The death of gentilnesse and of fraunchise
That all the world welded in his demain
And yet him thought it might not suice
So full was his corage of high emprise
Alas who shall me helpe to endite
False fortune, and poison to dispise
The which of all this wo I wite.

Julius Cesar.

By wisdome, manhood, and high labour
From humble bed to roiall Maieste
Up rose he, Julius the Conquerour
That all the Occident by lond and se
Wan by strength of hond, or els by trete
And vnto Rome made hem tributarie
And sith of Rome, Emperour was he
Till that fortune wex his aduersarie.

O mighty Cesar, that in Thessaly
Ayenst Pompei, father thine in law
That of the Orient had the chiualry
As ferre as that the day beginneth to daw
Them through knighthood hast take & slaw
Saue fewe folke, that with Pompeius fled
Through which thou puttest al ꝑ quēt in awe
Thanke fortune, that so well thee sped.

But now a little while I woll bewaile
This Pompei, this noble gouernour
Of Rome, which that fled at this battaile
I say one of his men, a false traitour
His head off smote, to winne him fauour
Of Julius, and to him the head brought
Alas Pompei, of the Orient conquerour
That fortune vnto such a fine thee wrought.

To Rome againe repaireth Julius
With his triumph lauriate full hie
But on a time Brutus Callius
That euer had of his high estate enuy
Full priuily had made conspiracie
Ayenst this Julius in subtill wise
And cast the place, in which he should die
With bodkins as I shall you deuise.

This Julius vnto the Capitoll went
Upon a day, as he was wont to gone
And in the Capitoll, anon him hent
This false Brutus, and his other fone
And sticked him with bodkins anone
With many a wound, & thus they let him lie
But neuer grutched he at no stroke but one
Or els at two, but if his story lie.

So manly was this Julius of hart
And so well loued estately honeste
That tho his deadly wounds so sore smart
His mantel ouer his hippes cast he
For no man should se his priuite
And as he lay in dying on a traunce
And wiste verely that die should he
Of honestie yet had he remembraunce.

Lucan to thee this story I commend
And to Sueton, and Valerie also
That of this story writen word and end
How that these conquerours two
Fortune was first a friend, and sithe a foe
No man trust vpon her fauour long
But haue her in awaite for euermo
Witnesse on all the conquerours strong.

Crelus.

The rich Crelus, whilom king of Lide
Of which Crelus, Cirus sore him drad
Yet was he caught amid all his pride
And to brenne, men to the fire him lad
But such a raine doune frō ꝑ firmament shad
That queint the fire, and made him to scape
But to beware yet no grace he had
Till fortune on the gallowes made him gape.

When he escaped was, he could not stent
For to begin a new aray again
He wend well, for that fortune him sent
Such hap, that he escaped through the rain
That of his foes he might not be slain
And eke a swemen vpon a night he met
Of which he was so proud and eke so fain
That in vengeance he all his heart set,

Upon a tree he was, as him thought
There Jupiter him wash both backe and side
And Phebus eke a faire towell him brought
To drie him with, & therewith were his pride
And to his doughter that stode him beside

Which

Which that he knew in his sentence habound
He bad her tell what it signified
And she his dreame right thus did expound.

The tree (qd. she) the galows is to meane
And Iupiter betokeneth snow and raine
And Phebus with his towell so cleane
Betokeneth the Sunne beames, lothy to sain
Thou shalt honged be, father certain
Raine shall thee wash, & sunne shall thee dry
Thus she warned him full plat and full plain
His doughter that called was Phany.

And honged was Crelus the proud king
His roiall throne might him not auaile
Tragedy is none other maner thing
Ne can in singing cry ne bewaile
But for that fortune alday will assaile
With vnware stroke, ỳ traignes ỳ been proud
For whã men trusteth her, than will she faile
And couer her bright face with a cloud.

Peter of Spaine.

O Noble, O worthy Petro glory of Spain
Whome fortune held so high in maistrie
Well ought men thy pitous death complain
Out of thy lond, thy brother made thee flie
And after at a siege by subtilte
Thou wer betraied and ladde vnto his tent
Whereas he with his owne hond slue the
Succeding in thy raigne and in thy rent.

The field of snow, with thegle of black therin
Caught with ỳ limerod, coloured as the glede
He brewe this cursednesse, and all this sinne
The wicked nest was wetter of this dede
Not Charles Oliuer, that tok ale hede
Of trouth and honour, but of Armorike
Genilon Oliuer, to trupt for mede
Brought this worthy king in such a brike.

Petro king of Lyre.

O worthy Petro, king of Lyre also
That Fortune wan by high maistry
Full many an heathen wroughtest thou wo
Of which thine owne liegis had enuy
And for nothing, but for thy chiualrie
They in thy bed han slain thee by the morow
Thus can fortune her whele gouern and gie
And out of ioy bring men to sorow.

Barnabo Viscount.

Of Millan great Barnabo Viscount
God of delight, & scourge of Lombardie
Why should I not thine infortune account
Sens in estate thou clomben were so hie
Thy brothers sone, that was thy double alie
For he thy neuew was, and sonne in law
Within his prison made thee to die
But why ne how not I, that thou wer slaw.

Hugeline of Pise.

Of thi erle Hugeline of Pise the langoure
There may no tong tell for pite
But little out of Pise stont a toure
In which toure in prison put was he
And with him been his little children thre
The eldest scarcly fiue yere of age
Alas fortune, it was a great cruelte
Such birds for to put in such a cage.

Dampned was he to die in that prison
For Roger, which that bishop was of Pise
Had on him made a false suggestion
Through which the people gan vpo him rise
And put him in prison, in such a wise
As ye haue heard, & meat and drinke he had
So small, that vneth it may suffise
And therewithall it was full poore and bad.

And on a day befell, that in that houre
Whan ỳ his meat wont was to be brought
The gaiour shut the doores of the toure
He heard it well, but he spake right nought
And in his hart anon there fill a thought
That they for hunger would do him dien
Alas (qd. he) alas that I was wrought
Therewith the teares fill fro his eyen.

His yong sonne, that thre yere was of age
Unto him said, father fain wold ye wepe
Whan will the gaiour bring our potage
Is there no morsel bread that ye doe kepe
I am so hungry, that I may not slepe
Now would God that I might slepe euer
Than should not hunger in my wombe crepe
There nis nothing but bread ỳ me were leuer

Thus day by day this child began to crie
Till in his fathers arme adoune it lay
And sain, farewell father I mote die
And kist his father, and died the same day
And whan the wofull father did it sey
For wo, his armes two he gan to bite
And sained alas, fortune and welawey
Thy false whele, my wo all may it wete.

His children wend, that it for hunger was
That he his armes gnew, and not for wo
And saied: father, doe not so (alas)

But

But rather eat the fleſh vpon vs two
Our fleſh thou yaue vs, take our fleſh vs fro
And eat inough, eight thus they to him ſaid
And after that within a day or two
They laid hem in his lappe adoun, and deide

Thus ended is this mighty crle of Piſe
Him ſelfe deſpeired deie, for hunger ſtarke
From high eſtate fortune away him carke
Of this Tragedy, it ought inough ſuffiſe
Who ſo woll here it in a longer wiſe
Redeth the great poete of Italie
That hight Dante, for he can it all deuiſe
Fro point to point, not a word woll he faile.

¶ Here endeth the Monkes tale.

¶ Here ſtinteth the knight the Monke of his tale, and here folowe-th the prologue of the Nonnes Prieſt.

HO (qd. the knight) good ſir no more of this
That ye haue ſayd, is right ynought iwis
And mokel more, for litell heuineſſe
Is right inough to much folke, I geſſe
I ſay for me, it is a great diſeaſe
Where as men haue be in welth and eaſe
To here of her ſodaine fal, alas
And the contrary is ioy and ſolas
As when a man hath ben in poore eſtate
And climbeth vp, and waxeth fortunate
And there abideth in proſperite
Such thinges is gladſome, as thinketh me
And of ſuch thing were good for to tell.
Ye (qd. our hoſt) by ſaint Poules bell
Ye ſay right ſoth, this monke clappeth loud
He ſpake, how fortune couered with a cloud
I wote not what, and alſo of a Tragedy
Right now ye herd, and perdy no remedy
It is for to bewailen, ne complaine
That that is done, and als it is a paine
As ye haue ſaid, to here of heuineſſe
Sir monke no more of this, ſo God you bleſſe
Your tale anoyeth all this company
Such talking is not worth a butterfly
For therin is there no diſport ne game
Therfore ſir monke, dan Piers by your name
I pray you hertely, tell vs ſomwhat elles
For ſikerly, nere clinking of your belles
That on your bridell hong on euery ſide
By heuen king, that for vs all dide
I ſhould er this han fall doune for ſlepe
Although the ſlough had ben neuer ſo depe
Than had your tale all be told in vaine
For certainly, as that thele clerkes ſaine
Whereas a man may haue none audience
Nought helpeth it to tell his ſentence
And well I wote the ſubſtaunce is in me
If any thing, ſhall well reported be
Sir, ſay ſomwhat of hunting I you pray
Nay (qd. this monke) I haue no luſt to play
Now let an other tell, as I haue told.

Thā ſpake our hoſt, with rude ſpeche bold
And ſaied vnto the Nonnes prieſt anon
come nere thou prieſt, com hither thou ſir Jhon
Tel vs ſuch a thing, as may our hertes glade
Be blith, though thou ride vpon a iade
What though thy horſe be bothe foule and lene
If he woll ſerue the, recke not a bene
Loke that thy hert be merry euer mo
Yes ſir (qd. he) yes hoſt, ſo mote I go
But I be merry, iwis I woll be blamed
And right anon, his tale he hath atamed
And thus he ſaid, vnto vs euerichon
This ſwete prieſt, this goodly man ſir Jhon

¶ Here endeth the Prologue of the Nonnes prieſt, and here folowe-th his tale.

A Pore wedowe, ſomedele ſtept in age
Was whilom dwelling in a poore cotage
Beſide a groue, ſtonding in a dale
This widow, of which I tell you my tale
Sens the day that ſhe was laſt a wife
In patience, led a full ſimple life
For litell was her catell and her rent
By huſbondry, of ſuch as God her ſent
She fond her ſelf, and eke her doughters two
Thre large ſowes had ſhe, and no mo
Thre kine, and eke a ſhepe that hight Mall
Well ſooty was her boure, and eke her hall
In which ſhe ete many a ſlender mele
Of poinant ſauce, ne knew ſhe neuer a dele
Ne deinty morſell paſſed through her throte
Her diet was acordaunt to her cote
Repletion ne made her neuer ſike
Attemperate diete was her Phiſike
And exerciſe, and hertes ſuffiſaunce
The gout let her nothing for to daunce
Ne apoplexy ſhent nat her heed
No wine ne dranke ſhe, white ne reed

Her boyd was moſt ſerued with white & black
Milk & bromboeed, in which ſhe fond no lack
Seind bakon, and ſomtime an eye or twey
For ſhe was as it were a maner dey.
A yerde ſhe had, enclоſed all about
With ſtickes, and dry diched without
In which ſhe had a cocke hight Chaunteclere
In all the land, of crowing nas his pere
His voice was merier than the mery orgon
On maſſe daies, that in the churches gon
Well ſikerer was his crowing in his loge
Than is a clocke, or in an abbey an orloge
By nature he knew ech aſſencion
Of the equinoctiall in the toun
For when degrees xv. were aſcended
Than crew he, that it might not be amended
His comb was redder than the fine coral
And battelled, as it had be a caſtell wall
His bill was blacke as any iet it ſhone
Like aſure were his legges and his tone
His nailes whiter than the lilly floure
And like the burned gold was his colour.
This gentel cocke, had in gouernaunce
Seuen hennes, to done his pleſaunce
Which were his ſuſters and his paramours
And wonder like to him, as of colours
Of which the fayreſt hewed in the throte
Was called faire Damoſell Pertelote
He fethered her a hundred times a day
And ſhe him pleſeth, all that euer ſhe may
Curteis ſhe was, diſcrete, and debonaire
And compenable, and bare her ſelfe ſo faire
Sens the time that ſhe was ſeuenight old
That truelich, ſhe hath the hert in hold
Of Chaunteclere, loking in euery lith
He loueth her ſo, that well was him therwith
But ſuch a ioy it was to here him ſing
Whan the bright ſunne gan to ſpring
In ſwete acord, my lefe is ferre in lond
For that time as I haue vnderſtond
Beſtes and birdes could ſpeke and ſing
And it ſo fell, that in the dawning
As Chaunteclere, among his wines all
Sat on his perch, that was in the hall
And next him ſat his faire Pertelote
This Chaunteclere gan to grone in his throte
As a man in his dreme is dreched ſore
And whan that Pertelot thus herd him rore
She was agaſt, and ſaid hert dere
What eyleth you to grone in this manere
Ye be a very ſleper, fie for ſhame.
And he anſwerd thus by God madame
I pray you, that ye take it not in greſe
By God I mette, I was in ſuch miſchiefe
Right now, that yet mine hert is ſore afright
Now God (qd. he) my ſweuen rede aright
And kepe my body out of foule priſoun
Me mette, that I romed vp and doun
Within our yerd, where I ſaw a beeſt
Was like an hound, & would haue made areſt
Upon my body, and would haue had me deed
His colour was betwixt yelow and reed
And tipped was his taile, and both his eres
With black, vnlike the remnent of his heres
His ſnout ſmall, with glowing eyen twey
Yet for his loke, almoſt for feare I dey
This cauſeth me my grоning doutleſſe.
Away (qd. ſhe) fie for ſhame hertleſſe
Alas (qd. ſhe) for by God aboue
Now haue ye loſt my hert, and all my loue
I cannot loue a coward by my faith
For certes, what ſo any woman ſaith
We all deſire, if that it might be
To haue huſbonds, hardy, wiſe, and fre
And ſecrete, and no nigard, ne no fole
Ne him that is agaſt of euery tole
Ne none auantour, by that God aboue
How durſt ye ſay for ſhame, vnto your loue
That any ſwouen might make you a ferd?
Haue ye no mannes hert, and haue a berd?
Alas, and con ye be aferd of ſweuens?
Nothing but vanite God wotte in ſweuen is
Sweuens ben engendred of repleccions
And of fume, and of complecсions
When humours ben to habundant in a wight
certes this dreme, which ye haue met to night
I tell you trouth, ye may truſt me
Cometh of ſuperfluite, and reed colour parde
Which cauſe folke to drede in her dremes
Of arowes, and of fire with reed lemes
Of reed beeſtes, that woll hem bite
Of conteke, and of waſpes great and lite
Right as the humour of melancoly
Cauſeth many a man in ſlepe to cry
For fere of great bulles, and beres blake
Or els that blacke diuels woll hem take
Of other humours could I tell alſo
That werke a man in ſlepe much wo
But I wol paſſe, as lightly as I can.
Lo Caton, which that was ſo wiſe a man
Said he not thus, do not force of dremes
Now ſir (qd. ſhe) when we flie fro the bemes
For Goddes loue, as taketh ſome laxatiue
Up peril of my ſoule, and of my life
I counſaile you the beſt, I woll not lie
That both of colour, and of melancolie
Ye purge you, and for ye ſhul not tary
Though in this toune, be none apotecary
I ſhall my ſelfe two herbes tech you
That ſhall be for your heale, & for your prow

And in our yerde, tho herbes ſhall I finde
The which I haue of her propertie by kinde
To purge you bineth, and eke aboue
Forget not this, for goddes owne loue
Ye be right colerike of complection
Where the ſiuine is in his aſcention
Ne finde you not replete of humours hote
For if ye do, I dare well lay a grote
That ye ſhall haue a feuer tercyane
Or els an ague, that may be your bane
A day or two, ye ſhall haue digeſtiues
Of wormes, or ye take your laxatiues
Of laurel, centorie, and of fenetere
Or els of elder beries, that growe there
Of Catapuce, or of gaitres beris
Of herbe yue, growing in our yerde ỹ mery is
Pluck hem vp as they growe, & eate hem in
Be mery husbond, for your father kin
Dredeth no dreme, I can ſay no more.

Madame (qd he) gramercy of your lore
But natheleſſe, as touching dan Caton
That of wisdome hath ſo great renoun
Though he bade no dremes for to drede
By God, men may in olde bookes rede
Of many a man, more of auctorite
Than euer Caton was, ſo mote I thee
That all the reuers ſaieth of his ſentence
And haue well founde by experience
That dremes ben ſignifications
As wel of ioye, as of tribulacions
That folke endure, in this life preſent
There nedeth to make of this none argumẽt
The very preke ſheweth it in dede
One of the greateſt auctours that men rede
Saith thus, that whilom two felowes went
On pilgrimage, in full good entent
And happed ſo, they come into a toun
Where as there was ſuch congregacion
Of people, and eke of ſtraite herbigage
That they ne founde, as much as a cotage
In which they bothe might yloged be
Wherefore they mote of neceſſitie
As for that night, departe company
And eche of hem goeth to his hoſtelry
And tooke his lodging, as it would fall.

That one of hem, was lodged in a ſtall
Farre in a yerde, with oxen of the plough
That other man was lodged well ynough
As was his auenture, or his fortune
That vs gouerneth all, as in comune.

And ſo befel, long er it were day
This man mette in his bedde, there as he lay
How that his felowe gan vpon him call
And ſaid (alas) for in an oxes ſtall
This night ſhal I be murdered, there I lie
Now helpe me dere brother er I die
In al haſte, come to me (he ſaid)

This man out of his ſlepe for feare abraid
But when he was waked of his ſlepe
He turned him, and tooke of this no kepe
Him thought his dreme was but a vanite
Thus twiſe in his ſlepe dremed he

And at third time, yet his felawe
Cam as him thought, & ſaid I now am ſlawe
Beholde my bloudy woundes, depe and wide
Ariſe vp erly, in the morow tide
And at the weſt gate of the toun (qd he)
A carte full of dong, there ſhalt thou ſee
In which my body is hid ful priuely
Do thou that carte arreſt boldly
My golde cauſed my deth, ſoth to ſaine
And told him euery point how he was ſlaine
With a full petous face, pale of hewe
And truſt wel his dreme he found right trewe
For on the morow, as ſone as it was day
To his felowes Inne, he toke the way
And when that he came to the oxes ſtall
After his felowe, he began to call.

The hoſteler anſwerde him anon
And ſaid, ſir your felowe is gon
As ſone as it was day, he went out of ỹ toun

This man gan fail in ſuſpection
Remembring of his dremes that he mette
And forth he goeth, no lenger would he lette
Vnto the weſt gate of the toun, and fonde
A dong carte, as it were to dong londe
That was arayed in the ſame wiſe
As ye haue herde the deed man deuiſe
And with hardy herte he gan to crie
Vengeaunce and iuſtice of this felonie
My felowe murdred is this ſame night
And in this carte he lyeth, gaping vpright
I cry out on the miniſters (qd he)
That ſhould kepe and rule this citie
Harowe alas, here lyeth my felowe ſlaine

What ſhould I more of this tale ſaine?
The people out ſtart, & cal the cart to ground
And in the middle of the dong they found
The deed man, that murdred was al newe.

O bliſſful God, that art ſo good and trewe
Lo, how thou bewrayeſt murdre alway
Murdre wol out, that ſee we day by day
Murdre is ſo wlatſome and abhominable
To God, that ſo iuſte is and reaſonable
That he ne wol it ſuffre healed to be
Though it abide a yere, two, or three
Murdre wol out, this is my concluſioun

And right anon, the miniſters of the toun
Haue hent the carter, and ſpred him pyned
And eke the hoſteler ſo ſore engyned

That they be knowe her wickednesse anone
And weren hanged by the necke bone.
Here may ye see that dremes ben to drede.
And certes, in the same lefe I rede
Right in the next chapter after this
I gabbe not, so haue I loyc and blis.
Two men would haue paſſed ouer the se
For certaine cause, into a ferre countre
If the winde ne had be contrarie
That made hem in a citie to tarie
That ſtoode full mery vpon an haven ſide
But on a day, ayenſt an even tide
The winde gan thaunge, & blewe as hem leſt
Joly and glad, they went to reſt
And caſt hem full erly for to saile
But herken, to one man fell a great meruaile
That one of hem in ſlepyng as he lay
He mette a wonders dreme, agam the day
Him thought a man ſtoode by his beddes ſide
And him commaunded, that he would abide
And ſaid him thus, if thou to morwe wende
Thou ſhalt be dreint, my tale is at an ende.
He woke, & tolde his felow what he mette
And prayed him his voyage for to lette
As for that day, he prayd him for to abide.
His felowe that lay by his beddes ſide
Gan for to laugh, and scorned him full faſte
No dreme (qd he) may ſo my herte agaſte
That I will let for to do my thinges
I ſet not a ſtrawe for thy dreminges
For ſweuens ben but vanities and iapes
Men mete all day of bules and of apes
And eke of many a maſe therewithall
And dremen of thing that neuer was, ne ſhall
But ſithe I ſee that thou wolt here abide
And thus ſlouthe wilfully thy tide
God wote it rueth me, and haue good day
And thus he toke his leue, and went his way.
But er he had halfe his courſe yſayled
I not why, ne what miſchaunce it ayled
But caſually the ſhippes botome to rent
And ſhip and men, vnder the water went
In ſight of other ſhippes beſide
That with hem ſailed at the ſame tide
And therefore faire Pertelot ſo dere
By ſuch enſamples olde, maiſt thou lere
That no man ſhould be to recheleſſe
Of dremes, for I ſay thee doutleſſe
That many a dreme full ſore is for to drede.
Lo in the life of ſaint Kenelme we rede
That was Kenelphus ſonne, the noble king
Of Mercenrike, how Kenelm mette a thing
A little er he were murdred on a day
His murder in this viſion he ſay
His norice him expouned it euery dele
His ſweuen, and badde him keepe him wele
For trayſon, but he was but ſeuen yere olde,
And therefore little tale he therof tolde
Of any dreme, ſo holy was his herte
By God, I had rather than my ſherte
That ye haue herde his legend, as haue I
Dame Pertelot, I ſay to you truely
Macrobius, that writeth the auiſion
In Affrike, of the worthy Scipion
Affirmeth dremes, and ſaith that they been
Warning of things, that we after ſeen.
And ferthermore I pray you loketh well
In the olde Teſtament, of Daniell
If he held dremes for vanitie,
Rede eke of Joſeph, and there ſhal ye ſee
Wonders hen ſomtime, but I ſay nat all
Warning of things that after ſhall fall.
Lo of Egypt the king, that hight Pharao
His baker, and his butteler alſo
Whether they felt none effect in dremes.
Who ſo will ſeke actes of ſundrie remes.
May rede of dremes a wonder thing.
Lo Creſus which was of Lide king
Met te he not that he ſat vpon a tree
Which ſignified he ſhould honged bee.
Lo Andromeda, that was Hectors wife
That day that Hector ſhould leſe his life
She dremed in the ſame night beforne
How the life of Hector ſhould be lorne
If that day he went vnto bataile
She warned him, but it might not auaile
He went for to fight neuertheleſſe
But he was ſlaine anone of Achilles
But that tale is to long to tell
And eke it is nigh day I may nat dwell.
Shortly I ſay, as for concluſion
That I ſhall haue of this auiſion
Aduerſite: and I ſay farthermore
That I ne tell of laxatiues no ſtore
For they ben venemous, I wete it wele
I hem deſie, I loue hem neuer a dele.
But let vs ſpeke of mirthe, & ſtinte all this
Madame Pertelot, ſo haue I blis
Of one thing God hath me ſent large grace
For when I ſee the beautie of your face
Ye ben ſo ſcarlet reed about your eyen
It maketh al my drede for to dien
For alſo ſiker, as In principio
Mulier eſt hominis confuſio.
Madame, the ſentence of this latin is
Woman is mannes ioye and his blis
For when I feele on night your ſoft ſide
Albeit that I may not on you ride
For that our perche is made ſo narowe alas
I am ſo full of ioye and of ſolas

That

That I deſie both ſweuen and dreme
And with ỹ word he flewe doun fro the beme
For it was day, and eke the hennes all
And with a chuck, he gan hem for to call
For he had found a corne lay in the yarde
Royall he was, and no more aferde
He feddred Pertelot twentie time
And treadde her eke as oft, er it was prime
He loketh as it were a grimme leoun
And on his toes he romed vp and doun
Him deined not to ſet his fete to the ground
He chucked, whan he had a corne yfound
And to him than ran his wines all
As royall as a prince in his hall
Leaue I this Chaunteclere in his paſture
And after woll I tell of his aduenture.
When ỹ moneth in which the world began
That hight March, ỹ God firſt made man
Was complete, and paſſed were alſo
Sith March he began, twenty daies and two
Befill that Chaunteclere, in all his pride
His ſeuen wines walking him beſide
Caſt vp his eyen to the bright Sunne
That in the ſigne of Taurus was yrunne
Fourty degrees and one, and ſomwhat more
He knew by kinde, and by none other lore
That it was prime, & crew with a bliſful ſteuē
The ſunne he ſaide is clombe vp to heuen
Fourty degrees & one, & ſomwhat more y wis
Madame Pertelot, my worldes bliſſe,
Herken how theſe bliſful birdes ſing
And ſee the freſh floures how they ſpring
Full is mine hert of reuel and ſolas
But ſodainly him fell a ſorowful caas
For euer the latter ende of ioy is woe
God wote, worldly ioye is ſoone ago
And if a rethore coud faire endite
He in a chronicle might ſafely write
As for a ſoueraine notabilitie.
Nowe euery wiſe man herken to me
This ſtory is al ſo true I undertake
As is the booke of Launcelot du lake
That women holden in full great reuerence
Now woll I turne ayen to my ſentence.
A col fox (full of ſleight and iniquitie)
That in the groue had wonned yeres three
By high imagination aforne caſte
The ſame night, through the hedge braſte
Into the yerde, there Chaunteclere the faire
Was wont and eke his wines to repaire
And in a bedde of wortes ſtill he lay
Til it was paſſed vndren of the day
Waiting his time, on Chaunteclere to fall
As gladly done theſe homicides all
That in a waite lie to murdre men
O falſe murdrer, rucking in thy den
O new Scariot, and new Ganilion
Falſe diſſimuler, O greke Sinon
That broughteſt Troy vtterly to ſorowe
O Chaunteclere, acurſed be the morowe
That thou in thy yerde flewe from the bemes
Thou were ful well warned by thy dremes
That ilke day was perilous to thee
But what ỹ God aforne wote, muſt nedes bee
After the opinion of certaine clerkes
Witneſſe of him, that any clerke is
That in ſchole is great altercacion
In this mater, and great diſputacion
And hath ben, of an hundred thouſand men
But I ne can nat boulte it to the bren
As can the holy doctour ſaint Auſtin
Or Boece, or the biſhop Bradwardin
Whether that goddes worthy forewéting
Straineth me nedely to do a thing
(Nedely clepe I ſimple neceſſitie)
Or if the free choice be graunted me
To do the ſame thing, or do it nought
Though God forewote it, er it was wrought
Or if his weting straineth neuer a dele
But by neceſſitie condicionele
I wol not haue to done of ſuch matere
My tale is of a cocke, as ye ſhal here
That toke his counſaile of his wife with ſorow
To walke in the yerde vpon the morow
That he had met the dreme, as I you tolde
Womens counſailes ben oft full colde
Womens counſaile brought vs firſt to woe
And made Adam fro Paradiſe to go
There as he was full mery, and well at eaſe
But for I not, whom I might diſpleaſe
If I counſaile of women ſhould blame
Paſſe ouer, I ſaid it in my game (tere
Rede the authors, wher they trete of ſuch mat-
And what they ſay of women, ye mowe here
Theſe ben the Cockes wordes, and not mine
I can of women no harme deuine.
Faire in the ſonde, to bathe her merely
Lieth Pertelot, and all her ſiſters by
Ayenſt the ſunne, and Chaunteclere ſo free
Song merier, than the Mermaide in the ſe
For Philiologus, ſaith vtterly
How that they ſingen well and merely.
And ſo befell as he caſt his eye
Among the wortes on a butterflie
He was ware of the fox that laie full lowe
Nothing than liſt him for to crowe
But cryed cocke cocke, and vp he ſtert
As one that was affraide in his hert
For naturally beaſtes deſireth to flie
Fro her contrarie, if he may it ſee

Tho he neuer erſt had ſeen it with his eye.
This Chaunteclere, when he gan him eſpie
He would haue fled, but the foxe anone
Said gentle ſir, alas: what woll ye done?
Be ye affrayd of me, that am your frende?
Now certes, I were worſe than a fende
If I to you would harme, or villanie
I am not come your counſaile to eſpie
But truely the cauſe of my comming
Was oncly to here howe ye ſing
For ſothly ye haue as mery a ſteuen
As any angell hath, that is in heuen
Therewith ye haue of muſicke more feling
Than had Boece, or any that can ſing
My lorde your father, God his ſoule bleſſe
And eke your mother of her gentelneſſe
Haue in my houſe ben, to my great eaſe
And certes ſir, full faine would I you pleaſe.
But for men ſpeken of ſinging, I woll ſey
So mote I broken wel mine eyen twey
Saue you, ne herde I neuer man ſo ſing
As did your father in the morning
Certes it was of herte, all that he ſong
And for to make his voice more ſtrong
He would ſo paine him, that with both his eyen
He muſt winke, ſo loude he muſt crien
And ſtonden on his tiptoes therwithall
And ſtretch forth his neck, long and ſmall
And eke he was of ſuch diſcretion
That there was no man in no region
That him in ſong or wiſedome might paſſe
I haue wel redde dan Burnel the aſſe
Among his verſes, how that there was a Cocke
For that a prieſtes ſonne yaue him a knocke
Upon his legges, while he was yong & nice
He made him for to leſe his benefice
But certaine there is no compariſon
Betwixt the wiſedome and diſcretion
Of your father, and of his ſubtilitie
Now ſingeth ſir, for ſaint charitie
Let ſe, can ye your father counterfete.
This Chaunteclere his wings gan to bete
As a man that could not his treſon eſpie
So was he raviſhed with his flaterie.
Alas ye lordes, many a falſe flatterour
Is in your courte, & many a falſe leſingour
That pleaſe you well more, by my faith
Than he that ſothfaſtneſſe vnto you ſaith
Redeth Eccleſiaſt of flaterie
Beware ye lordes of her trecherie.
This Chaunteclere ſtode hie vpō his toos
Stretching his necke, & helde his eyen cloos
And gan to crowe loude for the nones
And dan Ruſſel the foxe ſtart vp at ones
And by the gorget hent Chaunteclere
And on his backe, toward the wood him bere
For yet was there no man that him ſued
O deſtenie, that maiſt not be eſchued
Alas that Chaunteclere flewe fro the bemes
Alas his wife rought not of dremes
And on a friday fell all this miſchaunce.
O Venus that art goddeſſe of pleaſaunce
Sithens that thy ſeruant was this chaunteclere
And in thy ſeruice did all his powere
More for delite, than the worlde to multiplie
Why woldeſt thou ſuffer him on thy dai to die?
O Gaulfride, dere maiſter ſoueraine
That whan that worthy king Richard was ſlain
With ſhot, complainedſt his deth ſo ſore
Why ne had I now thy ſcience and thy lore
The friday for to chide, as did ye
For on a friday, ſoothly ſlaine was he
Than wold I ſhew you how that I could plaine
For Chaunteclers drede, and for his paine.
Certes ſuch cry, ne lamentacion
Was neuer of ladies made, whan that Ilion
Was won, & Pirrus with his bright ſwerde
Whan he hent king Priam by the berde
And ſlough him (as ſaieth Eneidos)
As made all the hennes in the cloos
Whan they had loſte of Chaunteclere the ſight
But ſouerainly dame Pertelot ſhright
Well louder than did Haldrubalies wife
Whan that her huſbond hath loſt his life
And that the Romaines had brent Cartage
She was ſo full of torment and of rage
That wilfully into the fire ſhe ſterte
And brent her ſelfe, with a ſtedfaſt herte.
O woful hennes, right ſo cryed he
As whan that Nero brent the citie
Of Rome, cryed the ſenatours wives
For that her huſbondes ſhould leſe her lives
Withouten gilte Nero hath hem ſlaine.
Now wol I turne to my tale againe.
The ſely widowe, and her doughters two
Herde the hennes crie and make woo
And out at the dore ſterte they anon
And ſaw the foxe toward the wood gon
And bare vpon his backe the Cocke away
And cried out harow and well away
Aha the Foxe, and after hem they ran
And eke with ſtaues, many another man
Ran Coll our dogge, Talbot, & eke Garlonde
And Malkin, with her diſtaffe in her honde
Ran Cowe & Calfe, and eke the verie hogges
For they ſo ſore aferde were of the dogges
And ſhouting of men, and of women eke
They ran ſo, her hert thought to breke
They yellen as fendes do in hell
The Dukes cried as men would them quell

The

The Geese for feare flewe ouer the trees
Out of the hiues came the swarme of Bees
So hidous was the noise,a benedicite
Certes Iacke Strawe,ne his meine
Ne made neuer shoutes halfe so shrill
Whan that they would any Flemming kill
As that daie was made vpon the Fore
Of brasse they blewe the trompes and of bore
Of horne & bone,in which they blew & pouped
And therwith they shriked and shouted
It seemed,as though heauen should fall
Now good men I pray you herken all.
Lo how fortune tourneth sodainly
The hope and the pride of her enemy
This Cocke that lay vpon the Fore backe
In all his drede,vnto the Fore he spake
And saied,sir, if I were as ye
Yet should I saie,as wise God helpe me
Tourneth ayen,ye proude churles all
A very pestilence vpon you fall
Now am I come vnto this woods side
Maugre your hed, the Cocke shall here abide
I woll him eate in faith,and that anon.
The Fore answerd,in faith it shal be doen
And as he spake the worde, all sodainly
This Cock brake from his mouth deliuerly
And high vpon a tree he flewe anon
And whan the Fore saw that he was gon
Alas(qd he)O Chaunteclere alas
I haue(qd he)doe to you trespas
In as much as I made you aferde
whan I you hent,& brought out of your yerde
But sir, I did it not in no wicked entent
Come doun,and I shal tel you what I ment
I shall you say sothe,God helpe me so.
Nay than(qd he) I shrewe vs both two
And first I shrewe my self, both blood & bones
If thou begyle me ofter than ones
Thou shalt no more with thy flatterie
Doe me sing with a winkyng eye
For he that winketh,when he should see
All wilfully,God let him neuer thee.
Naie(qd ỹ fore) but God yeue him mischance
That is so indiscrete of gouernaunce
That iangleth, whã that he should haue pees
Lo,such it is for to be recheles
And negligent,and trust on flatterie
But ye that holde this tale a lie
As of a Fore,of a Cocke,and of a Hen
Taketh the moralitie good men
For saint Poule saieth,all that writen is
To our doctrine it is writen ywis
Taketh the frute,and let the chaffe be still.
Now good God,if that it be thy will
As saieth my lorde,so make vs all good men
And bring vs to the high blisse,Amen.

Here endeth the tale of the Nonnes Priest,and here folowyth the Manciples Prologue.

SIr Nonnes priest, our hoste saied anone
Yblessed be thy brethe and euery stone
This was a merie tale of Chaunteclere
But by my trouth, if thou were seculer
Thou wouldest be a tredfoule a right
For if thou haue corage as thou hast might
Thee were nede of hennes,as I wene
Yea more than seuen times seuentene
See which brawnes hath this gentle priest
So great a necke,and such a large breest
He loketh as a Sparhauke with his eyen
Him nedeth not his colours for to dien
With Brasill,ne with graine of Portingale
But sir,faire fall you for your tale
And after that,he with full merry chere
Saied to another man,as ye shall here.
Wote ye not where standeth a little toune
Which that is called Bob vp and doune
Vnder the blee,in Caunterburie waie
There gan our hoste to iape and to plaie
And saied,sirs: what Dame is in the mire
Is there no man,for prayer ne for hire
That woll awake our felowe behinde
A theefe him might full lightly rob and binde
See how he nappeth,see for cockes bones
How he woll fall from his hors atones
Is that a Coke of London,with mischaunce
Doe him comfort,he knoweth his penaunce
For he shall tell a tale by my fey
Although it be not worth a bottell hey
Awake thou Coke,(qd he)God yeue the sorow
What aileth thee to slepe by the morow
Hast thou had flean al night, or art thou drõk
Or hast thou al night with som quean ywõk
So that thou maist not hold vp thine hedde.
This Coke ỹ was ful pale,& nothing redde
Saied sir hoste: so God my soule blesse
There is fallen on me great heuinesse
But I not why,me were leuer to slepe
Than the best gallon of wine in Chepe.
Well(qd the Manciple) if it may do ease
To thee sir Coke,and to no wight displease
Which that here ride in this companie
And that our hoste will of his curtesie
I woll as now excuse thee of thy tale

For in good faith thy vilage is full pale
Thine eyen dase, lothly as me thinketh
And well I wote, thy breth full soure stinketh
That sheweth wel thou art not well disposed
Of me certain thou shalt not be glosed
See how he galpeth, lo this dronken wight
As though he would vs swalow anon right
Holde close thy mouth, by thy father kin
The deuill of hell set his foote therein
Thy cursed breath will enfect vs all
Fie stinking swine, fie foule mote thee befall
Taketh hede sirs of this lustie man
Now swete sir, woll ye iuste at the ban
Thereto me thinketh ye be well shape
I trowe that ye haue dronken wine ape
And that is when men plaie at strawe.
And with his speach ỹ coke waxed al wrawe
And on the Manciple he gan to nodde fast
For lacke of speache: & doun his hors him cast
Where as he laie, til that men him vp toke
This was a faire chercelaunce of a coke
Alas that he ne had holde him by his ladill
And er that he ayen were in the sadill
There was a great shouing to and fro
To lift him vp, and much care and wo
So vnweldy was this sely palled goste
And to the Manciple than spake our hoste.
Because that drinke hath domination
Vpon this man, by my saluacion
I trowe lewdly woll he tell his tale
For were it wine, or old moustie ale
That he hath dr̃ke, he speaketh so in the nose
And snuffleth fast, and eke hath the pose.
He also hath to doe more than ynough
To kepe him on his caple out of the slough
And if he fall from his caple eft sone
Than shall we all haue ynough to doen
In lifting vp his dronken corse
Tell on thy tale, of him make I no force.
But yet Mãciple, in faith thou art to nice
Thus openly to repreue him of his vice
Another day he woll parauentuce
Reclaime thee, and bring thee to lure
I meane he speake will of small things
And for to pinche at thy reckeninges
That were not honest if it came to preke.
No (qd the Mãciple) ỹ wer a great mischefe
So might he bring me into the snare
Yet had I leuer paie for the Mare
which he rideth on thã he should with mestriue
I woll not wrathe him, so mote I thriue
That I spake, I saied it but in bourde
And wote ye what, I haue here in my gourde
A draught of wine, ye of a ripe grape
And right anon ye shall see a good iape
This Coke shall drinke thereof, if I maie
Vp paine of my life he woll not saie naie.
And certainly, to tellen as it was
Of this vessell the Coke dranke fast, alas
What needeth it, he dranke ynough beforne
And when he had pouped in his horne
To the Manciple he toke the gourde again
And of the drinke the Coke was full fain
And thonked him, in such wise as he could.
Than gan our hoste to laugh wonder loude
And saied: I see well it is necessarie
Where ỹ we go, good drink with vs to carie
For that will turne rancour and disease
To accord & loue, & many a worde to peace.
O Bacchus, yblessed be thy holy name
That so canst tourne earnest into game
Worshipped be to thy deitie
Of that matter ye get no more of me.
Tell on thy tale thou Manciple, I thee praie
Well sir (qd he) herkeneth what I saie,

Here endeth the Manciples Prologue, and here followeth his Tale.

WHan Phebus dwelled here in earth adoun
As olde bookes make mencioun
He was the most lustie bacheler
Of all the worlde, & eke the best archer
He slough Pheton the serpent, as he laie
Slepyng agenst the Sunne vpon a daie
And many an other noble worthy dede
He with his bowe wrought, as mẽ mow rede
Plaie he could on euery minstralcie
And sing, that it was a melodie
To here of his clere voice the soun
Certes the king of Thebes, Amphion
That with his song, walled the citie
Could neuer sing halfe so well as he
Thereto he was the semeliest man
That is or was, sith the world began
What needeth it his feture to diserue?
For in this world nas none so faire aliue
He was therwith fulfilled of gentilnesse
Of honour, and of perfite worthinesse
This Phebus, ỹ was floure of bachelerie
As well in freedome, as in chiualrie
For his disport, in signe eke of victorie
Of Pheton, so as telleth vs the storie
Was wont to beare in his honde a bowe
Now had this Phebus in his hous a crowe

within

Within a cage yfostred many a daie
And taught it speache, as men teach a Jaie
White was this crowe, as is a white Swan
And counterfete the speach of euery man
He could, when he should tell a tale
There was in all this world no Nightingale
He could, by an hundred thousand dele
Sing so wonderly mery and wele.
Now had this Phebus in his hous a wife
Which that he loued more than his life
And night and daie, did euer his diligence
Her for to please, and doe her reuerence
Saue onely, if I the soth shall sain
Jelous he was, and would haue kept her fain
For him were lothe, iaped for to be
And so is euery wight, in such degree
But all for nought, for it auarleth nought
A good wife, that is clene of werke & thought
Should not be kept in none awaite certain
And truely the labour is in vain
To kepe a shrewe, for it will not be
This holde I for a very nicete
To spill labour, for to kepe wiues
Thus writeth old clerkes in her liues
But now to purpose, as I first began
This worthy Phebus, doth all that he can
To please her, wening through such plesance
And for his manhode, & for his gouernaunce
That no man should put him from her grace
But God it wote, there may no man enbrace
As to distrain a thing, which that nature
Hath naturally set in a creature.
Take any birde, and put him in a cage
And doe all thine entent, and thy corage
To foster it tenderly with meate and drinke
Of all daintes that thou canst bethinke
And kepe it also cleanly as thou maie
Although the cage of gold be neuer so gaie
Yet had this birde, by twentie thousand fold
Leuer in a forest, that is wide and cold
Go eate wormes, and such wretchednesse
For euer this birde will doe his busines
To escape out of his cage, whan he may
His libertie the birde desireth aye.
Let take a Cat, and foster her with milke
And tender flesh, and make her couch of silke
And let her see a Mouse go by the wall
Anon she weiueth flesh, and couche, and all
And euery deintie, that is in that hous
Such appetite hath she to eate the Mous
Lo here hath lust his domination
And appetite fleme th discrecion.
A she Wolfe, hath also a vilanous kinde
The leudest Wolfe that she maie finde
Or lest of reputacion, that will she take
In time whan her lust to haue a make.
All these ensamples speake I by these men
That been vntrue, and nothing by women
For men haue euer a licorous appetite
On lower thing, to performe her delite
Than on her wiues, be they neuer so faire
Ne neuer so true, ne so debonaire
Flesh is so newfangle, with mischaunce
That we ne con in nothing haue plesaunce
That sowneth vnto vertue, any while.
This Phebus, which thought no gyle
Disceiued was, for all his solitie
For vnder him another had she
A man of little reputacion
Nought worth to Phebus, in comparison
The more harme is, it happeth oft so
Of which there cometh much harme and wo.
And so befell, whan Phebus was absent
His wife anon hath for her lemman sent
Her lemman, certes that is a vnauith speche
Forgeue it me, and that I you beseeche.
The wise Plato saieth, as ye mowe rede
The worde must needes accorde with the dede
If men should tell properly a thing
The worde must cosin be to the working
I am a boistous man, right thus saie I
There is but little difference truely
Betwixt a wife, that is of hie degree
If of her bodie dishonest she be
And a poore wenche, other than this
If it so be they werke both amisse
But for the gentill is in estate aboue
She shall be called his lady and his loue
And for that tother is a poore woman
She shal be called his wenche or his lemman
And God it wote mine owne dere brother
Men laie as lowe that one as that other
Right so betwixt a titleles tyraunt
And an outlawe, or a theefe erraunt
The same I saie, there is no difference
To Alexaunder was tolde this sentence
That for the tyraunt is of greater might
By force of meine, to slea doune right
And bren hous and home, and make all plaine
Lo therfore is he called a capitaine
And for the outlawe hath but small meine
And may not doe so great a harme as he
Ne bring a countrey to so great mischiefe
Men callen him an outlawe or a thiefe.
But for I am a man not textuele
I will not tell of textes neuer a dele
I will go to my tale as I began.
Whan Phebus wife had sent for her leman
Anon they wrought all their lust volage
This white crowe, that hing aie in the cage

Beheld

Beheld their werke, and saied neuer a worde
And whan home was come Phebus the lord
This crowe song, cuckow, cuckow, cuckow.
What bird (qd Phebus) what singest thou?
Ne were thou not wont so merily to sing
That to my harte it was reioysing
To heare thy voice, alas, what song is this?
By God (qd he) I sing not a mis
Phebus (qd he) for all thy worthinesse
For all thy beautie, and thy gentilnesse
For all thy song, and thy minstralcie
For all thy waiting, blered is thine eye
With one of little reputation
Not worth to thee in comparison
The mountenãce of a gnat, so mote I thriue
For on the bedde, thy wife I sawe him swinge.
What wol you more (qd crow anon him tolde
By sad tokens, and by wordes bold
How that his wife had done her lecherie
Him to great shame, and to great villanie
And tolde him eft, he sawe it with his eyen.
This Phebus gan awaiward for to yien
Him thought his wofull hart brast a two
His bowe he bent, and set therin a flo
And in his ire he hath his wife slain
This is the effect, there is no more to sain
For sorow whereof he brake his minstralsie
Both Harpe & Lute, Geterne, and Sautrie
And eke he brake his arowes, and his bowe
And after that, thus spake he to the crowe
Traitour (qd he) with toung of Scorpion
Thou hast me brought to my confusion
Alas that I was wrought, why nere I dedd?
O dere wife, O gemme, O lustie hedde
That were to me so sad, and eke so true
Now liest thou dedde, with face pale of hewe
Full gltlesse, that durst I sweare ywis
O rakell honde, to doe so foule amis.
O troubled wit, O ire retchelesse
That vnaised smitest gyltlesse
O wantrust, full of false suspeccion
Where was thy wit and thy discrecion
Oh euery man beware of rekelnesse
Ne trowe nothing without strong witnesse
Smite not too sone, or thou wete why
And be aised well and sikerly
Or ye doe any execucion
Upon your ire, for suspection
Alas, a thousand folke hath rekell ire
Fully fordoen, and brought hem in the mire.
Alas for sorowe I woll my selfe sle
And to the crowe, O falle theefe saied he
I woll quite anon thy false tale
Thou song whilom, like a Nitingale
Now shalt thou false theefe, thy song forgone
And eke thy white fethers euerychone
Ne neuer in all thy life shalt thou speake
Thus shull men on a traitour be awreake
Thou and thine offpring euer shall be blake
Ne neuer swete noise shall ye make
But euer crying ayenst tempest and rain
In token, that through thee my wife is slain
And to the crowe he stert, and that anon
And pulled of his white fethers euerichon
And made him blacke, & reft him all his song
And eke his speache, & out at doore him flong
Unto the deuill, which I him betake
And for this cause been all crowes blake.
Lordings, by this ensãple I wol you pray
Beware, and take kepe what I saie
Ne telleth neuer no man in your life
How that another man hath dight his wife
He woll you hate mortally certain
Dan Salomon, as wise clerkes sain
Teacheth a man to kepe his tong well
But as I saied, I am not textuell
But natheless, thus taught me my dame
My sonne thinke on the crowe a Gods name
My sonne kepe wel thy tong, & kepe thy frend
A wicked tong is worse than a fend
My sonne, from a fende men may hem blesse
My sonne, God of his endelesse goodnesse
Walled a tong with teeth, and lippes eke
For man should him auise what he speke
My sonne, full oft for to mikell speache
Hath many a man be spilt, as clerkes teache
But for little speache, spoken auisedly
Is no man shent, to speake generally
My sonne, thy tong shouldest thou restrain
At all times, but whan thou doest thy pain
To speake of God, in honour and prayere
The first vertue sonne, if thou wolt lere
Is to restrain, and kepe well thy tong
Thus learne children, whan they be yong
My sonne, of mikell speaking vnaised
(There lasse speaking had ynough suffised)
Cometh mikell harme, thus was me taught
In much speache, sinne wanteth naught
Wost thou wherfore a rakell tong serueth
Right as a sworde forcutteth and forkerueth
An arme on two, my dere sonne right so
A tong cutteth frendship all a two
A iangler is to God abhominable
Rede Salomon, so wise and honourable
Rede Dauid in his Psalmes, rede Seneck
My sonne speake not, ne with thy hedde beck
Dissimule as thou wer deef, if that thou here
The iangloure speaketh of perilous matere.
The Fleming saieth, learne if that thou leste
That litle iangling causeth much reste

My

My sonne, if thou no wicked word hast said
Thee dare not dread for to be bewraid
But he that hath misdaied, I dare well sain
He may by no way clepe his word again
Thing that is saied, is saied, and forth it goth
Though hun repent, or him be neuer so loth
He is thrall to him, to whome he hath saied
A tale, for which is now euill apaied
My sonne beware, and be none authour new
Of tidings, whether they be false or true
Where so thou come, emong hie or low
Kepe well thy tong, and thinke on the crow.

¶ Here endeth the Manciples tale, and here begynneth the Plowmans Prologue.

THe Plowman plucked vp his plow
whan Midsomer Moone was comen in
And saied his beasts should eat inowe
And lige in the Gralle vp to the chin
They been feble both Oxe and Cowe
Of hem nis left but bone and skin
He shoke of her shere and coulter off drowe
And honged his harnis on a pin.

He toke his tabard and his staffe eke
And on his head he set his hat
And said he would saint Thomas seke
On pilgrimage he goth forth plat
In scrippe he bare both bread and leke
He was forswonke and all forswat
Men mizt haue sene through both his chekes
And euery wang toth and where it sat.

Our host beheld well all about
And saw this man was Sunne ibrent
He knew well by his senged snout
And by his clothes that were to rent
He was a man wont to walke about
He nas not alway in cloister ipent
He could not religiousliche lout
And therefore was he fully shent.

Our host him axed, what man art thou?
Sir (qd. he) I am an hine
For I am wont to go to the plow
And earne my meat yer that I dine
To swette and swinke I make auow
My wife and children therewith to find
And serue God and I wist how
But we lewd men been full blind.

For clerkes say we shullen be fain
For her liuelod swette and swinke
And they right nought vs giue again
Neither to eat ne yet to drinke
They mow by law as they lain
Vs curse and dampne to hell brinke
Thus they putten vs to pain
With candles queint and belles clinke.

They make vs thralles at her lust
And say we mow not els be saued
They haue the corne and we the dust
Who speaketh thereagain they say he raued
What man (qd. our host) canst thou preach?
Come nere and tell vs some holy thing
Sir qd. he, I heard once teach,
A priest in pulpit a good preaching.

Say on qd. our host. I thee beseche
Sir I am redy at your bidding
I pray you that no man me reproch
While that I am my tale telling.

¶ Thus endeth the Prologue, and here followeth the first part of the tale.

ASterne strife is stirred new
In manie steedes in a stound
Of sondry seedes that been sewe
It seemeth that some been vnsound
For some be great growen vnground
Some beene souble, simple and small
Whether of hem is falser found
The falser foule mote him befall.

That one side is that I of tell
Popes, Cardinals, and Prelates
Parsons, Monkes, and Freres fell
Priours, Abbots, of great estates
Of heauen and hell they kepe the yates
And Peters successours they ben all
This is demed by old dates
But falshed foule mote it befall.

The other side been poore and pale
And people put out of prease
And seme caitiffes fore a cale
And euer in one without increase
I clepeth lollers and loudese
Who toteth on hem they been vntall

They

Thei been araied all for the peace
But falshed foule mote it befall.

Many a countrey haue I sought
To know the falser of these two
But euer my trauaile was for nought
All so ferre as I haue go
But as I wandred in a wro
In a wood beside a wall
Two foules saw I sit tho
The falser foule mote him befall.

That one did plete on the Popes side
A gryffon of a grimme stature
A Pellicane withouten pride
To these lollers laied his lure
He mused his matter in measure
To counsaile Christ euer gan he call
The Gryffon shewed as sharpe as fire
But falshed foule mote it befall.

The Pellicane began to preach
Both of mercy and of meknesse
And saied that Christ so gan vs teach
And meke and merciable gan diesse
The Euangely beareth witnesse
Alambe he likeneth Christ ouer all
In tokening that he mekest was
Sith pride was out of heauen fall.

And so should euery Christened be
Priests, Peters successours
Both lowliche and of low degre
And vsen none earthly honours
Neither croune, ne curious couetours
Ne pilloure, ne other proude pall
Ne nought to cofren vp great tresours
For falshed foule mote it befall.

Priests should for no cattell plede
But chasten hem in charite
Ne to no battaile should men lede
For inhaunsing of her owne degre
Nat wilne sittings in high see
Ne soueraintè in house ne hall
All worldly worship defie and flee
For who so willeth highnes foule shall fall.

Alas who may such saincts call
That wilneth weld earthly honour
As lowe as Lucifere such shall fall
In balefull blacknes tbuilden her boure
That eggeth the people to errour
And maketh them to hem thrall
To Christ I hold such one traitour.
As lowe as Lucifer such one shall fall.

That willeth to be kings peeres
And higher than the Emperour
Some that were but poore Freres
Now wollen ware a warriour
God is not her gouernour
That holdeth no man his permagall
While couetise is her counsaiour
All such falshed mote nede fall.

That hie on horse willeth ride
In glitterand gold of great aray
Ipainted and portred all in pride
No common knight may go so gay
Chaunge of clothing euery day
With golden girdles great and small
As boistous as is Bere at bay
All soch falshed mote nede fall.

With pride punished the poore
And some they sustaine with sale
Of holy Church maketh an hore
And filleth her wombe with wine and ale
With mony filled many a male
And chaffren churches when they fall
And telleth the people a leud tale
Such false faitours foule hem befall.

With chaunge of many manner metes
With song and solas sitting long
And filleth her wombe, and fast fretes
And from the meat to the gong
And after meat with harpe and song
And eche man mote hem Lords call
And hote spices euer emong
Soch false faitours foule hem fall.

And miters mo than one or two
Iperled as the quenes head
A staffe of gold, and pirrie lo
As heuy as it were made of lead
With cloth of gold both new and red
With glitterand gold as grene as gall
By dome will dampne men to dead
All such faitours foule hem fall.

And Christes people proudly curse
With brode booke, and braying bell
To put pennies in her purse
They woll sell both heauen and hell
And in her sentence and thou wilt dwell
They willen gesse in her gay hall
And though the soth thou of hem tell
In great cursing shalt thou fall.

That

That is blessed, that they blesse
And cursed that they curse woll
And thus the people they oppresse
And haue their lordships at full
And many be marchaunts of woll
And to purs penaies wol come thrall
The pore people they all to pull
Such false faitours foule hem fall

Lordes mote to hem loute
Obeysaunt to her rode blessing
They riden with her royal route
On a courser, as it were a king
With sadle of golde glittering
With curious harneis quaintly crallit
Struppes gape of golde maitling
All such falshed foule befall it.

Christes ministers clepen they bene
And rulen all in robberie
But Antichrist they seruen clene
Attyred al in tyrannie
Witnesse of Johns prophecie
That Antichrist is her admirall
Tuskelers attyred in trecherie
All such faitours foule hem fall.

Who saith that some of hem may sinne
He shalbe dome to be deed
Some of hem wol gladly winne
Al ayenst that which God forbed
Al holiest they clepen her heed
That of her rule is regall
Alas that euer they eaten breed
For all such falshed wol foule fall.

Her heed loueth all honour
And to be worshipped in word and dede
Kings mote to hem knele and coure
To the Apostles, that Christ forbede
To popes hestes such taketh more hede
Than to kepe Christes commaundement
Of gold and siluer mote ben her wede
They holdeth him hole omnipotent

He ordaineth by his ordinaunce
To parish priests a powere
To another a greater auaunce
A greater point to his mistere
But for he is highest in earth here
To him reserueth he many a point
But to Christ that hath no pere
Reserueth he neither opin no ioynt

So semeth he aboue all
And Christ aboue him nothing
When he sitteth in his stall
Dampneth and sauueth as him thinke
Such pride toforе God doth stinke
An angel bad John to him not knele
But only to God do his bowinge
Such willers of worship must nede euil fele.

They ne clepen Christ, but sanctus deus
And clepen her heed Sanctissimus
They that such a secte sewis
I trow they taken hem amisse
In earth here they haue her blisse
Her hie master is Belzebub
Christes people from hem wisse
For all such false will foule fall.

They mowe both bind and lose
And all is for her holy life
To saue or dampne they mowe chose
Betwene hem now is great strife
Many a man is killed with a knife
To wete which of hem haue lordship shall
For such Christ suffred woundes fiue
For all such falshed will foule fall.

Christ said: Qui gladio percutit
With sword shall die
He bad his priests peace and grith
And bad hem not drede for to die
And bad them be both simple and slie
And carke not for no catteil
And trusteth on God that sitteth on hie
For all false shall foule fall.

These wollen make men to swere
Ayenst Christes commaundement
And Christs members all to tere
On rood, as he were new prent
Such lawes they maken by common assent
Ech one it chooseth as a ball
Thus the poore be fully shent
But euer falshed foule it befall.

They vsen no simonie
But sellen churches and priories
Ne they vsen no enuie
But cursen all hem contraries
And hireth men by daies and yeres
With strength to hold hem in her stall
And cullieth all her aduersaries
Therefore falshed foule thou fall.

With purse they purchase personage
With purse they paynen hem to plede

And men of warre they wol wage
To bring her enemies to the dede
And lordes lues they woll lede
And much take, and giue but small
But he it so get, from it shall shede
And make such false right foule fall.

They halowe nothing but for hire
Church, font, ne vestement
And make orders ouercuery shire
But priestes pay for the parchement
Of tyatours they taken rent
Therewith they smere the shepes skall
For many churches ben oft inspent
And all such falshed yet foule it fall.

Some liueth not in lecherie
But haunten wenches, widowes, & wines
And punisheth the poore for purtee
Them selfe it vseth all their liues
And but a man to them shriues
To heuen come he neuer shall
He shal be cursed as he caitiues
To hell they saine that he shall fall

There was more mercy in Maximien
And in Nero, that neuer was good
Than is now in some of them
Whan he hath on his furred hoode
They folowe Christ that shed his bloode
To heuen, as bucket into the wall
Such wretches ben worse than woode
And al such faitours foule hem fall.

They giue her almes to the riche
To mainteynours, and to men of lawe
For to lordes they wol be liche
An harlottes sonne not worth an hawe
Sothfastnesse such han slawe
They kembe her crokettes with christall
And drede of God they haue doune drawe
All such faitours foule hem fall.

They maken parsons for the pennie
And Canons of her Cardinals
Unnethes amongest hem all is any
That he ne hath glosed the gospel fals
For Christ made neuer no Cathedrals
Ne with him was no Cardinall
With a redde hatte as vsen minstrals
But falshed foule mote it befall.

Their tything, and her offring bothe
They clemeth it by possession
Therof nil they none forgo
But robben men as raunsome
The tything of Turpe lucrum
With these maisters is meinall
Tything of bribry, and larson
Will make falshed full foule to fall.

They taken to ferme her sompnours
To harme the people what they may
To pardoners, and false faitours
Sell her seales I dare wel say
And all to holden great arraie
To multiply hem more metall
They dride full litel domes day
Whan al such shal foule fall

Such harlottes shul men disclaunder
For they shullen make her gree
And ben as proude as Alexander
And sain to the poore, wo be ye
By yere eche priest shal paie his fee
To encrease his lemmans call
Such heerdes shul wel yuel thee
And al such false shull foule fall.

And if a man be falsely famed
And woll make purgacioun
Than wol the officers be agramed
And assigne him fro toun to toun
So nede he muste pay raunsome
Though he be clene as is Christall
And than haue an absolution
But all such false shull foule fall.

Though he be gyltie of the dede
And that he may money paie
All the while his purse wol blede
He may vse it fro day to day
The bishops officers gone full gay
And this game they vsen ouer all
The poore to pill is all their pray
All such false shul foule fall.

Alas, God ordained neuer such lawe
Ne no such crafte of couetise
He forbad it by his lawe
Such gouernours mowen of God agrise
For all his rules is right wise
These newe pointes ben pure papall
And Goddes lawe they despise
And all such faitours shul foule fall.

They saine that Peter had the key
Of heuen and hell, to haue and holde
I trowe Peter toke no money
For no sinnes that he solde

Such

Such successours ben to bolde
In winning all their witte they wyall
Her conscience is waxen colde
And all such faitours foule hem fall.

Peter was neuer so great a fole
To leaue his key with such a loyell
Or take such cursed such a tole
He was aduised nothing well
I trowe they haue the key of hell
Their maister is of that place marshall
For there they dwellen hem to dwell
And with false Lucifer there to fall.

They ben as proud as Lucifare
As angry, and as enuious
From good faith they ben full farre
In couetise they ben curious
To catche catell as coutrous
As hound, that for hungre woll yall
Ungodly, and ungracious
And nedely such falshed shall foule fall.

The Pope and he were Peters heire
Me thinke he erreth in this tale
Whan chose of bishops is in despaire
To chosen him in diuers place
A lord shall write to him for grace
For his clerke amone pray he shall
So shall he spede his purchase
And all such falce foule hem fall.

Though he can no more good
A lordes praier shall be spedde
Though he be wild of will as wood
Nat vnderstanding what men han redde
A leud boster, and that God forbedde
As good a bishoppe is my horse tail
Such a Pope is foule bestedde
And at last woll foule fall.

He maketh bishops for erthly thanke
And nothing for Christes sake
Such that ben full fat and ranke
To soule heale none hede they take
All is well done what euer they make
For they shall answere at ones for all
For worldes thanke, such worth and wake
And all such falke shall foule fall.

Suche that can nat her Crede
With praier shull be made prelates
Nother came the gospell rede
Such shull now welde hie estates
The hie goddes frendship hem makes
They toteth on her summe totall
Such bere the keyes of hell gates
And such false shall foule fall

They forsake for Christes loue
Trauaile, hungre, thurst, and cold
For they ben ordred ouer all aboue
Out of youth till they ben old
By the dore they go, nat in to the fold
To helpe their shepe they nought trauail
Hired men all such I hold
And all such false foule hem fall

For Christ our king they woll forsake
And know him nought for his pouerte
For Christes loue they woll wake
And drinke piement ale aparte
Of God they seme nothing aferde
As lusty lueth, as did Lamual
And driuen her shepe into desert
All such faitours shull foule fall.

Christ hath xii. Apostles here
Now say they, there may be but one
That may not erre in no manere
Who leueth not this ben lost echone
Peter erred, so did not Jhon
Why is he cleped the principall?
Christ cleped him Peter, but himselfe the stone
All false faitours foule hem fall.

Why cursen they the crosiery
Christes christen creatures
For bytwene hem is now enuy
To be enhaunsed in honours
And Christen liuers with her labours
For they leuin on no man mortall
But do to deth with dishonours
And all such false foule hem fall

What knoweth a tillour at the plowe
The popes name, and what he hate
His crede sufficeth to him inowe
And knoweth a cardinall by his hatte
Rough is the poore vnrighty latte
That knoweth Christ his God royal
Such maters be not worth a quatte
But such false faitours foule hem fall

A king shall knele and kisse his showe
Christ suffered a sinfull to kisse his fete
Me thinketh he holdeth him hie inowe
So Lucifer did, that hie set
Such one me thinketh him selfe forget
Either to hie trouth he was nat call

Chriſt that ſuffered wounds wete
Shall make ſuch falſhed foule fall.

They laieth out her large nettes
For to take ſiluer and gold
Fulen coffers, and ſackes fettes
There as they ſoules catch ſhold
Her ſeruauntes be to them vnhold
But they can doublin their rentall
To bigge hem caſtles, and bigge hem hold
And all ſuch falſe foule hem fall.

¶ Here endeth the firſt part of this tale and hereafter folowеth the ſecond part.

TO accord with this word fall
No more Engliſh can I find
Shew another now I ſhall
For I haue moch to ſay behind
How prieſtes han the people pind
As curteis Chriſt hath me kind
And put this matter in my mind
To make this maner men amend

Shortly to ſhend hem, and ſhew now
How wrongfully they werch and walke
O hie God, nothing they tell, ne how
But in Goddes word, telleth many a balke
In harnes hold hem and in halke
And preachen of tithes and offrend
And vntruely of the goſpell talke
For his mercy God it amend

What is Antichriſt to ſay
But euen Chriſtes aduerſary
Such hath now ben many a day
To Chriſtes bidding full contrary
That from the trueth clene warry
Out of the way they ben wend
And Chriſtes people vntruely cary
God for his pity it amend

They liuen contrary to Chriſtes life
In hie pride againſt meekenеſſe
Againſt ſuffraunce they ben ſtrife
And angre ayenſt ſobrenеſſe
Againſt wiſedom wilfulneſſe
To Chriſtes tales litell tend
Againſt meaſure outragiouſneſſe
But whan God woll it may amend

Lordely life ayenſt lowlineſſe
And demin all without mercy
And couetiſe ayenſt largeſſe
Againſt treweth trechery
And againſt almeſſe enuy
Againſt Chriſt they comprehend
For chaſtite they mainteine lechery
God for his grace this amend

Againſt penaunce they vſe delights
Againſt ſuffraunce ſtrong defence
Ayenſt God they vſen euill rights
Ayenſt pitie puniſhments
Open euill ayenſt continence
Her wicked winning worſe diſpend
Sobrenеſſe they ſette into diſpence
But God for his goodneſſe it amend

Why cleimen they wholy his powere
And wrangлen ayenſt all his heſtes
His liuing folow they nothing here
But liuen worſe than witleſſe beeſtes
Of fiſh and fleſh they louen feeſtes
As lordes they hen wrode ſkend
Of Goddes poore they haten geſtes
God for his merry this amend

With diuers ſuch ſhall haue her dome
That ſaine that they be Chriſtes frendes
And do nothing as they ſhould done
All ſuch ben faiſer than ben fendes
On the people they ley ſuch bendes
As God is in earth they han offend
Succour for ſuch Chriſt now ſend vs
And for his mercy this amend

A token of Antichriſt they be
His careckes ben now wide iknow
Receiued to preach ſhall no man be
Without token of him I trow
Ech chriſten preeſt, to prechin owe
From God aboue they ben ſend
Goddes word, to all folke for to ſhow
Sinfull man for to amend

Chriſt ſent the poore for to preche
The royall rich he did not ſo
Now dare no poore the people teache
For Antichriſt is ouer all her foe
Among the people he mote go
He hath bidden, all ſuch ſuſpend
Some hath he hent, and thinketh yet mo
But all this God may well amend

All tho that han the worlde forſake

And

And liuen lowly, as God badde
Into her pyison shullen be take
Betin and bounden, and forth laddе
Hereof I rede no man be dradde
Christ said, his should be shend
Ech man ought hereof be gladde
For God full well it woll amend

They take on hem royall power
And say they haue swordes two
One curse to hell, one slee men here
For at his taking Christ had no mis
Yet Peter had of tho
But Christ, to Peter smite gan defend
And into the sheth badde put it tho
And all such mischeues God amend

Christ badde Peter kepe his shepe
And with his sword forbade hem smite
Sword is no tole with shepe to kepe
But to shepherdes that shepe woll bite
Me think: th such sheperdes ben to wite
Ayen her shepe with sword that contend
They driue her shepe with great dispite
But all this God may well amend

So successours to Peter be they nought
Whom Christ made chefe pasture
A sword no sheperd bien ought
But he would slee, as a bochour
For who so were Peters successour
Should bere his shepe till his backe bend
And shadow hem from euery shoure
And all this God may well amend

Successours to Peter ben these
In that, that Peter Christ forsoke
That had leuer the loue of God lese
Than a sheperd had to lese his hoke
He culleth the shepe as doth the Coke
Of hem taken they woll vntrend
And falsely glose the Gospell boke
God for his mercy them amend

After Christ had take Peter the key
Christ said, he must die for man
That Peter to Christ gan withsay
Christ bad him go behind Sathan
Such counsailours many of these men han
For worlds wele, God to offend
Peters successours they ben for than
But all such God may well amend

For Sathan is to say no more
But he that contrary to Christ is
In this they lerne Peters lore
They sewen him whan he did misse
They folow Peter forsoth in this
In all that Christ would Peter reprehend
But nat in that, that longeth to heuin blisse
God for his mercy hem amend.

Some of the apostels they sewen in case
Of ought that I can vnderstond
Him that betraied Christ, Judas
That bare the purse in euery lond
And all that he might sette on hond
He hidde and stale, and mispend
His rule these traitours han in hond
Almighty God hem amend

And at the last his lord gan tray
Cursedly through his false couetise
So would these traine him for money
And they wisten in what wise
They be seker of the selfe enuise
From all sothnesse they ben fiend
And couetise chaungen with queintise
Almighty God all such amend

Were Christ on erth here eftsone
These would dampne him to die
All his hestes they han forgone
And saine his sawes ben heresie
And ayenst his commaundements they cry
And dampne all his to be brend
For it liketh not hem such losengery
God Almighty hem amend

These han more might in England here
Than hath the king and all his law
They han purchased hem such powere
To taken hem whom list not knaw
And say that heresie is her saw
And so to pyison wol hem send
It was not so by elder daw
God for his mercy it amend

The kings law woll no man deme
Angerlich without answere
But if any man these misqueme
He shall be baighteth as a bere
And yet well worse they woll him tere
And in pyison woll him pend
In giues, and other gere
Whan God woll, it may amend

The king taketh nat his men
But by assent of the comminalte
But these ech yere woll raunsom hem

Maisterfully, more than doth he
Her scales by yere better be
Than is the kings in extend
Her officers han greater fee
But this mischefe God amend

For who so woll proue a testament
That is nat all worth tenne pound
He shall pay for the parchment
The third of the money all round
Thus the people is raunsound
They say such part to hem should apend
There as they gripen it goeth to ground
God for his mercy it amend

A simple fornicacion
Twenty shillings he shall pay
And than haue an absolucion
And all the yere vsen it forth he may
Thus they letten hem go astray
They recke nat though the soule be brend
These kepen iuel Peters kay
And all such shepherds God amend

Wonder is, that the parliament
And all the lords of this lond
Hereto taken so litel entent
To helpe the people out of her hond
For they ben harder in their bond
Worse beat, and better brend
Than to the king is vnderstand
God him helpe this to amend.

What Bishoppes, what religions
Han in this land as much lay fee
Lordshippes and possessions
More than Lordes, it semeth me
That maketh hem lese charite
They mow not to God attend
In earth they haue so high degre
God for his mercy it amend

The Emperour yafe the Pope somtime
So high lordship him about
That at last the sely time
The proud Pope put him out
So of this realme is in dout
But lords beware and them defend
For now these folke be wonders stout
The King and lords now this amend.

¶ Thus endeth the second part of this tale, and hereafter followeth the third.

Moyles law forbode it tho
That preests should no lord-shippes weld
Christs gospell biddeth also
That they should no lordshippes held
Ne Christs apostels were neuer so bold
No such lordshippes to hem enbrace
But smeren her shepe and kepe her fold
God amend him for his grace

For they ne ben but counterfete
Men may know hem by her fruite
Her greatnesse maketh hem God forgete
And take his meknesse in dispite
And they were poore and had but lite
They nold nat demen after the face
But norish her shepe, and hem nat bite
God amend hem for his grace

Griffon.

What canst thou prech ayenst Chanons
That men clepen seculere?

Peli. They ben curates of many toumes
On yearth they haue great powere
They haue great prebends and dere
Some two or thre, and some mo
A personage to ben a playing fere
And yet they serue the king also

And let to ferme all that fare
To whom that woll most giue therfore
Some woll spend, and some woll spare
And some woll lay it vp in store
A cure of soule they care not fore
So they mow money take
Whether her soules be wonne or lore
Her profites they woll not forsake

They haue a gedering procuratour
That can the poore people enplede
And robben hem as a rauinour
And to his lord they money lede
And catch of quicke and eke of dede
And richen him and his lord eke
And to robbe the poore can giue good rede
Of old and yong, of hole and sicke

Therwith they purchase hem lay fee
In lond, there hem liketh best
And build also brode as a cite
Both in the East, and eke in the west
To purchase thus they ben full prest
But on the poore they woll nought spend
Ne no good giue to Goddes gest

Ne send him some that all hath send.

By her seruice soch woll liue
And trust that other into treasure
Though all her parish die vnshriue
They woll nat giue a rose flour
Her life should be as a mirrour
Both to lered and to lend also
And teach the people her lele labour
Soch mister men been all misgo.

Some of hem ben hard nigges
And some of hem ben proud and gay
Some spend her good vpon gigges
And finden hem of great aray
Alas, what thinke these men to say
That thus dispenden Goddes good
At the dreadfull domes day
Soch wretches shull be worse than wood

Some her churches neuer ne sie
Ne neuer o peny, thider ne send
Though the poore parishens for hunger die
O peny on hem will they not send
Haue they receiuing of the rent
They recke neuer of the remenaunt
Alas, the deuill hath cleane hem blent.
Soch one is sathanas sojournaunt.

And vsen horedome and harlottry
Louetise, pompe, and pride
Sloth, wrath, and eke enby
And sewen sinne by euery side
Alas, where thinke soch tabide
How woll they accomptes yeld
From hie God they mow hem not hide
Soch willers witte is not worth a neld.

They ben so rooted in richesse
That Christs pouert is foryet
Serued with so many messe
Hem thinketh that Manna is no meat
All is good that they mowen geat
They wene to liue euermore
But whan God at dome is seat
Soch treasour is a feble store.

Unneth mote they Matins say
For counting and courtholding
And yet he iangeleth as Jay
And vnderstont himself nothing
He woll serue both Erle and King
For his finding and his fee
And hide his tithing and his offring
This is a feble charite.

Other they been proud, or couetous
Or they been hard, or hungry
Or they been liberall or lecherous
Or els medlers with Marchandry
Or mainteiners of men with maistry
Or stewards, countours, or pleadours
And serue God in Ypocrisie
Soch priests been Christs false traitours

They been false, they been vengeable
And beguilen men in Christs name
They been vnstedfast and vnstable
To tray her lord, hem thinketh no shame
To serue God they been full lame
Goddes theues, and falsely steale
And falsely Goddes word defame
In winning is her worlds weale.

Antichrist these serue all
I pray thee who may say naye
With Antichrist such shull fail
They folowen him in deed and fay
They seruen hem in rich aray
To serue Christ soch falsely fain
Why, at the dreadfull domes day
Shull they not folow him to pain.

That knowen hem self that they doen ill
Ayenst Christs commaundement
And amend hem neuer ne will
But serue sathan by one assent
Who saieth soth he shall be shent
Or speaketh ayenst her false liuing
Who so well liueth shall be brent
For soch been greater than the king.

Popes, Bishops, and Cardinals
Chanons, Parsons, and Vicare
In Goddes seruice I trow been fals
That Sacraments sellen here
And been as proud as Lucifere
Ech man loke whether that I lie
Who so speaketh ayenst her powere
It shall be holden heresie.

Loke how many orders take
Onely of Christ, for his seruice
That the worlds goods forsake
Who so taketh orders, or other wise
I trow that they shall sore agrise
For all the glose that they conne
All sewen not this assise
In euill time they thus begonne.

Loke how many emong hem all

Holden not this hie way
With Antichrist they shullen fall
For they wollen God betray
God amend hem that best may
For many men they maken shend
They weten well the sooth I say
But the deuill hath foule hem biend.

Some on her churches dwell
Apparailed proudly, proud of port
The seuen sacraments they done sell
In cattell catching is her comfort
Of ech matter they wollen mell
And doen hem wrong is her disport
To afray the people they bene fell
And hold hem lower than doth the lord.

For the tithing of a Ducke
Or of an Apple, or an Aie
They make men sweare vpon a boke
Thus thei foulen Christes faie
Such bearen cuill heauen kaie
They mowen assoile. they mow shriue
With mens wiues strongly play
With true tillers hurte and striue.

At the wrestling, and at the wake
And chicke chaumbours at the nale
Market beaters, and medling make
Hoppen and houten with heue and hale
At faire fresh, and at wine stale
Dine and drinke, and make debate
The seuen Sacraments set a sale
How kepe such the kaies of heauen gate.

Hennes wiues they wollen hold
And though that they been right lozy
To speake they shull not be so bold
For sompning to the Consistory
And make hem saie mouthe I lie
Though they it sawe with her eye
His lemman holden openly
No man so hardy to aske why

He woll haue tything and offring
Maugre whosoeuer it grutche
And twise on the daie he woll sing
Goddes priestes nere none such
He mote on hunting with dogge and biche
And blowen his horne, and crien hey
And sorcerie vsen as a Witche
Such kepen cuill Peters key.

Yet they mote haue some stocke or stone
Gaille painted, and proudly dight
To maken men leeuen vpon
And saie that it is full of might
About such, men set vp great light
Other such stockes shull stand therby
As darke as it were midnight
For it may make no maistrie

That it leude people see mowe
Thou Mary, thou worchest wonder things
About that, that men offren to nowe
Hongen broches, ouches, and ringes
The priest purchaseth the offrings
But he nill offer to none Image
Who is the soule that he for singes
That preacheth for such a pilgrimage.

To men and women that been poore
That been Christes awne likenesse
Hen shullen offer at her doore
That suffre hunger and distresse
And to such Images offer lesse
That mowe not ete thurst ne cold
The poore in spirite gan Christ blesse
Therfore offreth to feeble and old.

Buckelers brode, and swerdes long
Baudrike, with baselardes kene
Such tooles about her necke they hong
With Antichrist such priestes been
Upon her deedes it is well seen
Whom they seruen, whom they honouren
Antichristes they been clene
And Goddes goods falsly deuouren.

Of scarlet and grene gaie gounes
That mote be shape for the newe
To clippen and kissen counten in tounes.
The damoscles that to the daunce sewe
Cutted clothes to sewe her hewe
With long pikes on her shone
Our Goddes Gospell is not true
Either they seruen the deuill or none.

Now been priestes pokes so wide
That men must enlarge the vestiment
The holy Gospell they doen hide
For the contrarien in raiment
Such priestes of Lucifer been sent
Like conquerours they been arayed
The proude pendauntes at her arse ypent
Falsely the trueth they han betrayed.

Shrift silver such wollen aske is
And woll men creepe to the crouche
None of the Sacramentes saue askes

Without

Without mede shall no man touch
On her Bishop their warant vouch
That is the law of the decre
with mede and money thus they mouch
And thus they saun is charite.

In the middes of her Masse
They nill haue no man but for hire
And full shortly let forth passe
Soch shull men find in ech shire
That Parsonages for profite desire
To liue in liking and in lustes
I dare not sain, Sans ose ico dire
That soche been Antichristes prestes

Or they yek the bishoppes why
Or they mote been in his seruice
And holden forth her harlottry
Soche prelates been of feable empryse
Of Goddes grame soch men agrise
For soch matters that taken mede
How they excuse hem, and in what wise
Ne thinketh they ought greatly drede.

They sain that it to no man longeth
To reprouc them though they erre
But falsly Goddes goodes they fongeth
And therwith maintein wo and werre
Her deedes should be as bright as sterre
Her liuing, leud mannes light
They say the Pope may not erre
Nede must that pasle mannes might.

Though a preest lie with his lēman al night
And tellen his felow, and he him
He goth to Masse anon right
And saieth he singeth out of time
His birde abideth him at his inne
And dighteth his diner the meane while
He singeth his Masse for he would winne
And so he weneth God begile.

Hem thinketh long till they be met
And that they vsen forth all the pere
Emong the folke whan he is set
He holdeth no man halfe his pere
Of the Bishop he hath powere
To soile men, or els they been lore
His absolucion may make them skere
And wo is the soule that he singeth for.

The Griffon began for to threte
And saied, of Monkes canst thou ought
The Pellican said, they been full grete
And in this world moch wo hath wrought
Sainct Benet, that her order brought
Ne made hem neuer on soch manere
I trow it came neuer in his thought
That they should vse so great power.

That a man should a Monke lord call
Ne serue on knees, as a king
He is as proud as Prince in pall
In meat, and drinke, and all thing
Some wearen miter and ring
With double Worsted well idight
With roiall meat and rich drinke
And rideth on a courser as a knight.

With hauke and with hounds eke
With broches or ouches on his hood
Some say no Masse in all a weke
Of deinties is her most food
With lordshippes and with bondmen
This is a roiall region
Sainct Benet made neuer non of hem
To haue lordship of man ne toune.

Now they been queint and curious
With fine cloth clad and serued cleane
Proud, angry, and enuious
Malice is moch that they meane
In catching crafty and couetous
Lordly liuen in great liking
This liuing is not religious
Accoarding to Benet in his liuing.

They been clerkes, her courts they ouerse
Her poore tenaunce fully they slite
The hier that a man amerced be
The gladlier they woll it write
This is farre from Christes pouerte
For all with couetise they endite
On the poore they haue no pite
Ne neuer hem cherish but ouer with bite.

And commenly soch been comon
Of poore people, and of hem begete
That this perfection han inomen
Her fathers riden nat but on her fete
And trauailen sore for that they eat
In pourt liueth yong and old
Her fathers suffreth drought and weat
Many hungry meales, thurst, and cold.

And all this the Monkes han forsake
For Christes loue and sainct Benete
To pride and ease haue hem take
This religion is euill beseat
Had they been out of religioun

They

They must haue hanged at the plow
Threshing and diking fro toune to toune
With sory meat, and not halfe inow.

Therfore they han this all forsake
And taken to riches, pride, and ease
Full few for God woll Monkes hem make
Little is soch order for to praise
Sainct Benet ordained it not so
But bad hem be therein
In churlich maner line and go
Boistous in yearth, and not lordlish.

They disclaunder sainct Benet
Therfore they haue his holy curse
Sainct Benet with hem neuer met
But if they thought to robbe his purse
I can no more hereof tell
But they ben like tho before
And cleane serue the deuill of hell
And ben his treasure and his store.

And all soch other counterfaitours
Chanons, Canons, and soch disguised
Ben Goddes enemies and traitours
His true religion han foule dispised
Of Freres I haue told before
In a making of a Crede
And yet I could tell worse and more
But men would werien it to rede.

As Goddes goodnes no man tell might
With tre ne speake, ne thinke in thought
So her falshed, and her vnright
May no man tell that euery God wrought
The griffon saied, thou canst no good
Thou came neuer of no gentill kind
Other I trow thou wartest wood
Or els thou hast lost thy mind.

Should holy church haue no hedde?
Who should be her gouernaile
Who should her rule, who should her redde
Who should her forthren, who should auaile
Ech man shall liue by his trauaile
Who best doeth, shall haue most mede
With strength if men the church assaile
With strength men must defend her nede.

And the Pope were purely poore
Nedy, and nothing ne had
He should be driuen from doore to doore
The wicked of him nold not be drad
Of soch an hedde men would be sade
And sinfully liuen as hem lust
With strength, amends soch be made
With wepen Wolues from shepe be wust.

If the Pope and prelates would
So begge, and bid, bow and borow
Holy church should stand full cold
Her seruaunts sit and soupe sorow
And they were noughty foule and horow
To worship God men would hate
Both on euen and on morow
Soch harlotry men would hate.

Therfore men of holy church
Should be honest in all thing
Worshipfull Gods workes werch
So semeth it to serue Christ her king
In honest and in cleane clothing
With vessels of gold and clothes rich
To God honestly to make offring
To his Lordship none is lich.

The Pellican cast an houge crie
And saied alas, why saiest thou so
Christ is our hedde that sitteth on hie
Heddes ne ought we haue no mo
We ben his membres both also
And father he taught vs to call him als
Maisters to be called defended he tho
All other maisters ben wicked and fals.

That taketh maistry in his name
Ghostly, and for yearthly good
Kings and lords should lordship haue
And rule the people with mild mode
Christ for vs that shed his blood
Bad his priests no mastership haue
Ne carke not for cloth ne food
From euery mischief he will him saue.

Her rich clothing shall be rightwisnesse
Her treasure, true life shall be
Charite shall be her richesse
Her Lordship shall be vnite
Hope in God, her honeste
Her vessell cleane conscience
Poore in spirit, and humilite
Shall be holy churches defence.

What saied the Griffon may thee greue
That other folkes faren wele
What hast thou to doen with her liue
Thy falshed ech man may fele
For thou canst no catell gete
But liuest in lond as a forell
With gloling getest thou thy mete

So

Godfareth the deuill that wonneth in hell.

He would that eche man ther ſhould dwell
For he liueth in cleane enuie
So with the tales that thou doeſt tell
Thou wouldeſt other people deſtrie
With your gloſe, and your hereſie
For ye can liue no better life
But clene in Hypocriſie
And dringeſt thee in wo and ſtrife.

And therewith haue not to doen
For ye ne haue herto no cure
Ye ſerue the deuill neyther God ne man
And he ſhall paie you your hire
For ye woll fare well at feaſtes
And warme clothed for the cold
Therefore ye gloſe Goddes heeſtes
And begyle the people yong and old.

And all the ſeuen Sacraments
Ye ſpeake a yenſt, as ye were ſlye
Ayenſt tythings, offrings with your entents
And on our Lords body falſely lye
And all this ye doen to liue in eaſe
As who ſaieth, there been none ſuch
And ſain the Pope is not worth a peaſe
To make the people ayen him groche.

And this commeth in by fendes
To bring the chriſten in diſtaunce
For they would that no man were frendes
Leaue thy chattering with miſchaunce
If thou liue well, what wilt thou more
Let other men liue as hem liſt
Spende in good, or kepe in ſtore
Other mennes conſcience neuer thou niſt

Ye han no cure to anſwere fore
What meddle ye, that han not to doen
Let men liue as they han doen yore
For thou ſhalt anſwere for no man
The Pellican ſaied, ſir, naie
I deſpiſed not the Pope
Ne no Sacrament, loth to ſaie
But ſpeake in charitie and good hope.

But I deſpiſe her hie pride
Her richeſſe, that ſhould be poore in ſpirite
Her wickednеſſe is knowe ſo wide
They ſerue God in falſe habite
And tournen meekeneſſe into pride
And lowlineſſe into hie degre
And Goddes wordes tourne and hide
And that am I moued by charitie.

To let men to liue ſo
With all my conning and all my might
And to warne men of her wo
And to tellen hem trouth and right
The Sacraments be ſoule heale
If they been vſed in good vſe
Ayenſt that ſpeake I neuer a deale
For than were I nothing wiſe.

But they that vſen hem in miſſe manere
Or ſet hem vp to any ſale
I trowe they ſhall abie hem dere
This is my reaſon, this is my tale
Who ſo taketh hem vnrightfulliche
Ayenſt the ten commaundements
Or by gloſe wretched liche
Sellen any of the Sacraments.

I trowe they do the deuill homage
In that they weten they do wrong
And thereto I dare well wage
They ſerue Sathan for all her ſong
To tythen and offren is holſome life
So it be doen in due manere
A man to houſelin and to ſhriue
Wedding, and all the other in fere.

So it be nother ſolde ne bought
Ne take ne gyue for couetiſe
And it be ſo taken it is nought
Who ſelleth hem ſo, maie ſore agriſe
On our lordes body I doe not lie
I ſaie ſooth through true rede
His fleſh and blood through his miſterie
Is there, in the forme of brede.

How it is there, it nedeth not ſtriue
Whether it be ſubget or accident
But as Chriſt was, whan he was on liue
So is he there verament
If Pope or Cardinall liue good liue
As Chriſt commaunded in his Goſpell
Ayenſt that woll I not ſtriue
But me thinketh they liue not well.

For if the Pope liued as God bedde
Pride and highneſſe he ſhould deſpiſe
Richeſſe, couetiſe, and croune on hedde
Meekeneſſe and pouertie he ſhould vſe.
The Griffon ſaied he ſhould abie
Thou ſhal be brent in balefull fire
And all thy ſect I ſhall deſtrie
Ye ſhall be hanged by the ſwire.

Ye ſhullen be hanged and to drawe

who

Who giueth you leaue for to preache
Or speake against Goddes lawe
And the people thus falsely to teache
Thou shalt be cursed with booke and bell
And dissceuered from holie churche
And cleane ydampned into hell
Otherwise but ye woll worche.

The Pellican saied that I ne drede
Your cursing is of little value
Of God I hope to haue my mede
For it is falshed that ye shewe
For ye been out of charitie
And wilneth vengeaunce, as did Nero
To suffren I woll redy be
I drede not that thou canst do.

Christ bad ones suffre for his loue
And so he taught all his seruaunts
And but thou amende for his sake aboue
I drede not all thy maintenaunce
For if I drede the worldes hate
Me thinketh I were little to praise
I drede nothing your hie estate
Ne I drede not your disease.

Woll ye tourne and leaue your pride
Your hie porte, and your richesse
Your cursing should not go so wide
God bring you into rightwisenesse
For I drede not your tyrannie
For nothing that ye can done
To suffre I am all redie
Siker I recke neuer how sone.

The Griffon grinned as he were wood
And looked lourely as an Owle
And swore by cokes harte blood
He would him teare euery doule
Holy churche thou disclaundrest foule
For thy reasons I woll thee all to race
And make thy flesche to rote and moule
Losell, thou shalt haue hard grace.

The Griffon flewe forth on his waie
The Pellican did sit and weepe
And to himselfe he gan saie
God would that any of Christes sheepe
Had heard, and ytake kepe
Eche a worde that here saied was
And would it write and well it kepe
God would it were all for his grace.

Plowman.

I answerd, and saied I would
If for my trauaile any man would pey
Pellican. He saied yes, these þ God han sold
For they han store of money
Plowman. I saied, tell me and thou mate
Why tellest thou mennes trespace?
Pellican. He said, to amend hem in good fay
If God woll giue me any grace.

For Christ himselfe is likened to me
That for his people dien on Rood
As fare I, right so fareth he
He feedeth his birdes with his blood
But these doen euill ayenst good
And been his foen vnder frendes face
I told hem how her liuing stood
God amend hem for his grace.

Plowman.

What ayleth the Griffon, tell why
That he holdeth on the other side
For they two been likely
And with kindes roben wide
Pellican. The foule betokeneth pride
As Lucifer, that high flewe was
And sith he did him in euill hide
For he agylted Goddes grace.

As birde flyeth vp in the aire
And liueth by birdes that been meke
So these been flowe vp into dispaire
And shenden sely soules eke
The soules that been in sinnes seke
He culleth hem, knele therefore alas
For vnkindly Goddes forbode breke
God amende it for his grace.

The hinder parte is a Lion
A robber and a raucner
That robbeth the people in earth doune
And in earth holdeth none his pere
So fareth this foule bothe ferre and nere
And with tẽporell strength the people chase
As a Lion proude in earth here
God amende hem for his grace.

Pellican.

He flewe forth with his winges twaine
All drouping, dased, and dull
But sone the Griffon came again
Of his soules the earth was full
The Pellican he had cast to pull
So great a nomber neuer seen there was
What maner of soules tellen I woll
If God woll giue me of his grace.

With the Griffon comen soules fele
Rauens, Rokes, Crowes, and Pie
Graye soules, agadred wele

I gurd aboue they would hie
Gledes and bolards weren hem by
White molles and puttockes token her place
And lapwings, that well conneth lie
This felowship han forgerd her grace

Long the Pellican was out
But at last he commeth againe
And brought with him the Phenix stout
The Grifon would haue slow full faine
His foules that flewen as thicke as raine
The Phenix tho began him chase
To flie from him it was in vaine
For he did vengeaunce and no grace

He slew hem doune without mercy
There astart neither free ne thrall
On him they cast a rufull crie
When the Grifon doun was fall
He bete him not, but slew hem all
Whyther he hem droue no man may trace
Under the erth me thought they yall
Alas they had a feble grace

The Pellican then ared right
For my writing if I haue blame
Who woll for me fight of flight
Who shall sheld me from shame
He that had a maid to dame
And the lambe that slaine was
Shall sheld me from gostly blame
For erthly harme is Goddes grace

Therfore I pray euery man
Of my writing haue me excused
This writing writeth the Pellican
That thus these people hath disguised
For I am freshfully aduised
I nill not maunteine his manace
For the Deuill is often disguised
To bring a man to euill grace

writeth the Pellican and not me
For herof I nill not auow
In hie ne in low, ne in no degre
But as a fable take it ye now
To holy church I will me bow
Ech man to amend him Christ send space
And for my writing me alow
He that is almighty for his grace.

¶ Here endeth the Plowmans tale, and hereafter foloweth the Parsons prologue.

By that the Plowman had his tale ended
The sunne fro the south side is discended
So low, that it was nat to my sight
Degrees of five and twenty on hight
Tenne at clocke it was, so as I gesse
For enleuen fote, a litell more or lesse
My shadow was at that time, as there
Of such fete as my length parted were
In sixe fete equally of proporcion
Therwith the moones exaltacion
I mene Libra, alway gan ascend
As we were entring at the thropes end
For which our Host, as he was wont to gie
Aye in this case, this holy company
Said in this wise, lordings euerichone
Now lacketh vs no tale more than one
Fulfilled is my sentence and my decre
Who woll now tell a tale let se
Almost fulfilled is my ordinaunce
I pray to God so yeue him right good chaunce
That telleth this tale to vs lustely
Sir preest (qd. he) art thou a vicary
Or art thou a parson, say soth by thy fay
Be what thou be, breke thou not our play
For euery man saue thou, hath told his tale
Unbokell, and shew vs what is in thy male
For trewly me thinketh by thy chere
Thou shouldest knit vp well a great matere
Tell vs a fable anon, for cockes bones
This Person him answerd all at ones
Thou gettest fable none told of me
For Poule, that writeth to Timothe
Repreueth hem that waiuen sothfastnesse
And techen fables, and such wretchednesse
Why should I sow draffe out of my fist
Whan I may sow whete, if that my list
For which I say, if that ye list to here
Moralite, and of vertuous matere
And than, if ye woll yene me audience
I would full faine at Christs reuerence
Done you pleasaunce leefull, as I can
But trusteth well, I am a sotherne man
I can not iest, rum, ram, ruf, by letter
And God wote, rime hold I but litle better
And therfore if ye list, I woll noe glose
I woll you tell a litle tale in prose
To knit vp all this feest, and make an end
And Iesu for his grace, wit me send
To shew you the way, in this voyage
Of thilke perilte glorioufe pilgrimage
That hight Hierusalem celestiall
And if you vouchsaue, anon I shall

Begin vpon my tale, for which I pray
Tell your aduise, I can not better say
But natheleſſe this meditacion
I put it aye, vnder the correccion
Of clerkes, for I am not textuell
I take but the ſentence, truſteth well
Therfore I make proteſtacion
That I woll ſtand to correccion
Vpon this word, we haue aſſented ſone
For as it ſemed, it was for to done
To end in ſome vertuous ſentence
And for to yeue him ſpace and audience
And bade our Hoſt he ſhould to him ſay
That all we, to tell his tale him pray
Our Hoſt had the words for vs all
Sir preeſt (qd. he) now fayre mote you befall
Say that what ye liſt, & we ſhall gladly here
And with word he ſaid in this manere
Telleth (qd. he) your meditacioun
But haſteth you, the ſunne woll adoun
Beth fructuous, and that in litle ſpace
And to do well, God ſend you his grace.

¶ Here endeth the Parſons prologue, and hereafter folo-weth his tale.

Ieremi. vi. State ſuper vias, et videte, et interogate de ſemitis antiquis, que ſit via bona, & ambulate in ea: et inuenietis refrigerium animabus veſtris.

OUr ſwete lorde God of heuen, that no man wol periſh, but woll that we turn al to the knowlege of him, and to the blisful life that is perdurable, amoneſheth vs by the Prophet Ieremy, that ſaith in this wiſe. Stondeth vpon the waies and ſeeth, and aſketh of old pathes: that is to ſay, of olde ſentences, whiche is the good way, and walketh in that way, and ye ſhall finde refreſhing for your ſoules, &c. Many been the waies eſpirituelles that lede folke to our lorde Jeſu Chriſt, and to the reigne of glory: Of which waies there is a full noble way, and full conuenable, whiche maye not faile to man ne to woman, that through ſinne hath miſgone fro the right way of Hieruſalem celeſtiall: and this way is called penitence, of which man ſhould gladly herken and enquire with all his hert, to wete what is penitence, and which is called penitence, and howe many maners bene of actions or werkinges of penitence, and howe many ſpeces there ben of penitence, and which thinges apertaine and behoue to penitence, and which thinges diſtourbe penitence.

Saint Ambroſe ſaith, that penitence is the plaining of maune for the gilte that he hath doen, and no more to do any thing for which him ought to playne. And ſome doctours ſaith, Penitence is the waimenting of man that ſorroweth for his ſinne, and paineth him ſelfe, for he hath miſdon. Penitence with certaine circumſtaunces, is very repentaunce of a man that holte himſelfe in ſorow, and other payne for his giltes: and for he ſhall be very penitent, he ſhall firſt bewaile ſinnes that he hath done, and ſtedfaſtly purpoſe in his hert to haue ſhrifte of mouthe, and to do ſatiſfaction, and neuer to doe thing, for which him ought more bewaile or complaine, and continew in good workes: or els his repentaunce may not auaile. For as ſaint Iſodor ſaieth, He is a iaper and a lier, and no very repentaunt, that eftſone doth thing, for which him ought repente. Weping and not for to ſtint to do ſinne, may not auaile: But natheleſſe men ſhall hope that at euery time that man falleth, be it neuer ſo oft, that he may ariſe through penaunce, if he haue grace: but certaine it is great dout, for as ſaieth S. Gregory Unnethes ariſeth out of ſinne, that is charged with the charge of euill vſage. And therefore repentaunt folke, that ſtint for to ſinne, and leue ſinne or ſinne leue them, holy Church holdeth them ſiker of their ſaluacion. And he that ſinneth, and verely repenteth him in his laſt end: holy church yet hopeth his ſaluacion, by the great mercy of our lord Jeſu Chriſt, for his repentaunce: but take the ſiker way.

And now ſith I haue declared you, what thing is Penitence, now ye ſhall vnderſtond, that there been three actions of Penitence. The firſt is, that a maune be baptiſed after that he hath ſinned. Saint Auguſtin ſaieth, but he be penitent for his old ſinfull life, he may not beginne the new clene life: For certes if he be baptiſed without penitence of his old gilt, he retaineth the marke of baptiſme, but not the grace ne the remiſſion of his ſinnes, till he haue very repentaunce. An other defaut is this, that men doe deedly ſinne after that they haue receyued baptiſme. The thirde defaute is this, that men fall in veniall ſinnes after her baptiſme, fro day to day.

Thereof

Thereof saith saint Augustin, that penitence of good and humble folke, is the penitence of euery day.

The speces of penitence ben thre: That one of hem is solempne: another is commune, and the thirde is priuy. That penaunce that is solempne is in two maners: As to be put out of holy church in lent, for slaughter of children, and suche maner thynge. An other is when a man hath sinned openly, of whiche sinne the fame is openly spoken in the country: and than holy church by iudgement, distraineth him for to do open penaunce.

Commen penaunce is, that priests enioyne men in certaine case: as for to go peraventure naked in pilgrimage, or bare fote. Priuy penaunce is that, that men do all day for priuy sinnes, of which we shrine vs priuely, and receine priuy penaunce.

Now shalt thou understond, what is behouefull and necessary to very perfite penitence: and this stont on thre thinges. Contrition of hert, confession of mouth, and satisfaction. For which saieth sainct Johan Chrisostom. Penitence distraineth a man to accept benignely euery paine, that him is enioyned, with contrition of hert, and shrift of mouth, with satisfaction: and in werking of all manner humilite. And this is fruitfull penitence ayenst thre thinges, in which we wrath our lord Jesu Christ: this is to say. By delite in thynking, by rechelesnes in speaking, and by wicked sinnefull werking. And ayenst these wicked giltes is penitence, that may be likened vnto a tree.

The rote of this tree is contricion, that hideth him in the hert of him that is very repentaunt, right as the roote of a tree hideth him in the earth. Of this root of contricion springeth a stalke, that bereth braunches and leues of confession, and fruit of satisfaccion. For which Christ saith in his gospell. Doth digne fruite of penitence, for by this fruite men may knowe the tree, and not by the rote that is hid in the herte of manne, ne by the braunches, ne the leues of confession. And therefore our lord Jesu Christ saith thus: By the fruit of hem shall ye knowe hem. Of this roote also springeth a sede of grace, the which sede is mother of all likernesse, and this sede is eger & hote. The grace of this sede springeth of God through remembraunce on the day of dome, and on the paines of hell. Of this matter saieth Salomon, that in the drede of God, man forleteth his sin. The heat of this sede is the loue of God, and the desiring of the ioy perdurable: This heat draweth the hert of man to God, and doth him hate his sinne: For sothely there is nothing that sauoureth so well to a child, as the milke of his nourice, ne nothing is to him more abhominable than that milke, whan it is medled with other meat. Right so the sinfull man that loueth his sinne, him semeth that it is to him most swete of any thing, but fro that time he loueth sadly our lord Jesu Christ, and desireth the life perdurable, there is to him no thing more abhominable: For sothely the law of God is the loue of God. For which Dauid the prophet saieth: I haue loued thy law, and hated wickednesse: He that loueth God, kepeth his law and his word.

This tre saw the prophete Daniel in spirite, on the vision of Nabuchodonosor, whan he counsailed him to do penitence. Penaunce is the tree of life, to hem that it receyue, and he that holdeth him in very penitence is blessed after the sentence of Salomon. In this penitence or contricion, man shall understond foure thinges, that is to say: What is contricion, and which ben the causes that moue a man to contricion, and how he should be contrite, and what contricion auaileth to the soule. Than is it thus, that contricion is the very sorow, that a man receiueth in his hert for his sinnes, with sadde purpose to shriue him, and to do penaunce, and neuer more to doe sinne: And this sorow shall be in this maner, as saieth saint Bernard: It shall be heuy and greuouse, and full sharpe and poinaunt in hert.

First, for a man hath agilted his lord and his creatoure, and more sharpe and poynaunt, for he hath agilted his father celestiall: And yet more sharpe and poynaunt, for he hath wrathed and agilted him that bought him, that with his precious blood hath deliuered vs fro the bondes of sinne, and fro the cruelte of the diuell, and fro the paines of hell.

The causes that ought moue a man to contricion beneth. First a man shall remembre him of his sinnes, but loke that that remembraunce ne be to him no delite, by no waye, but greate shame and sorowe for his sinnes. For Job saith, sinfull men done workes worthy of confession. And therefore saieth Ezechiell: I woll remembre me all the yeres of my life, in the bitternesse of my herte. And God saieth in the Apocalipse: Remembre ye from whence that ye been fall, for before that time

that ye sinned, ye were children of God, and limmes of the reigne of God: But for your sin ye ben waxen thrall and foule, and membres of the fende: hate of angels, slaunder of holye churche, and foode of the false serpent, perpetual mattere of the fyre of hell: And yet more foule and abhominable, for ye trespace so oft times, as doeth an hounde that returneth ayen to eate his own spewing: and yet be ye fouler, for your long continuing in sinne, and your sinfull vsage, for whiche ye be roted in your sinne, as a beeste in his donge. Suche manner of thoughtes make a manne to haue shame of his sinne, and no delite. As God saith, by the prophete Ezechiel: Ye shall remembre you of your waies, and they shull displease you sothly, Sinnes ben the waies that lede folke to Hell.

The second cause that ought make a man to haue disdaine of sinne is this, that as saith saint Peter: Who so doth sinne, is thrall of sinne, and sinne putteth a manne in great thraldome. And therefore saieth the prophete Ezechiell: I wente sorowfull, in disdaine of my selfe. Certes well ought a manne haue disdaine of sinne, and withdrawe him fro that thraldome and vilany. And lo, what saieth Seneke in this matter, he saith thus: Though I wiste, that neither God ne manne should neuer knowe it, yet would I haue disdaine for to do sinne. And the same Seneke also saieth: I am borne to greater thinge, than to be thrall to my body, or for to make of my body a thrall. Ne a fouler thrall maye no man ne woman make of his body, than for to yeue his body to sinne, all were it the foulest churle, or the foulest woman that liueth, and leste of value, yet is he than more foule, and more in seruitude. Euer fro the higher degre that man falleth, the more is hee thrall, and more to God and to the worlde vile and abhominable. O good God, well oughte man haue great disdaine of sinne, sith that through sinne, there he was fre he is made bonde. And therefore saieth saint Augustin: If thou hast disdaine of thy seruaunt, if he offende or sinne, haue thou than disdaine that thou thy selfe shouldest do sinne. Take rewarde of thine owne valewe, that thou ne be to foule to thy selfe. Alas well ought they than haue disdaine to be seruauntes and thralles to sinne, and sore to be ashamed of them selfe, that God of his endeles goodnesse hath sette in highe estate, or yeue hem witte, strength of bodye, heale, beuty, or prosperite, and bought hem fro the death with his hert blood, that they so vnkindly, ayenst his gentilnesse, quite him so vilainously, to slaughter of her owne soules. O good God, ye women that been of greate beauty, remembreth you on the prouerbe of Salomon. He saieth he likeneth a faire woman, that is a foole of her body, to a ring of gold that were worne on the groine of a sowe: For right as a sowe wroteth in euery ordure so wroteth she her beaute in stinking ordure of sinne.

The thirde cause that ought meue a man to contricion, is drede of the daye of dome, and of the horrible paines of hell. For as sainte Jerom saieth: At euery time that me remembreth of the day of dome, I quake: For when I eate and drinke, or what so that I doe, euer semeth me that the trompe sowneth in mine eare: Riseth ye vp that been deed, and commeth to the iudgement. O good God, muche ought a manne to drede suche a iudgement, there as we shall be all, as sainte Poule saieth, before the seate of oure Lorde Jesu Christ, where as he shall make a generall congregacion, where as no man may be absent, for certes there auayleth none essoyne ne excusation, and not onely that our defautes shalbe iudged, but also that all our werkes shall openly be knowen. And as saieth saint Barnarde, there ne shall no pleding auaile, ne no sleight: We shall yeue reckening, of euery idle worde. There shall we haue a iudge that may not be disceiued ne corrupt, and why? For certes, all our thoughtes been discouered, as to him, ne for prayer ne for mede, he shall not be corrupte. And therefore saith Salomon: The wrath of God ne will not spare no wight, for prayer ne for yefte: And therefore at the daye of dome, there is no hope to escape. Wherefore, as saieth saint Anselm: full great anguishe shall the sinnefull folke haue at that time: There shall the fiers and wroth iudge sitte aboue, and vnder him the horrible pitte of hell open, to distroy him that must beknowe his sinnes, which sinnes openly been shewed before God and before euery creature: And on the lefte side, no Diuels than anie herte maye thinke, for to haie and drawe the sinfull soules to the paine of hell, and within the hertes of folke shall bee the biting conscience, and without forth shall be the worlde all brenning: whither shal than the wretched sinfull man flie to hide him? Certes he may not

hide

hide him, he must come forth and shew him. For certes, as saith S. Jerom, the earth shal cast him out of it and the see also, and the ayre that shall be full of thunder clappes & lightninges. Now sothly, who so wel remembreth him of these thinges: I gesse that his sinne shall not turne him in delite, but to great sorowe, for drede of the paine of hell. And therfore saith Job to God: suffer lord, that I may awhyle bewayle and wepe, er I go without returning to the derke londe, couered with the derknesse of death, to the londe of misease and of darknesse, where as is the shadowe of death, where as there is none order or ordinaunce, but ferefull drede that euer shal last. Lo, here may you see, that Job prayed respite awhile, to bewepe and waile his trespas: for sothely one daye of respite is better than all the tresour of this world. And for as much as a man may acquite himself before God by penitence in this world, & not by tresour, therefore should he pray to God to yeue him respite awhile, to bewepe and waile his trespas: for certes, all the sorowe that a man might make fro the begynning of the world, nis but a litle thing, in regarde of the sorowe of hell. The cause why that Job calleth hell the londe of derkenesse, understondeth that he calleth it londe or earth, for it is stable and neuer shall faile: and derke. For he that is in hel hath defaut of light materiall, for certes the derke light that shall come out of the fire that euer shal brenne, shal turne him all to paine that is in hell, for it sheweth him to the horrible Dinels that him tormenteth, couered with the derknesse of death, that is to say, that he that is in hel, shall haue default of the sight of god: for certes the sight of God is the life perdurable. The derkenesse of death, been the sinnes that the wretched man hath don, which that disturb him to see the face of God, right as the derke cloude betwixt vs and the sunne. Lond of misease, because that there ben three maner of defautes ayenst three thinges that folke of this worlde haue in this present life, that is to saie: honours, delices, and richesse. Ayenst honour haue they in hell shame & confusion: For wel ye wote, that men call honour the reuerence that man doth to man, but in hell is none honour ne reuerẽce. For certes, no more reuerence shal he do there to a king, than to a knaue. For whiche God saith by the prophet Jeremy: Those folke that me despise, shalbe in despite. Honour is also called great lordship: there shall no wight serue other: but of harme and torment. Honour is also called great dignitie and highnesse, but in hell shall they be al fortroden of diuels. As God saieth: the horrible diuels shall goe and come vpon the heedes of dampned folke: and this is, for as much as the higher that they were in this present life, the more shall they be abated and defoiled in hell. Ayenst the richesse of this world shal they haue misease of pouertie, that shal be in foure thinges. In defaute of tresoure. Of which Dauid saith: The riche folk that embrace and knit all her herte to tresour of this worlde, shall slepe in the sleepinge of death, and nothing ne shull they finde in her hondes of al her treasour. And moreouer the misease of hel shall be in defaute of meete and drink. For God saith thus by Moyses: They shall be wasted with honger, and the birdes of hell shall deuour hem, with bitter death, and the gal of the dragon shall be her drinke, and the venime of the Dragon her morsels. Also her misease shall bee in defaute of clothing, for they shall be naked in body, as of clothing, saue the fire in which they brenne, and other filthes: and naked shall they be of soule, of all maner vertues, which that is the clothing of the soule. Where been than the gay robes, the soft shetes, & the small shertes? Lo, what saieth God of hem by the Prophet Isaie, ỹ vnder hem shal be strewed moughts, and her couertures shal be of wormes of hel. Also her misease shalbe in defaute of frendes, for he is not pore that hath good frendes: but there is no frende, for neither God ne no creature shall be frende to hem, and eche of hem shal hate other with dedly hate: The sonnes and the doughters shall rebell ayenst father and mother, and kinred ayenst kinred, chide and despise eche other, both day and night, as God saieth by the prophet Micheas: And the louinge childzen that whilome loued so fleshly eche other, would eche of hem ete other if they might. For how should they loue together in the paines of hell, whan they hated eche other in prosperitie of this life? for trust well, her fleshly loue was deadly hate. As saith the prophet Dauid: Who so that loueth wickednesse, he hateth his soule, & who so hateth his owne soule, certes he may loue none other wight in no maner: And therfore in hell is no solace ne no frẽdship, but euer the more kinreds that been in hell, the more cursings, the more chidinges, and the more deedly hate there is among hem. Also they shall haue defaute of all manner delices, for certes delices

ben after the appetites of the fiue wittes: As sight, hearing, smellinge, sauouring, and touching. But in hell her sight shal be ful of derknesse and of smoke, and therfore full of teares, and her hearing full of waylng and grunting of teeth: As saieth Jesu Christ. Her nosthrilles shall be full of stinking. And, as saieth Isaie the Prophet: Her sauouring shall be full of bitter gall, and as touching of al her bodies, yeouered with fire, that neuer shall quenche, and with wormes that neuer shall dye: As God saieth by the mouth of Isaie. And for as much as they shall not wene that they may dye for paine, and by death flye fro paine, that may they understonde in the wordes of Job, that saieth: There is the shadowe of death. Certes a shadowe hath likenesse of the thing of which it is shadowed, but shadowe is not the same thing of which it is shadowed: right so fareth the paine of hell, it is like death, for the horrible anguishe. And why? For it paineth hem euer as though they should dye anon, but certes they shal not dye. For as saith saint Greg. to wretched caitifes shalbe death without death, and end without end, and defaute without fayling, for her death shall alway liue, and her end shall euer more begin, and her defaut shall not faile

And therfore saieth saint John the Euangelist, they shall folowe death, and they shall not finde him, and they shall desire to die, and death shall flie from him. And also Job saith, that in hel is no order or rule. And al be it so, that God hath create all thing in right order, and nothing without order, but all thinges ben ordred and numbred, yet natheleſſe they that been dampned been nothing in order, ne holde none order, for the erth ne shal bere hem no fruite. For, as the Prophet Dauid saieth: God shall destroy the fruite of the earth, as for hem, ne water ne shall yeue hem no moisture, ne the eyre no refreshinge, ne fire no lighte. For as saieth saint Basile: The brenning of the fire of this world shall God yeue in hell to hem that ben dampned, but the light and the clerenesse shall be yeue in Heuen to his children: right as good men yeue flesh to her children, and bones to her houndes. And for they shall haue none hope to escape, saieth Job at laste, that there shall errour and grefly drede dwell without ende. Horrour is alway drede that is to come, and this drede shall alwaie dwell in the hertes of hem that be dampned. And therefore haue they lost all her hope for seuen causes. First, for God that is her iudge shall be without mercie to hem, and they may not please him ne none of his sainctes, ne they may not yeue nothing for her raunsome, ne they shall haue no voyce to speake to him, ne they may not flye from paine, ne they haue no goodnesse in hem that they may shewe to deliuer hem from paine. And therefore sayeth Salomon: The wicked manne dyeth, and whan he is dead, he shall haue no hope to escape fro paine. Who so than would wel understonde the paines, and bethinke him well that he hath deserued those paines for his sinnes, certes he shoulde haue more talent to sighe and weepe, than for to singe and playe. For as saieth Salomon, who so that had the science to know the paines that ben ordained for sinne, he would make sorow. That science as saieth sainte Austine, maketh a man to weiment in his herte.

The fourth point that ought to make a man haue contricion, is the sorowful remembraunce of the good that hee hath lefte to doe here in earth, and also the good that he hath loste. Sothly, the good werkes that he hath lefte, either they bee the good werkes that he wrought er he fell in deedly sinne, or els the good werks that he wrought whyle he laie in sin. Sothly the good werkes that he did before that he fell in sinne been all mortified, astonied, and dull by oft sinninge. The werks that he did while he lay in sinne be dead, as to the life perdurable in Heauen: than the good werkes that been mortified by oft sinning, which he did being in charitie, may not quicke ayen without very penitence. And of it sayeth God by the mouth of Ezechiel: If the rightfull man returne ayen fro his righteousnesse and do wickednesse, shal he liue? nay: for al the good werkes that he hath do, ne shall neuer be in remembraunce, for he shall die in his sinne. And vpon that chapiter saith S. Gregorie thus, that we shal understond this principally: If that he don deedly sin, it is for nought than to reherce or drawe unto memorie the good werkes that we haue wrought before: for certes in the werking of deedly sinne, there is no truste to no good werke that we haue doen before: that is to say, as for to haue thereby the life perdurable in Heuen. But natheleſſe the good werkes quicken and come agame, and helpe and auaile to haue the life perdurable in Heauen whā we haue cōtricion: But sothly the good werkes that men don whyle they be in deedly

sinne,

sinne, for as much as they were doen in dedly sinne, they may neuer quicke: For certes, thing that neuer had life, may neuer quicke: And natheless, albeit that they auaile not to haue the life perdurable, yet auaile they to abredge of the pain of hell, or els to get temporell richesses, or els that God woll the rather enlumine or light the hart of the sinfull man to haue repentaunce, and eke they auaile for to vse a manne to doe good werkes, that the fende haue the lesse power of his soule. And thus the curteis Lorde Jesu Christ, ne woll that no good werke bee loste, for in somwhat it shall auaile. But for as much as the good werkes that menne doen while they been in good life, been all amortised by sinne folowing: and also sithe that all the goods werkes that men doen while they be in dedly sinne, been vtterly dedde, as for to haue the life perdurable, well may that manne that no good werke ne doeth, sing that newe fresh song (Iay tout pardu mon temps, et mon labourc). For certes sinne bireueth a man both goodnesse of nature, & also the goodnesse of grace. For sothly the grace of the holy ghoste, fareth like fire that may not be idell, for fire faileth anon as it forletteth his working: and right so grace faileth anon, as it forletteth his werking. Than leseth the sinfull man the goodnesse of glory, that onely is behight to good men that labour and werke. Well may he be sorie than, that oweth all his life to God, as long as he hath liued, and also as long as he shall liue, that no goodnesse ne hath to paye with his debt to God, to whome he oweth all his life: for trust well he shall yeue accomptes as saieth sainte Bernarde, of all the goodes that haue been yeue him in this present life, and how he hath hem dispended, in so much that there shall not perish an heere of his hed, ne a moment of an houre, ne shall not perish of his time, that he ne shall yeue of it a reckening.

The fifthe thing that ought to moue a man to contricion, is remembraunce of the passion that our Lorde Jesu Christ suffered for our sinnes. For as saieth Sainte Bernarde, while that I liue, I shall haue remembraunce of the trauailes, that our lorde Jesu Christ suffred in preaching, his wearinesse in trauailing, his temptations whan he fasted, his long wakings whan he praied, his teres whan that he wept for pitie of good people, the woe, the shame, and the filth that men saied to him: of the foule spitting that men spit in his face, of the buffettes that men yaue him: of the foule mowes and of the reproues that men saied to him: of the nayles with whiche he was nayled to the crosse, and of all the remnant of his passion, that he suffred for my sinnes, and nothing for his gylte. And ye shal vnderstand, that in mannes sinne is euery maner order or ordinaunce, tourned vp so doune. For it is sothe, that God, reason, sensualitie, and the bodie of man, been ordained, that eche of these foure thinges, shoulde haue lordshipe ouer that other, as thus: God should haue lordshipe ouer reason, and reason ouer sensualitie, and sensualitie ouer the bodie of man. But sothly whan man sinneth, all this order or ordinance, is turned vp so doun, And therfore than, for as much as reason of man, ne woll not be subiect ne obeysaunt to God, that is his Lorde by right, therefore leseth it the Lordshipe that it should haue ouer sensualitie, and also ouer the body of manne. And why? For sensualite rebelleth than ayenst reason: and by that way leeseth reason the lordshipe ouer sensualitie, and ouer the bodie: For right as reason is rebell to God, right so is both sensualitie rebell to reason, and to the body also. And certes this disordinaunce and this rebellion, our Lord Jesu Christ bought vpon his precious body full deare: and herkeneth in what wise. For as muche than as reason is rebell to God, therfore is man worthy to haue sorow, and to be dedde. This suffred our Lorde Jesu Christ for manne, after that he had be betraied of his disciple, and distrained and bound, so that his blood braste out at euery nayle of his hondes, as saith S. Iugustine. And ferthermore, for as much as reason of manne, woll not daunt sensualitie, whan it may, therefor is man woorthie to haue shame: and this suffred our Lorde Jesu Christ for man, whan they spit in his visage. And ferthermore, for as much than as the caitife body of man, is rebell both to reason & to sensualitie, therfore it is worthy death, and this suffred our Lorde Jesu Christ vpon the crosse, where as there was no part of his bodie free, without great paine and bitter passion: and all this suffred our lorde Jesu Christ that neuer forfaited. And therefore reasonably may be saied of Jesu in this maner: To much am I payned, for things that I neuer deserued, and to much defouled for shame that man is worthie to haue: And therefore may the sinfull man well saie, as saieth S.

Bernarde. Accursed bee the bitternesse of my sinne, for which there must bee suffered so much bitternes. For certes, after the diuers discordaunce of our wickednes, was the passion of Jesu Christ ordained in diuers thungs: as thus. Certes sinfull mannes soule is betrayed of the diuell, by couetise of temporell prosperitie, and scorned by disceit, whan that he cheseth fleshly delices, & yet it is tormented by impacience of aduersitie, and despet by seruage and subiection of sinne, and at the last it is slaine finally. For this disordinaunce of sinfull man, was Jesus Christ first betrayed, and after that was he bounde, that came for to vnbinde vs of sinne and of paine. Than was he descorned, that onely should haue be honoured in all things. Than was his visage that ought be desired to be seen of all mãkind, in which visage Angels desire to looke, vilainously despet. Than was he scourged that nothing had trespased, and finally, than was he crucified and slain. Than was acomplished the wordes of Isaie: He was wounded for our misdeedes, and defoiled for our felonies. Now sith that Jesu Christ tooke on him the paine of all our wickednesse, much ought sinfull manne wepe and bewaile, that for his sinnes, Goddes sonne of heuen shoulde all this pain endure

THE first thing that should meue a man to contrictiõ, is the hope of three things, that is to saie: forgiuenesse of sinne, and the yefte of grace for to doe well, and the glorie of heauen, with which GOD shal reward manne for his good deedes: And for as much as Jesu Christ, yeueth vs these yeftes of his largenesse, and of his souerain bountie therfore is he called (Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudeorum) Jesus is to saie, sautour or saluacion, on whom men shall hope to haue forgyuenesse of sinnes, which that is properly saluacion of sinnes. And therefore saied the Angell to Joseph, thou shalte call his name Jesus, that shall saue his people of her sinnes. And hereof saieth sainct Peter: There is none other name vnder heauen, that is yeue to any man, by whiche a man maie be saued, but onely Jesus. Nazarenus is as muche for to saie, as flourishing, in whiche a manne shall hope, that he that yeueth him remission of sinnes, shall yeue him also grace well for to doe. I was at the doore of thine harte, saieth Jesus, & called for to enter: he that openeth to mee, shall haue forgyuenes of his sinne. I woll enter into him by my grace, and suppe with him by the good werkes that hee shall doe, which werks been the foode of the soule, and he shall suppe with me, by the great ioye that I shall yeue him. Thus shall man hope for his werke of penaunce, that GOD shall yeue him his reigne, as he behight him in the Gospell. Now shall a man vnderstande, in which maner shall be his contricion: I saie, that it shall bee vniuersall and totall, this is to saie: a man shall be very repentaunt, for all his sinnes that he hath doen in delite of his thought, for it is right perilous.

For there been two maner of consentings, that one of hem is called consenting of affection, whan a man is mooued to doe sinne, and than deliteth him long, for to thinke on that sinne, & his reason apperceiueth it well, that it is sinne ayenst the Lawe of God, and yet his reason refraineth not his foule delite to talent, though he see well apertly, that it is ayenst the reuerence of God, although his reson consent not, to do that sinne in deede, yet saie some Doctours, that such delight that dwelleth long is full perilous, albeit neuer so little. And also a man should sorowe, namely for all that euer he hath desired ayenst the Lawe of God, with perfite consenting of his reason, for thereof is no doubte, that it is dedly sinne in consenting: for certes there is no deadly sinne, but that it is firste in mannes thought, and after that in his delite, and so forth into consenting, and into deede. Wherefore I saie that many men, ne repent hem neuer of such thoughtes and delices, ne neuer shriue hem of it, but only of the deede of great sinnes outward: wherefore, I saie that such wicked delites been subtill beggilers of hem that shall be dampned.

Moze ouer, man ought to sorowe for his wicked wordes, as well as for his wicked dedes: for certes the repentance of a singuler sinne, & not repentant of all his other sinnes, or els repent him of all his other sinnes, and not of a singuler sinne, maie not auayle: for certes GOD almightie is all good, and therefore, either he forgyueth all, or els right nought. And therefore saieth sainct Augustin: I wote certainly, that God is enemie to euery sinner: and how than he that obserueth one sinne, shall he haue forgyuenesse of those other sinnes? Naie. And more ouer, contricion should be wonder sorowfull and anguishous and therefore yeueth him God plainly his mercie: and therfore whan my soule was anguished

guilshed, and sorowfull within me, than had I remembrance of God, that my praier might come to him. Furthermore, contricion muste be continuall, and that manne haue stedfast purpose to shriue him, and to amend him of his life. For sothly while contricion lasteth, man may euer hope to haue forgeuenesse. And of this commeth hate of sinne, that distroieth both sinne in himselfe, and also in other folke at his power. For which saieth Dauid: they that loue God hate wickednesse: For to loue God, is for to loue that he loueth, and hate that he hateth. The last thing that men shall understand is this, wherefore auaileth contricion? I say, that contricion sometime deliuereth a manne fro sinne: Of whiche Dauid saith, I say (saied Dauid) I purposed fermely to shriue me, and thou lord releiddest my sinne. And right so as contricion, auaileth not without sad purpose of shrift, if manne haue opportunite, right so little worth is shrift or satisfaction without contricion. And more ouer contricion distroieth the prison of helle, and maketh weake and feable all the strengthes of the deuils, and restoreth the yeftes of the holy ghost, and of all good vertues, and it cleanseth the soule of sinne, and deliuereth it fro the paine of helle, and fro the company of the Deuill, and fro the seruage of sinne, and restoreth it to all good spiritualles, and to the company and communion of holy church. Furthermore, it maketh him that whilome was sonne of Ire, to be the sonne of Grace: And all these thinges been proued by holy writte. And therefore, he that would set his entent to these thinges, he were full wise, for truly he ne should haue than in all his life corage to sin, but yeue his hart and body to serue Christ, and therof doe him homage. For truly our Lord hath spared vs so mekely in our folies, that if he ne had pite of mannes soule, a sory song might we all sing.

Explixit prima pars penitentie: & incipit pars secunda.

The second part of penitence is Confession, that is signe of contricion. Now shall ye vnderstond what is confession, & if it ought needs be doen or no, and whiche thinges be conenable to very confession.

First shalt thou vnderstand, that confession is very shewing of sinnes to the Priest: this is to say very, for he must confesse him of all the condicions that belong to his sinne, as forforth as he can: all must be saied, and nothing excused ne hid, and not auaunt thee of thy good werkes. Also it is necessary to vnderstand whens that sinnes spring, and how they entre, and which they been.

Of the spring of sinnes, saith S. Poule in this wise: that right as by one man sinne is entred first into this world, and through sinne death, right so the death entreth into all men that sinne, and this man was Adam, by whom sinne entred into this world, whan he brake the commaundement of God. And therefore he that first was so mighty, that he ne should haue died, became so that he must needes die, whether he would or no, and all his progeny in this world, that in the said man sinned.

Looke that in the estate of innocency, whan Adam and Eue were naked in Paradise, and shamed not thereof, how the serpent, wiliest of all other beastes that GOD made, saied to the woman: why commaunded God you, that ye should not eate of euery tree in Paradise? The woman answered: of the fruit saied she of trees of Paradise we feede vs, but of the fruict of the middle tree of Paradise, God forbode vs to eate and touche, least we should die. The serpente saied to the woman: nay, nay, ye shall not die of death, for sothe God wotte that what day that ye eate thereof your yen shall open, and ye shall be as Gods knowing good and harme. The woman than saw that the tree was good to feeding, and faire to the yen, and delectable to sight, she tooke of the fruite of the tree and eate, and yaue to her husbande, and he eate, and anon the yen of hem both opened: and whan that they knew that they were naked: they sowed of Figgeleues in maner of breches, to hide her members. There may ye se that dedly sinne hath first suggestion of the fende, as sheweth here by the Adder, and afterwarde the delite of the flesh, as sheweth by Eue, and after that, consenting of reason, as sheweth here by Adam. For trust well though so it were, that the fende tempted Eue, that is to say, the flesshe, and the flesshe had delite in the beauty of the fruicte defended, yet certes till that reason, that is to say Adam, consented to the eating of the fruict, yet stoode he in the state of innocency. Of the saied Adam tooke we the saied originall sinne, for of him flesshly discended bee wee all, and engendered of vile and corrupt mattere: And whan the soule is

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put in our bodies, right anon is contract originall sinne, and that that was erst, but onely paine of concupiscense, is afterward both pain and sinne, & therefore we ben all borne sonnes of wrath, and of dampnation perdurable, if it nere Baptisme that we receiue, which benimmeth vs the coulpe, but forsooth the pine dwelleth with vs as to temptation, which pine hight concupiscence. This concupiscence whan it is wrongfully disposed or ordained in man, it maketh him coueit by couetise of flesh, fleshly sinne by sight of his yen, as to yearthly things, and also couetise of highnes by pride of heart.

Now as to speake of the first couetise, that is concupiscence, after the lawe of our members, that were lawfully made, and by rightfull iudgement of God, I say, for as much as manne is not obeisaunt to God, that is his Lorde, therefore is the flesh to him disobeysaunt through concupiscence, which is called nourishing of sinne, and occasion of sinne. Therefore all the while that a manne hath within him the pine of concupiscence, it is impossible but he be tempted sometime, and moued in his flesh to sinne. And this thing may not faile, as long as he liueth. It may well waxe feble by vertue of Baptisme, and by the grace of God through penitence, but fully ne shall it neuer quench that he ne shall sometime be moued in himselfe, but if he were all restrained by sickenesse, or by malice of sorcery or cold drinkes. For lo, what saith S. Poule: the flesh coueteth ayenst the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: they been so contrary and so striuen: that a manne may not alway doe as he would. The same Saint Poule, after his great Pennaunce, in water and in lond: in water by night and by day, in great perill, and in great paine. In lond, famine and thirst, cold and clothlesse, and once stoned almost to death. Yet (saied he) alas, I caitife manne, who shall deliuer me fro the prison of my caitife body? And saint Jerome, whan he long time had dwelled in desert, where as he had no company but of wild beasts, where as he had no meate but hearbs, and water to drinke, ne no bed but the naked yerth, wherefore his flesh was blacke, as an Ethiopian for heate, and nie destroyed for cold. Yet (said he) that the brenning of lechery boiled in all his body. Wherefore I wot well that they be deceiued that say, they be not tempted in her bodies. Witnesse sanct James that saieth, that euery wight is tempted in his own conscience, that is to say: That each of vs hath matter and occasion, to be tempted of the norishing of sinne, that is in his body. And therfore saieth saint John the Euangelist: if wee saie that we been without sinne, we deceiue our self, and trueth is not in vs. Now shall ye vnderstande, how sinne wexeth and encreaseth in man. The first thing is the same nourishing of sinne, of which I spake before, the fleshly concupiscence, and after that commeth suggestion of the deuill, this is to saie, the deuils belous, with which he bloweth in man, the fire of concupiscence, and after that a man bethinketh him whether he woll doe or no, that thing to which he is tempted. And than if a man withstonde and weiue, the first entising of his flesh, and of the fende, than it is no sinne, and if so be he doe not, than fealeth he anon a flame of delite, and than it is good to beware and keepe him well, or els he woll fall anone to consenting of sinne, and than woll he do it, if he maie haue time and place. And of this matter saieth Moses by the Deuill, in this maner: The fende saieth, I woll chace and pursue man by wicked suggestion, and I woll take him by mouing and stering of sinne, and I woll departe my prise of my praie by deliberation, and my lust shall be accomplished in delite, I woll drawe my sword in consenting. For certes, right as a swerde departeth a thing in two peces, right so consenting departeth God fro manne, and than wolle I slea him with my honde in deede of sinne: thus saieth the fende. For certes, than is a man all dedde in soule, and thus is sinne accomplished with temptacion, by delite and consenting: and then is the sinne actuell. Forsoth sinne is in two maners, either it is veniall or dedly sinne. Soothly whan man loueth any creature, more than Jesu Christ our creatour, than it is dedly sinne, and veniall sinne it is, if man loue Jesu Christ lesse than hem ought. Forsoth the deede of this venial sinne is full perillous, for it minisheth the loue that man should haue to God more and more. And therefore if a man charge himself, with many such veniall sinnes: certes but if so bee that he somtime discharge him of hem by shrifte. They may full lightly minish in him, all the loue that he hath to Jesu Christ, and in this wise skippeth venitall sinne, into dedly sinne. For certes, the more that a man chargeth his soule with veniall sinnes, the more he is enclined to fall into dedly sinne. And therefore let vs not be negligent, to charge vs of veni-

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all sinnes. For the Prouerbe saieth, that many small make a great. Herken this ensample: A great waue of the sea cometh, sometime with so great a violence, that it drowneth the shippe. And the same harme doeth sometime the small droppes of water, that entreth through a little creueis, into the timber, and into the bottome of the shippe, if men be so negligent, that they discharge hem not betimes: And therefore although there be a difference, betwixt these two causes of drouning, algates the shippe is drowned. Right so fareth it sometime of deadly sinne, and of anoious veniall sinnes, whan they multiply in man so greatly, that those worldly thinges that he loueth, through which he sinneth venially, is as great in his hart as the loue of God, or more: and therfore the loue of euery thing, is not beset in God, ne doen principally for Goddes sake, although that a manne loue it lesse than God, yet is it veniall sinne, and deadly sinne whan the loue of any thing, weieth in the hart of man, as moch as the loue of God or more. Dedly sinne as saieth sainct Augustine, is whan a man tourneth his hart fro God, which that is very soueraine bounty, that may not chaunge, and yeueth his hart to thing that may chaunge and flit: and certes, that is euery thing saue God of heauen. For loth is that, if a man yeue his loue, which that he oweth to God with all his hart, vnto a creature, certes, as moch of loue as he yeueth to the same creature, so moch he bireueth fro God, and therefore doeth he sinne: For he that is debtour to God, ne yeldeth not to God all his debt, that is to say, all the loue of his hart. Now sith manne vnderstandeth generally, which is veniall sinne, than it is conenable to tell specially of sinne, whiche that many a man perauenture, demeth hem no sinnes, and shriueth him not of the same thinges, and yet natheles they be sinnes soth ly, as these clerkes write, this is to say: At euery time that manne eateth and drinketh, more than suffiseth to the sustenance of his body, in certaine he doeth sinne: and also whan he speaketh more than it nedeth, it is sinne.

Also whan he herkeneth not benignely the complaint of the poore: Also whan he is in heale of body, and woll not fast whan other folke fast, without cause resonable: also whan he slepeth more than needeth, or whan he cometh perchaunce to late to Church, or to other werkes of charite: Also whan he vseth his wife without soueraine desire of engendrure, to the honour of God, or for the entent to yeld to his wife debt of his body. Also whan he woll not visite the sick, or the prisoner, if he may. Also if he loue wife or child, or other worldly thing, more than reson requireth. Also if he flatter or blandise more, than him ought for any necessite. Also if he minish or withdrawe the almose of the poore. Also, if he apparaile his meat more dilicously than nede is, or eat to hastely by likorousnes. Also, if he talke vanities at church, or at Goddes seruice, or that he be a talker of idle wordes of foly or vilany, for he shall yeld accomptes of it at the day of dome. Also, whan he behighteth or assureth to doe thinges, that he may not performe. Also, whan that he by lightnesse of foly, missaieth or scorneth his neighbour. Also, whan he hath any wicked suspeccion of thing, that he ne wote of sothfastnesse. These thinges and mo without nomber be sinnes, as saieth S. Augustine. Now shall men vnderstond, that all be it so that none yearthly manne may eschue all veniall sinnes, yet may he refrain him, by the brenning loue that he hath to our lord Jesu Christ, and by praiers and confession, and other good workes, so that it shall be but little grieue. For as saith S. Augustin, If a man loue God in soch maner, that all that euer he doth is the loue of God, or for the loue of God verely, for he brenneth in the loue of GOD: looke how moch that one drop of water, which doeth fall into a great fourneis full of fire, anoieth or greueth the brenning of the fire: in like maner anoieth or greueth a veniall sinne, vnto that manne, which is stedfast and perfite, in the loue of our sauiour Jesu Christ. Furthermore, men may also refraine and put away veniall sinne, by commoning and receiuing worthely, the body of our sauior Jesu Christ. Also, by taking of holy water, by almose dede, by generall confession of Confiteor at Masse, and at Complin, and by blessing of Bishops and priests, and by other good workes.

De septem peccatis mortalibus & de eorum dependentiis circumstantiis, & speciebus.

NOw it is expedient to tell, which been the seuen dedly sinnes, that is to say, chieftains of sinnes. All they ren in o lees, but in diuers maners

Now been they called seuen Lenes, for as moche as they be chiefe, and spring of all other

ther sinnes. Of the roote of these seuen sinnes, than is Pride the generall roote of all harmes. For of this roote springeth certaine braunches: as Ire, Enuy, Accidie or Sloth, Auarice or Couetise, to common vnderstonding, Glotonie and lechery: and each of these chiefe sinnes, haue her braunches and twigs, as it shall be declared in her chapiters following. And though so be, that no man can vterly tell the nomber of twigges, and of the harmes that come of Pride, yet woll I shew a part of hem, as ye shall vnderstonde. There is inobedience, auaunting, hypocrisie, despite, arrogance, impudence, swelling of heart, insolence, elacion, impatience, strife, contumacie, presumption, irreuerence, pertinacie vainglory, and many other twigges that I can not declare. Inobedience, is he that disobeyeth for dispight, the commaundementes of God, to his soueraines, and to his ghostly father. A vaunter, is he that bosteth of the harm or of the bounte that he hath done. Hypocrite, is he that hideth to shewe him such as he is, and sheweth him to seeme such as he is not. Dispitous, is he ỹ hath disdaine of his neighbour, that is to say, of his euin Christen, or hath dispite to doe that him ought to doe. Arrogaunce, is hee that thinketh that he hath those bounties in him, that he hath nat, or weneth that he should haue hem by his deserts, or els that he demeth, he is that he is not. Impudent, is he that for his pride, hath no shame of his pride ne sinne. Swelling of heart, is whan man reioyceth him of harme, that he hath done. Insolence, is he that dispiseth in his iudgement all other folke, as in regard of his value, of his cunning, of his speaking, and of his bearing. Elacion, is whan he ne may neither sufferr to haue master ne fellowe. Impacience, is hee that woll not be taught, ne rebuked of his vice, and by strife denieth trouth wittingly, and defendeth his follie. Contumacie, is he that through his indignation, is ayenst euery authorite or power, of hem that been his Soueraines. Presumption, is whan a manne vndertaketh an empryse that him ought not to doe, or els that he may not do, and this is called Surquidry. Irreuerence, is whan man doth not honour there, as him ought to doe, and looke to be reuerenced. Pertinacie, is whan men defend her folly, and trust to much on her owne wit. Vainglory, is for to haue pompe, and delite in his temporall highnes, and glory him in worldly estates. Iangling, is whā men speake to much before folke, and clappeth as a mill, and take no kepe what they say.

And yet there is a priuy spice of pride, that waiteth first to be salewed, or he woll salue, all be he lesse worthy than that other is. And also he waiteth or desireth to sit, or els to goe aboue him in the way, or kisse pax, to be inceneed, or go to offring before his neighbour, and such semblable things, ayenst his dutie peraucnture, but that he hath his heart and his intent, in such a proud desire, to be magnified and honoured before the people.

Now ben there two maner of prides: one of hem is within the heart of a man, and that other is without. Of which foresaid thyngs sothly, and mo than I haue said, appertaine to pride that is in the heart of man, and other spices of pride ben without, but natheless, that one of these spices of pride, is signe of that other, right as the gay leuesell at the Taueme, is signe of the Wine that is in the Cellar. And this is in many thinges: as in speach and countenance, and outragious array of clothing: for certes, if there had been no sinne in clothing, Christ would not so sone haue noted, and spoken of the clothing of the rich men in the Gospell. And as S. Gregory saieth, that precious clothing is culpable, for the dearth of it, and for his softnesse, and for his straungenesse and disguising: And for the superfluite, or for the inordinate scantnes of it. Alas, may not a man see as in our daies, the sinnefull costlew array of clothing, and namely in too much superfluite, or els in to disordinate scantnesse.

As to the first sinne in superfluite of clothing, such that maketh it so deare, to the harme of the people, nat onely the cost of enbraudering, the disguyled endenting, or barring, ounding, paling, wynding, or bending, and semblable waste of clothe in vanitie. But there is also the costlewe Furringe in her gounes, so much poumsing of chesell to make holes, so much dagging of Sheres forche, with the superfluitie in length of the foresaied gounes, trailing in the dong and in the myre, on hors and also on foote, as well of man as of woman. That all that trayling is verely as in effect wasted, consumed, tredbare, and rotten with doung, rather than it is yeue to the poore, to great dommage of the forsaide poore folke, & that in sundrie wise, this is to saie, that the more the cloth is wasted, ỹ more must it cost to the poore people for the scarsenesse. And more ouer, if so be that they would

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yeue such pounced and dagged clothinge to the poore people, it is not conuenient to wete for her estate, ne sufficient to her necessitie, to keepe hem from the distemperaunce of the firmament. Upon that other side, to speake of the horrible disordinate scantnes of clothing, as been these cutted sloppes or hanselines, that through her shortnesse couer not ỹ shamfull membres of manne, to wicked entent. Alas, some of hem shew the bolle of her shape, and the horrible swole membres that semeth like the maladye of Hernia, in the wrapping of her hosen, and also the buttockes of hem fare as it were the hinder parte of a shee Ape in the full of the Moone. And more ouer the wretched swollen membres that they shewe through disguising, in departing of her hosen, in white and redde seemeth that halfe her shamefull priuie membres were slaine. And if so be that they depart her hosen in other colours, as is white and blewe, or white and blacke, or black and redd, and so forth: Than semeth it as by variaunce of colour that the halfe part of her priuy membres, ben corrupt by the fire of sainte Anthony, or by canker, or other such mischaunce. Of the hinder parte of the buttockes it is full horrible for to see, for certes in that partie of her bodie there as thei purge her stinking ordure, that foule partie shewe they to the people proudly in dispite of honestie, which honestie that Jesu Christ and his frendes obserued to shewe in her life. Nowe as to the outragious aray of women, God wote that though the visages of some of hem seeme ful chaste and debonaire, yet notifie in her aray or atire, licorousnesse and pride: I say not that honestie in clothing of man or woman is vncouenable, but certes the superfluitie of disordinate quantitie of clothing is reprouable. Also the sinne of ornement or of aparaile is in thinges that appertaine to ryding as in company, delicate horses that ben holden for delite, that been so faire, fatte, and costlewe, and also in many a riche harnays, that is fastened bet ause of hem, in curious harneys, as in sadels, cropers, peitrels, and brydels couered with precious clothing, and rich barres of plates, of golde and of siluer. For which God saieth by Zacharie the Prophet, I woll confounde the riders of such horses. Thise folke take little regarde of the riding of goddes sonne of heauen, and of his harneys when he rode vpon the Asse, and had none other harneis but the poore clothes of his disciples, ne were rede not that euer he rode on other beast. I speake this for the sinne of superfluitie, and not for reasonable honeste, whe reason it requireth. And more ouer, certes pride is greatly notified in holding of great meine, when they been of little profite or of right no profit, and namely when that meine is felonous and dammageous to the people by hardinesse of high lordship, or by waye of offices. For certes, such lordes sell than her lordship to the Deuill of Hell, whan they sustaine the wickednesse of her meine. Or els, whan these folke of lowe degree: as those that kepe hostelries, susteine theefte of her hostellers, and that is in manie maner of disceites: those maner of folke been the flies that folowe the hony, or els the houndes that folowe the caraine. Such forestalde folke strangell spiritually her lordships: For suche, thus saieth Dauid the Prophete. Wicked death might come on those lordshippes, and GOD yeue that they might descend into Hell, all doune, all doune: For in her houses been iniquities and shrewednesse, and not GOD of heauen. And certes, till they doen amendement, right as God yaue his blessing to Pharao by the seruice of Jacob, and to Laban by the seruice of Joseph: Right so God woll yeue his curse to such lordshippes, as sustaine the wickednesse of her seruauntes, but they come to amendement. Pride of the table apeareth also full ofte: for certes, riche meine be called to feastes, and poore folke been put awaye and rebuked. And also in excesse of diuers meates and drinkes, and namely such maner bake meates and dishe meates brenning of boilde flote: peinted & castelled with paper and semblable waste, so that it is abusion to thinke. And also in to greate preciousnesse of vessell, and curiositie of minstralcie, by which a man is stirred more to delices of lecherie, if so be that he sette his harte the lesse vpon our lord Jesu Christe, certainly it is a sinne. And certainly the delices might be so great in this case, that a manne might lightly fall by hem into a deadly sinne. The especes that sourde of pride, sothely whan they sourde of malice imagined, auised, and forecaste, or els of vsage, been deadly sinne it is no doubt. And when they soude by fraitie vnauised sodenly, and soudenly withdrawe ayen, all be they greuous sinnes, I gesse that they be not deadly. Nowe might men aske, whereof that pride sourdeth and springeth: I say that sometime it springeth of ỹ goods of nature, sometime of the goods of Fortune, and sometime

of the goods of grace. Certes the goodes of nature stondeth onely in goodes of bodye, or goods of the soule. Certes goodes of bodye ben hele of body, strēgth, deliuernesse, beautie, gentrue, franchise. Goodes of nature of the soule, been good with sharpe understonding, subtel engine, vertue naturel, good memorie. Goods for Fortune be, riches, hie degrees of lordships, praysings of the people. Goodes of grace, ben science, power to suffice spirituell trauaile, benigne, vertuous contemplacion, understanding of temptacion, and semblable thinges: of which foresaid goodes: certes it is a full great folie, a man to haue pride in any of hem all. Nowe, as for to speake of goodes of nature, God wote that somtime we haue hem in nature as much to our domage as to our profite. As to speake of hele of body, truly it passeth full lightly, and also it is full ofte occasion of sickenesse of the soule: for God wote the flesbe is a greate enemy to the soule: and therfore the more that the body is whole, the more we be in peril to fall. Also for to haue pride in his strength of body, it is an hie foly, for certes the flesh coueteth ayenst the spirite: and the more strong that the flesbe is, the sorer may the soule be. And ouer all this strength of body and worldly hardinesse, causeth full ofte many manne to perill and mischaunce, and also to haue pride of his gentry, is right great folly: for oft time the gentry of the body, taketh away the gentry of the soule: and also we ben all of o father and mother: and all we ben of o nature, rotten and corrupt, both rich and poore. For soth o maner gentry is for to praise, that apparaileth mans courage. Wit, vertue, and morality, maketh him Christes child. For trust well, that ouer what man that sinne hath maistry, he is a bery churle to sinne.

Now been there generall signes of gentilnesse: as eschewing of vice and ribaudry, and seruage of sinne: in word, in worke, and continuance and vsing of vertue, curtesie, and cleannesse, and to be liberall: that is to say, large by measure: for that that passeth measure, is folly and sinne: Another is to remember him of bounte, that he of other folke hath receiued: Another is to be benigne to his good subiects. Wherefore saieth Seneche: there is nothing more conenable to a man of high estate, than debonairte and pite. And therefore these flies that men call bees, whan they make hearking, they chese one that hath no pricke, wherewith he may sting.

Another is, manne to haue a noble heart and a diligent, to attaine to the high vertuous things. Now certes, a man to haue pride in the goods of grace, is also an outragious folly: for those gifts of grace that shuld haue turned him to goodnesse, and to medicine, tourneth him to venime and confusion, as saith saint Gregory. Certes also, who so hath pride in the goddesse of fortune, he is a full great foole: For sometime is a manne a great lord by the morne that is a caitife and a wretch or it be night: and sometime the riches of a manne is cause of his death. Sometime the delices of a manne is cause of grieuous malady through which he dieth. Certes, the commendation of the people is sometime full false and brotell for to trust. This day they praise, to morrow they blame. God wote, desire to haue commendacion of the people, hath caused death to many a busie man. Now sith that so is, that ye haue understonde what is pride, and which be the speces of it, and whence it sourdeth and spryngeth: now ye shall understond which is the remedy ayenst it. Humility or meekenesse is the remedy ayenst pride, that is a vertue, through which a man hath very knowledge of him selfe, and holdeth of him selfe nor prise ne dainte, as in regard of his deserts, considering euer his frailty. Now ben there three manner of humilities: As humility in heart, another humility is in mouth, and the third is in workes. The humility in heart is in foure maners: That one is, whan a man holdeth him selfe as nought worth before God of heauen. The second is, whan he dispiseth none other man. The third is, whan he ne recketh nat, though men hold him nought worth. And the fourth is, whan he is not sory of his humiliacion. Also the humility of mouth is in foure things. In a temperate speech, in humility of speech, and whan he confesseth with his own mouth, that he is such as him thinketh that he is in his heart: Another is when he praiseth the bounty of another man and nothing therof minisheth. Humility also in worke, is in foure maners. The first is, when he putteth other menne before him, the second is to choose the lowest place ouer all, the third is, gladly to assent to good counsaile, the fourth is, to stond gladly to the award of his soueraignes, or of him that is in higher degre: Certaine this is great work of humility.

¶ De

De Inuidia.

After pride woll I speke of the foule sinne of Enuy, which that is after the word of the Philosopher, sorow of other mennes prosperite. And after the word of saint Augustin, it is the sorow of other mennes wele, and the ioy of other mennes harme. This foule sinne is platly ayenst the holy ghost: All be it so, that euery sinne is ayenst the holy ghost: yet nathelesse, for as much as bounte apertaineth properly to the holy ghost, Enuy cometh properly of malice, therefore it is properly ayenst the bounte of the holy gost. Now hath malice two speces, that is to say, hardinesse of hert in wickednesse, or elis the flesh of a manne is so blind, that he considreth nat that he is in sinne, or reketh nat that he is in sinne, which is the hardinesse of the deuill. That other spece of Enuy is, when that a mã denieth trouth, when he knoweth that it is trouth, and also when he repenteth the grace that God hath yeue to his neighbour: and all this is by Enuy. Certes, than is Enuy the worst sinne that is, for sothly all other sinnes be somtime onely ayenst o speciall vertue: but certes, enuy is ayenst al vertues and al goodnesse. For it is sory ayenst all the bountes of her neighbour, and in this manner, it is diuers from all other sinnes. Alas: For there ne is any sinne that it ne hath some delite in it selfe, saue only Enuy, that euer hath in it selfe anguish and sorow. The speces of Enuy ben these: there is first sorow of other mennes goodnesse and of her prosperite, and prosperite is kindly matter of ioy: Than is enuy a sinne ayenst kind. The second spece of Enuy, is ioy of other mennes harme, and that is properly like to the Deuill, that euer reioyseth him of mannes harme. Of these two speces commeth backbiting, and this sinne of backebiting or detractinge hathe certaine speces, as thus: Some manne praiseth his neighbour by a wicked entent, for he maketh alway a wicked knot at the last end: alway he maketh a but at the last end, that is digne of more blame, than is worth al the praising. The second spere is, that if a man be good, or doth or saith a thing to good entent, the backbiter woll turne al that goodnesse vp so doun: to his shrewd entent. The third is to amynish the bounty of his neighbour. The fourth spece of backbiting is this, that if menne spoke goodnesse of a manne, than wol the backbiter say: Perfay such a manne is yet better than he, in dispraising of him that menne praise. The fifth spece is this, for to consent gladly and herke gladly to the harme that men speke of other folke: This sinne is full great, and aye encreseth after the wicked entent of the backbiter. After backbiting cometh grutching or murmuracion, and somtime it springeth of impacience ayenst God, and somtime ayenst manne. Ayenst God it is whan a man grutcheth ayenst paine of hell, or ayenst pouerty, or losse of cattell, or ayenst rain or tempest, or elis grutcheth that shrewes haue prosperite, or elis for that good menne haue aduersite: and all these thinges should menne suffre pacientely, for they come by the rightfull iudgement and ordinaunce of God. Somtime commeth grutching of auarice, as Judas grutched ayenst Maudelein, whan she annointed the heed of our lord Jesu Christ, with her precious ointment: This manner murmuring is such as whan man grutcheth of goodnesse that himselfe doth, or that other folke doen of her owne cattell. Somtime cometh murmure of pride, as whan Simon the Pharise grutched ayenst Maudelein whan she approched to Jesu Christ and wept at his fete for her sinnes. And somtime it sourdeth of Enuy, whan men discouer a mans harme that was priuy, or bereth him on hond thing that is false. Murmure also is oft among seruauntes that grutch whan her soueraines bidde hem do lefull thinges, and for as much as they dare not openly withsay the commaundement of her soueraines, yet woll they say harme and grutch and murmure priuely for very dispite: which words they call the diuels Pater noster, though so be that the diuell had neuer Pater noster, but that lewd folke yeueth it such a name. Somtime it cometh of ire or priuy hate, that norisheth rancour in the hart, as afterward I shall declare. Than commeth also bitternesse of hert, thorow which bitternesse euery good dede of his neighbour semeth to him bitter & vnsauery. Than cometh discord that vnbindeth all manner of frendship. Than commeth scorning of his neighbour, all do he neuer so well. Than commeth accusing, as whan man seketh occasion to anoy his neighbour, which is like the craft of the diuell, that waiteth both day and night to accuse vs all. Than cometh malignite, thorough which a manne annoieth his neighbour priuely if he may, and if he may

not, algate his wicked will shall not let as for to bzenne his house pzivily, oz enpoison oz slea his beasts, and semblable things. Now wol I speake of the remedie against this foule sinne of enuy. First is the loue of God pzincipally, and louing of his neighbour as himselfe: for soothly that one ne may not be without that other. And trust well that in ỹ name of thy neighbour thou shalt vnderstand the name of thy bzother, for certes all wee haue one father fleshly and one mother, that is to say, Adam and Eue, and also one father spirituall, that is God of heauen. Thy neighbour art thou bounde for to loue, and will him all goodnesse, and therefore saith God: Loue thy neighbour as thy selfe, that is to say, to saluation both of life and soule. And moreouer thou shalt loue him in word and in benigne admonishing and chastising, and comfort him in his noyaunces, and pzay for him with all thy heart. And indeed thou shalt loue him in such wise, that thou shalt doe to him in charity, as thou wouldest that it were done to thine owne person: and therefore thou ne shalte doe him no dommage in wicked wozde, ne harme in his body ne in his cattaile, ne in his soule by entising of wicked ensample. Thou shalt not desire his wife ne none of his thinges. Understonde also, that in the name of neighbour is compzehended his enemy: Certes man shall loue his enemy by the commaundement of God: and soothly thy friend thou shalt loue in God. I say thine enemy, shalt thou loue for Gods sake, by his commaundement, for if it were reason that man should hate his enemy, forsooth God nolde not receiue vs to his loue that beene his enemies. Ayenst thzee maner of wrongs that his enemy doth to him, he shall do thze things, as thus: ayenst hate and rancour of heart, he shall loue him in heart: ayenst chiding and wicked wozdes, he shall pzay for his enemy: ayenst wicked deeds, he shall doe him bounte. For Chzist saith, Loue your enemies, and pzay for hem that speke you harme, and for hem that chase and pursue you: and doe bountie to hem that hate you. Loe, thus commaundeth vs our Lozd Jesu Chzist to do to our enemies: Forsooth nature dziueth vs to loue our frends, & parfay our enemies haue moze need of loue than our frends, and they that moze need haue, certes to hem shall men doe goodnesse. And certes in that dede haue we remembzaunce of the loue of Jesu Chzist that died for his enemies: And in as much as that loue is moze grieuous to perfourme, so much is the moze great the merite, and therfore the louing of our enemy hath confounded the Deuils venim: For right as the deuill is confounded by humility, right so is he wounded to death by the loue of our enemy, certes than is loue the medecine that casteth out the venim of enuy fro mans heart. The spices of this place shal be moze largely declared in her chapiters following.

¶ De Ira.

After Enuy woll I discriue the sinne of Ire, for soothly who so hath Enuy vpon his neighbour, anone he woll commõly find him a matter of wzath in wozde oz in deed, against him to whome he hath Enuy: And as wel commeth Ire of pzide as of Enuy: for soothly he that is pzoud oz enuious is lightly wzoth.

This sinne of Ire, after the discriuing of S. Austin is wicked will to be auenged by wozd oz by deed. Ire after the Philosopher, is the feruent blood of man iquicked in his hert, through which he would harme to him that he hateth: for certes the heart of man by eschauffing and mooning of his bloode, waxeth so troubled, that it is out of al maner of iudgement of reason. But ye shall vnderstond that Ire is in two manners, that one of hem is good, and that other is wicked. The good ire is by icalculie of goodnes through which a man is wzoth with wickednesse, and ayenst wickednesse. And therefore saith a wise man, that ire is bet than playe. This ire is with debonairte, and it is wzoth without bitternesse, not wzoth ayenst the man, but wzothe with the misdeede of the manne. As saieth the Pzophet Dauid: Irascimini, & nolite peccare. Now vnderstond that wicked Ire is in two maners, that is to say, sodaine ire oz hasty ire without aduisement and consenting of reason: The meaning and the sence of this is, that the reason of a manne ne consent not to that sodaine ire, and than it is veniall. Another ire is full wicked, that cometh of sclony of heart, auised and cast before with wicked will to do vengeaunce, and thereto his reason consenteth: & soothly this is deadly sinne. This ire is so displeasaunt to God, that it troubleth his house, and chaseth the holy ghoste out of mans soule, and wasteth and destroyeth that likenesse of God, that is to say, the vertue that is in mans soule, and putteth in him the likenesse of the deuill, and taketh the man fro god

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that is his rightfull lord. This is a full great pleasaunce to the deuil, for it is the deuils forneis that is eschaufed with the fire of Hell: For certes right so as fire is more mighty to distroy earthly thinges, than any other element, right so ire is mighty to distroy all spirituell thinges. Loke how that fire of small coles that ben almost deed vnder ashen, woll renine or quicke ayen when they ben touched with brimstone, right so ire woll euer more quicke ayen when it is touched, by the pride that is couered in mans hert. For certes fire ne may not come out of nothing, but if it were first in the same thing naturally: as fire is drawen out of flints with steele. And right so as pride is many times matter of ire, right so is rancour norice and keper of Ire. There is a maner tree, as saieth saint Isodore, that whan a manne maketh fire of the said tree, and couer the coles of it with ashen, sothely the fire of it woll last a yere or more: And right so fareth it of rancour, when it is ones conceiued in the hert of some men, certes it woll last peraventure from one Ester day vntill an other Ester day or more. But certes the same man is full ferre from the mercy of God all that while.

In this forsaid deuils forneis there forge thre shrews: Pride that aye bloweth and encreaseth the fire, by chiding and wicked wordes: Than stondeth enuy and holdeth hotte yron in the fire vpon the hert of man, with a payre of long tonges of long rancour. And than stondeth the sinne of contumely or strife and chest, and battereth and forgeth by vilainous reproeuings. Certes this cursed sinne annoieth both to the manne him selfe and also his neighbour. For sothly almost al the harm or damage that any man doth to his neighbour commeth of wrath: for certes outragious wrath doth all that euer the foule fend willeth or commandeth him. for he ne sparceth neither our lord Jesu Christ, nether his sweete mother. And in his outragious angre and ire, alas, alas, full many and diuers at that time, sclcth in his hert full wickedly both of Christ, and also of all his hallows: Is not this a cursed vice? yes certes. Alas it taketh fro man his wit and reason, and all his debonayre life spirituell that should kepe his soule. Certes it withdraweth also Goddes dew lordship, and that is mans soule, and the loue of his neighbours. It striueth also all day ayenst trouth, it reueth him the quiet of his hart, and subuerteth his soule.

Of ire cometh these stinking engendrures. First hate, that is old wrath. Discord, throwo which a man forsaketh his old frende that he hath loued full long. And than commeth warre and euery maner of wrong that a man doth to his neighbour in body or in catell. Of this cursed sinne of ire commeth also manslaughter. And vnderstond well that homicide, that is manslaughter is in diuers wise.

Some maner of homicide is spirituell, and some is bodely. Spirituell manslaughter is in vi. thinges: First by hate as saieth sainte Jhon. He that hateth his brother is an homicide. Homicide is also by backbiting, of which backbiting saieth Salomon, that they haue two swerds, with which they slea her neighbours: For sothly as wicked is to take fro him his good name as his life. Homicide is also in yeuing of wicked counsell by fraud, as for to yeue counsayle to areise wrongfull customes, and talages. Of which saith Salomon: A Lion roring and a Beere hungry, be like to the cruell Lordes in withholding or abredging of the shepe or the hire of the wages of Seruaunts, or elles in vsurie, or in withdrawinge of the Almesse of poore folke. For which the wise man saieth. Fedeth him that almoost dieth for honger, for sothly but if ye feede him ye slee him. And all these ben deedly sinnes. Bodily manneslaughter is when thou sleest him with thy tounge: An other manner is, when thou commaundest to slee a man, or elles yeuest counsaile to slee a man. Manslaughter in dede is in foure manners. That one is by law, right as a Justice dampneth him that is culpable to the death. But let the Justice beware that he doe it rightfully, and that he doe it not for delite to spill blood, but for keping of rightwisnesse. An other homicide is done for necessite, as when a man sleeth an other in his defence, and that he ne may none other wise escape without slaughter of his aduersary, he doth sinne, and he shall beare penaunce as for deedly sinne. Also if a manne by case or aduenture shote an arrow or cast a stone, with which he sleeth a man, he is an homicide. Also if a woman by negligence ouerlieth her child in her sleping, it is homicide and deedly sinne. Also whan man disturbleth conception of a child, and maketh a woman either bareine by drinking of venemous herbes, through which she may not conceiue, or sleeth a child by drinkes, or els putteth certaine materiall

thinges in her secret places to slee the child, or els doth vnkindly sinne, by which a man or a woman shedeth her nature in manner or in a place there as a child may not be conceyued. Or els if so be that a woman hath conceiued, and hurteth her selfe, and by that mishappe the child is slayne, yet it is homicide. What say we of those women that murderen her children for vicause of eschewyng of worldely shame? Certes it is an horrible homicide. Homicide is also if a manne approch to a woman by desire of lechery, thorow which the child is perished, or els smiteth a woman wittingly, through which she leseth her child: All these ben homicides and horrible deedly sinnes. Yet come there of ire mo sinnes, as well in word as in thought, and dede. As he that arreteth vpon God, or blameth God of the thing of which he is himselfe guilty, or dispiseth God and all his halowes, as don the cursid hasardours in diuers countreis: This cursid sinne don they, whan they feele in her hert ful wickedly of God and of his halowes. Also when they trete vnreuerently the sacrament of the auiter, that sin is so great that vnneth it may be releaced, but that the mercy of God passeth all his werkes, it is so great and he so benigne. Than commeth of ire an atterly angre, whan a man is sharply amonested in his shrift to leaue his sinne: Than will he be angry, and answere hokerly and angerly, or defend or excuse his sinne by vnstedfastnesse of his flesh, or els he did it for to hold company with his felowes, or els he saith the fend enticed him, or els he doth it for his youth, or els his complexion is so coragious that he may not forbeare, or els it is his destiny he saieth vnto a certaine age, or els he saith it cometh him of gentilnesse of his auncestres, and semblable things. All these manner of folke so wrappe hem in her sinnes, that they ne will not deliuer hemselfe: For sothly no wight that excuseth himselfe wilfully of his sinne, may not be deliuered of his sinne, till that he meekely beknoweth his sinne. After this than cometh swearing, that is expresse ayenst the commaundement of God, and this befalleth often of angre and of ire. God saieth, Thou shalt not take the name of thy Lord God in beine or in idell. Also our lord Jesu Christ saieth by the word of sainct Mathew: Ne will ye not swere in all maner, neither by heuen, for it is Goddes trone, ne by erth, for it is the bench of his fete, ne by Hierusalem. for it is the cite of a great king, ne by thine heed, for thou maist not make an here nyther white ne blacke: but say by your word, ye ye, nay, nay: and what that it is more, it is of euill. Thus saith Christ. For Christs sake sweare not so sinfully in dismembring of Christ: By soule, hert, bones, and body, for certes it semeth that ye think that the cursed Jewes ne dismembred not inough the precious person of Christ, but ye dismembre him more. And if so be that the law compell you to swere, than ruleth you after the law of God in your swering, as saieth Jeremy. iiii. cap. Thou shalt kepe thre condicions, thou shalt sweare in trouth, in dome, and in rightwisenesse, this is to say, thou shalt sweare soth, For euery lesing is ayenst Christ, for Christ is very truth. And thinke well this that euery great swearer not compelled lawfully to sweare, the plague shall not depart fro his hous, while he vseth such vnlefull swearing. Thou shalt sweare also in dome, whan thou art constreined by thy domes manne to witnesse trouth: Also thou shalt not sweare for enuy, neither for fauour, nether for mede, or reward, but onely for rightwisnesse and for declaring of it to the honour and worshippe of God, and to the ayding and helpe of thine eum Christen. And therefore euery man that taketh Goddes name in idell or falsely sweareth with his mouth, or els taketh on him the name of Christ to be called a Christen man, and liueth ayenst Christs liuing and his teaching, all they take Gods name in idle. Loke also what saith saynt Peter. Actuum iiii. capitu. Non est aliud nomen sub celo, &c. There is none other name saith sainct Peter vnder heuen yeue to men, in which they may be saued, that is to say, but the name of Jesu Christ. Take hede eke how precious is the name of Jesu Christ, as saith saint Poule, ad Philipenses ii. In nomine Iesu, &c. That in the name of Jesu euery knee of heuenly creatures, earthly, and of hel should bow, for it is so hie and so worshipfull, that the cursed fend in hel should tremble to here it named. Thā semeth it that mē that swere so horribly by his blessed name, that they dispise it more boldely than the cursed Jewes, or els the diuell that trembleth whan he heareth his name.

Now certes sith that swearing, but if it be lawfully done, is so hiely defended: moch more is forswering falsely, and yet nedelesse.

What say we also of hem that delite hem in swearing, and hold it a gentery or a manly

dede

dede to swere great othes: And what of hem that of very vsage, ne cease not to swere great othes, all be the cause not worth a straw: certes, this is horrible sinne. Swearing sodenly, is also a great sinne. But lette vs go now to that horrible sinne, swearing of adiuracion and conjuracion, as doen these fals Enchaunters, or Nigromancers in Basins full of water, or in a bright sword, in a cercle, in a fire, or in the shulder bone of a shepe: I can not say, but that they doe cursedly and damnably ayenst Christ, and all the faith of holy church.

What say we of hem, that beleue on Deuinales, as by flight or by noise of birdes or of beast, or by sort, by Geomancy, by dreames, by chirking of doores, or craking of houses, by gnawing of rattes, and such maner wretchidnesse: certes, all these thinges been defended by God, and holy church, for which they been accursed, till they come to amendment, that on such filth set her beleue. Charmes for woundes, or malady of menne, or of beasts, if they take any effect, it may be paraventure that God suffreth it, for folke should yeue the more faith, & reuerence to his name.

Now will I speake of leasinges, which generally is false signifiaunce of word in entent, to deceine his euin Christen. Some leasing, is of which there commeth none auauntage to no wight, and some leasing turneth to the profite and ease of a man, and to the damage of an other man. An other leasing is, for to sauc his life or his catell, which cometh of delite for to lie, in which delite they will forge a long tale, & peint it with all circumstaunces, where al the tale of the ground is false. Some leasing commeth, for he will sustein his wordes: Some leasing cometh of recchelesnesse without auisement, and semblable things.

Lette vs now touch the vice of flattery, which ne commeth not gladly but for dread, or for couetise. Flattery, is generally wrongfull prailing. Flatterers been the deuils norices, that norish his children, with milke of losingery: forsoth Salomon saith, that flattery is worse than detraction, for sometime detraction maketh an hautein manne, be the more humble, for he dreadeth detraction, but certes flattery maketh a man, to enhaunce his hart and his countenaunce. Flatterers bee the Deuilles enchauntours, for they make a manne to wene himselfe be like that he is nat like. Those be like to Judas, that betray a manne, to sell him to his enemy. Flatterers been the deuilles Chapelcins, that euer sing Placebo. I reken flattery in the vices of ire: for oft time if a man be wroth with an other, than will he flatter some wight, to sustaine him in his quarell.

Speake we now of such cursing, as commeth of irous hart. Malison generally may be saied, euery manner power of harme: such cursing bereueth man fro the reigne of God, as saieth S. Poule. And oft time such cursing wrongfully, returneth ayen to him that curseth, as a bird that turneth againe to his owne nest. And ouer all thing, men ought eschue to curse her children, and yeue to the deuill her engendrure, as ferforth as in hem is: certes, it is great perill and great sinne.

Let vs than speake of chiding and reproch which beene full great wounds in mannes hart, for they vnclow the semes of frendship in mannes hart: For certes, vneth may a man plainly be accorded with him, that him openly hath reuiled and reproued, & disclaundred: This is a full ghostly sinne, as Christ saieth in the Gospel. And take hede now, that he that reproueth his neighbour, either he reproueth him by some harme of paine, that he hath vpon his body, as Mesell, croked, harlot, or by some sinne that he doeth. Now if ye reproue him by harme of paine, than turneth the reproue to Jesu Christ: for pain is send by the rightwise sonne of God, and by his sufferaunce, be it meselry, maime, or malady: and if he reproue him vncharitably of sinne, as thou holour, thou dronkelew harlot, and so forth. Than pertaineth that to the reioising of the Deuill, which euer hath ioy that men doen sinne. And certes, chiding may not come but of vilanous hart, for after the haboundaunce of the hart, speaketh the mouth full oft. And ye shall vnderstond, that loke by any way, whan any man shall chastise or correct an other, that he beware from chiding or reproueing: for truly but he beware, he may full lightly quicke the fire of angre and of wrath, which he should quench: and peraventure, slaeth him, which he might chastise with benignite. For as saith Salomon: the amiable tongue is the tree of life, that is to say, of life spirituell. And sothly, a dissolute tong slaeth the spirites of hem that reproueth, and also of him which is reproued. Lo, what saieth sainct Augustin: There is nothing so like the deuils child, as he which oft chideth. A seruaunt of GOD behoueth not to chide. And

though that chiding bee a villainous thing, betwixt all manner folke, yet it is certes most vncouenable, betwene a man and his wife, for there is neuer rest. And therefore saieth Salomon: An hous that is vncouered and dropping, and a chiding wife, ben alike.

A manne, which is in a dropping hous in many places, though he eschue the dropping in one place, it droppeth on him in another place: So fareth it by a chiding wife, if she chide him in one place, she woll chide him in an other: And therefore better and greatly more pleasaunt is a morsell, or little gobet of bread with ioy, than an hous filled full of delices, with chiding and gnerring, saieth Salomon. Saunct Poule saith: O ye wome, bethe subgect to your husbands, as you behoueth and ought in God: And ye men loueth your wines, Ad Colonicenses. iii.

Afterward speake we of scorning, which is a wicked sin, and namely whan he scorneth a man for his good werkes: for certes, such scorners fare like the foule Tode, that may not endure to smell the swete sauour of the vine, whan it flourisheth. These scorners ben parting felowes with the deuil. for they haue ioy whan the Deuill winneth, and sorrow if he leseth. They been aduersaries of Jesu Christ, for they hate that he loueth, that is to say, saluacion of soule.

Speake we now of wicked counsaile, the which is a Traitour, for he destrieueth him that trusteth in him: Vr Achitofell ad Salomonem. But natheless, yet is his wicked counsaile, first ayenst himselfe, for as saith the Wise man: Euery false liuing hath this property in himselfe, that he that woll annoy an other man, he annoieth first himself. And men shall vnderstond, that man shall not take his counsaile of false folke, ne of angry folke, or greuous folke, ne of folke that loue specially to moch worldly folke, namely in counsailing of soules.

Now commeth the sinne of hem that sowe and make discord emong folke, which is a sin that Christ hateth vtterly, and no wonder is: for he died for to make concord. And more shame doe they to Christ, than did they that him crucified: For God loueth better that friendship be emonges folke, than he did his owne body, which that he gaue for vnite. Therefore ben they likened to the deuill, that euer be about to make discord. Now commeth the sinne of double tongue, such as speake faire before folke, and wickedly behind, or els they make semblaunt, as though they spake of good entencion, or els in game & play, and yet they speake of wicked entent.

Now commeth bewraying of counsaile, through which a man is defamed: certes vneth may he restore y damage. Now cometh menace, that is an open foly, for he that oft menaceth, he threatteth more than he may performe full oft time. Now cometh idel wordes, that is without profite of him that speaketh the wordes, and also of him that harketh the wordes: Or els idle wordes been those that ben nedelesse, or without entent of naturell profite. And albeit that idell wordes, be somtime veniall sinne, yet should men doubt hem, for we shall yeue rekening of hem before God. Now cometh iangling, that may not be without sinne. And as saieth Salomon: it is a signe of apert foly: And therefore a Philosopher saied, whan menne asked him how that he should please the people, he answeard: Doe many good werks, and speake few vanities. After this commeth the sinne of iaperies, that ben the deuilles apes, for they make folke to laugh at her iapery, as folke doe at the gaudes of an ape: which iapes defendeth sainct Poule. Loke how that vertuous wordes and holy, comfort hem that trauaile in the seruice of Christ: Right so comforteth the vilainous wordes and knackes of iapers hem, that trauaile in the seruice of the deuill. These ben the sinnes of the tongue, that come of ire, and of other sinnes.

¶ The remedy ayenst Ire.

THe remedy ayenst Ire, is a vertue that men call manstetude that is Debonairte, and also an other vertue that men clepe pacience or sufferaunce.

Debonairte withdrawith and refraineth, the steringes and mouings of mannes corage in hart, in such manner that they ne skip nat out by anger ne Ire. Sufferaunce suffreth swetely all the annoiaunces & wronges that menne doen to man outward. S. Jerome saith this of Debonairte, that it doeth no harme to no wight, ne saieth: ne for no harme that men doe ne say, he ne chafeth ayenst reason. This vertue somtime cometh of nature: for as saith y Philosopher: A man is a quicke thing by nature, debonaire and treatable to goodnes: but whan debonairte is enformed of grace, then it is the more worth.

Pacience

Pacience is an other remedy ayenst ire, and is a vertue that suffereth swetely euery mannes goodnes, and is nat wroth for no harme that is doen to him. The Philosopher saith, that pacience is the vertue that suffreth debonairly, all the outrages of aduersite, and euery wicked word. This vertue maketh a man like to God, and maketh him Goddes owne child: as saith Christ. This vertue discomfiteth thine enemies. And therefore saieth the Wiseman: if thou would venquish thine enemy, learne to suffre. And thou shalt understond, that a man suffereth fower maner of greuaunces, in outward things, ayenst the which fower, he must haue fower manner of pacience.

The first greuaunce is of wicked wordes, whiche suffered Jesu Christe without grutching full pacently, whan the Jewes dispised him full oft. Suffer thou therfore pacently, for the Wiseman saith: if thou strine with a foole, though the foole be wroth, or though he laugh, alway thou shalt haue no rest.

That other greuaunce outward, is to haue dommage of thy cattell: There ayenst suffred Christ full pacently, whan he was dispouled of all that he had in this life, & that was but his clothes. The third greuaunce, is a man to haue harme in his body: that suffred Christ full pacently in all his passion. The fourth greuaunce, is in outragious labour in werkes: wherefore I say, that folke that make her seruaunts to trauaile too greuously, or out of time, as in holy daies, sothly they dooe great sinne. Here ayenst suffred Christ full pacently, and taught vs pacience, whan he bare vpon his blessed shulders the crosse, vpon which he should suffre dispitous death. Here may men learne to be pacient, for certes, not onely Christen bee paciente for loue of Jesu Christ, and for reward of the blessed life that is perdurable, but certes the old Painems, that neuer were Christened, commended and vsed the vertue of patience.

A Philosopher vppon a time, that would haue beat his disciple, for his great trespace, for which he was moued, and brought a rod to beat the child, and whan this child saw the rodde, he said to his maister: what thinke ye to doe? I will beat thee saied the maister for thy correction: Forsothe saied the childe, ye ought firste correcte your selfe, that haue loste all your pacience, for the offence of a childe. Forsoth saied the maister all weping, thou saiest soth: haue thou the rodde my dere child, and correct me for mine impacience. Of pacience cometh obedience, through whiche a manne is obedient to Christ, and to all hem to which he ought be obedient in Christ. And vnderstand well, that obedience is perfite, whan that a man doeth gladly and hastely, with good harte entierly, all that he should dooe. Obedience generally, is to performe the doctrine of God, and of his soueraines, to which him ought to be obeisaunt in al right wisnesse.

De Accidia.

After the sinnes of Enuy and Ire, now will I speake of the sinne of Accidy: for enuy blindeth the hart of a manne, and ire troubleth a man, and Accidie maketh him heuy, thoughtfull and pensife. Enuy and ire maken bitternesse in hart, which bitternesse is moder of Accidie, & taketh fro him the loue of all goodnesse, than is Accidy the anguish of trouble of hart: And sainct Augustine saieth: It is anoy of goodnesse and annoy of harme. Certes this is a dampnable sinne, for it doeth wrong to Jesu Christ, in as moch as it benommeth the seruice that men ought doe to Christ, as saieth Salomon: but Accidy doeth no soch diligence. He doeth all thing with annoy, and with wrawnesse, slackenesse, and excusacion: with idlenesse and vnlust. For which the boke saieth. Accursed bee hee, that doeth the seruice of God negligently. Than is Accidy enemy to euery estate of man. For certes the estate of man, is in thre manners. Either it is in the estate of innocency, as was the estate of Adam, before that he fell into sinne, in which estate he was hold to worke, as in praising and lauding God. An other estate is the estate of sinful men: in which estate men ben holden to labour in praying to God, for amendment of her sins, and that hee would graunt hem to rise out of her sinnes.

An other estate, is the estate of grace, in whiche state he is holden to woorkes of penitence: and certes, to all these things is Accidy contrary, for he loueth no busines at all. Now certes, this foule sinne Accidy, is also a full great enemie to the liuelode of the body, for it ne hath no purueyaunce ayenst temporell necessite, for it forslotheth, forslogeth, and distroieth all goodes temporell by recheslesnes.

The fowerth thing is, that Accidy is like hem

hem that ben in the paine of hell, bicause of her sloth and heauines: for they that be damned, ben so bound, that they may neither well doe ne thinke. Of accidie cometh first that a manne is annoied and encombred to doo any goodnesse, and maketh that God hath abhominacion of such accidie, as saith S. Jhon.

Now cometh sloth, that woll nat suffre no hardnesse ne penaunce: for sothly sloth is so tender & so delicate, as saieth Salomon, that he woll sucker no hardnesse ne penaunce, and therfore he marreth all that he doeth. Ayenst this rotten sinne of accidy and sloth, should men exercise hem self, and vse hem to do good workes: and manly and vertuously catch corage to do, thinking that our lord Jesu Christ quiteth euery good deed, be it neuer so lite. Usage of labor is a great thing. For it maketh, as saith S. Bernard, the labourer to haue strong armes, and hard sentwes: and sloth maketh heuy, feble, and tender. Than cometh dread to beginne to worke any good works. For certes, he that enclineth to sin, him thinketh it is so great an empryse, for to vndertake the workes of goodnes, & casteth in his hart, that the circumstaunces of goodnesse, been so greuous & weighty for to suffre, that he dare not vndertake to doe workes of goodnesse, as saith saint Gregory.

Now cometh wanhope, that is dispeire of the mercy of God, that cometh somtime of to moch outragious sorow, and sometime of to moch dreade, imagining that he hath doe so moch sinne, that it woll not auaile him, tho he would repent him, and forsake sinne: through which dispeire or dread, he abandoneth all his hart to euery maner sinne, as saieth sainct Augustine. Which dampnable sinne, if it continue vnto his end, it is called sinning in the holy ghost. This horrible sin is so perillous, that he that is despeired, there nis no felony ne no sinne, that he doubteth for to doe, as sheweth wel by Judas. Certes, aboue all sinnes than is this sinne most displeasaunt to Christ, and most aduersary. Sothly, he that dispeireth him, is like to the coward champion recreaunt, that flieth without nede. Alas, alas, nedeles is he recreaunt, and nedelesse dispaired. Certes, the mercy of God is euer redy to the penitent person, and is aboue all his werkes Alas can not a man bethinke him on the Gospell of S. Luke. xv. where as Christ saith, that as wel shal there be ioy in heauen, vpon a sinfull manne that doth penitence, as vpon. xcix. rightfull men that nede no penitence. Looke ferther in the same Gospell, the ioy and the feast of the good man, that had lost his sonne, whan his sonne with repentaunce was retourned to his father. Can they not remember hem also, that (as saith S. Luke) Chapi. xxi. How that the thief that was hanged beside Jesu Christ, saied: Lord remember me, whan thou comest into thy reigne. For loth saied Christ, I say to thee: to day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. Certes, there is non so horrible sinne in man, that ne may in his life be distroied by penitence, through vertue of the passion and of the death of Christ. Alas what nede men than to be dispaired, sith that his mercy is so redy and large? Aske and haue. Than cometh somnolence, that is sluggy slombring, whiche maketh a man heauy, and duile in body and in soule, and this sinne commeth of sloth: And certes, the time that by way of reason, man should not slepe, is by the morow, but if there were cause reasonable. For sothly the morow tide is most conenable, a manne to say his praiers, and for to thanke God, and to honor God, and to yeue almes to the poore that cometh first in the name of Jesu Christ.

Loe, what saieth Salomon? Who so woll by the morow awake to seke me, he shall find me. Than cometh negligence or retchlesnesse that recketh of nothing. And though that ignorance bee mother of all harmes, certes, negligence is the norice. Negligence ne doth no force, whan he shall do a thing, whether he doth it well or euill.

The remedy of these two sinnes is, as saith the Wiseman: that he that dredeth God, spareth not to doe that he ought to dooe, and he that loueth GOD, he woll dooe diligence to please GOD by his werkes, and abandon himselfe with all his might, well for to dooe. Than cometh idlenesse, that is the yate of all harmes. An idle manne is like to a place that hath no walles, the deuill may enter on euery side, or shote at him that is discouert, by temptacion on euery side. This idlenes is the thorrake of all wicked & vilaine thoughtes, and of all ordure. Certes, the heauen is yeue to hem that will labour, and not to idell folke. Also Dauid saieth, that they ne bee not in the labour of menne, ne they shall not be whipped with men, that is to say in Purgatory. Certes, than seemeth it they shal be turmented with the deuils in hell, but if they do penaunce.

Than cometh the sinne, that men call tarditas,

ditas, as whan a man is so latered, or tarying or he woll tourne to God: and certes, that is a great folly. He is like him that falleth in the ditch, and woll not arise. And this vice cometh of fals hope, that he thinketh he shall liue long, but that hope faileth full oft.

Than cometh lachesse, that is he that whā he begynneth any good worke, anon he woll leaue and stint it, as doen they that haue any person to gouern, and ne take of him no more hede, anon as they find any contrary or any annoy. These been the new shepherds, that let their shepe wittingly go ren to the Wolfe, that is in the bryres, or dooe not force of her owne gouernaunce. Of this cometh pouerte and destruction, both of spirituell and temporell things. Than commeth a maner coldnesse, that freseth the hart of man. Than commeth vndeuocion, through which a man is so blont, and as saith S. Bernard, hath soch langour in his soule, that he may neither rede ne sing in holy church, ne here ne think of no deuocion, ne trauaile with his hondes in no good worke, that it nis to him vnsauery and all apalled. Than wexeth he slow and slombry, and sone woll be wroth, and soone is enclined to hate and enuy. Than cometh the sinne of worldly sorowe, soche as is called Tristicia, that slacth a man, as saieth saint Poule. For certes, soch sorow worketh the death of the soule and body also, for thereof cometh that a man is anoied of his own life. Wherefore soch sorow shorteth full oft the life of man, er that his time is come, by way of kind.

Remedium contra peccatum Accidie.

Ayenst this horrible sinne of Accidie, and the braunches of the same, there is a vertue that is called Fortitudo or strēgth, that is an affection, through which a man dispiseth annoyous things: this vertue is so mighty and so rigorous, that it dare withstond mightily, and wisely kepe himself fro perilles that ben wicked, and wrastel ayenst the assaults of the deuill, for it enhaunceth & enforceth the soule, right as Accidy abateth and maketh it feble: for this fortitude may endure by long sufferaunce, the trauailes that ben conenable.

This vertue hath many speces, the first is called Magnanimite, that is to say, great corage. For certes, there behoueth great corage ayenst Accidy, lest that it ne swallow the soule by the sinne of sorow, or distroy it by wanhope. Certes, this vertue maketh folk vndertake, hard and greuous things by her own will, wisely and reasonably. And for as moch as the deuill fighteth ayenst a manne, more by subtilte and sleight, than by strength, therfore shall a man withstand him by wit, reason, and discrecio. Than are there the vertues of faith, and hope in GOD and in his sainctes, to eschue and accomplish the good workes, in the which he purposeth fermely to continue. Than commeth surety or sikernesse, and that is whan a man, ne doubteth no trauaile in time cōming, of the good workes that he hath begon. Than cometh Magnificence, that is to say, whan a man doth & performeth great workes of goodnes, that he hath begon, and that is thend, why ỹ men should do good workes. For in the accomplishing of good workes, lieth the great guerdon. Than is there Constaunce, that is stablenes of corage, and this should be in hart by stedfast faith, and in mouth, in bearing, in chere, and in deed. Also there been mo speciall remedies ayenst Accidy, in diuers woorkes: as in consideracion of the paines of hell, the ioyes of heauen, and in trust of the grace of the holy ghost, that will yeue him might to performe his good entent.

De Auaricia.

After Accidy, woll I speake of Auarice, & of Couetise. Of which sinne S. Poule saith: the root of all harmes is Couetise, ad Timoth. vi. For sothly, whan the hart of manne is confounded in it selfe and troubled, and that the soule hath lost the comfort of God, than seketh hee anidell solace of worldly things.

Auarice, after the discripcion of S. Augustine, is a licorousnes in hart to haue yearthly thinges. Some other folke say, that Auarice is for to purchace many yearthly things, and nothing to yeue to hem that haue ne de. And vnderstand, that Auarice standeth not only in land ne cattel, but somtime in science and glory, and in euery maner of outragious things is auarice. And couetise is this.

Couetise, is for to couet soch thinges, that thou hast nat. And Auarice is to with hold and kepe soch thinges, as thou hast without right. Sothly, this Auarice is a sinne, that is full dampnable, for all holy writ curseth it, and

and speaketh ayenst that vice, for it doeth wrong to Jesu Christ: for it taketh fro him, the loue that men to him owe, and tourneth it backeward ayenst all reason, and maketh that the auaricious man, hath more hope in his catell, than in Jesu Christ, and doeth more obseruaunce in keeping of his treasour, than he doeth in the seruice of Jesu Christ. And therefore saieth sainct Poule: Ad Ephesios quinto: That an auaricious man is the thraldome of Idolatry.

What difference is there betwixt an Idolater, and an auaricious man: But that an Idolater, paraventure ne hath nat but a Maumet or two, and the auaricious manne hath many. For certes, euery florein in his coffer, is his maumet. And certes, the sinne of maumetry, is the first that God defended, as in the 1. commaundement it beareth witnes, in Exodi. Capi. xx. Thou shalt haue no false Goddes before me, ne thou shalt make to the no graue thing. Thus is an auaricious man that loueth his treasure before God, an Idolater. And through this cursed sinne of auarice and couetise, cometh these hard lordshippes, through which they been streined by tillages, customes, and cariages, more than her duety or reason is, or els take they of her bondmenne amerciamentes, which might more reasonably be called extorcions, than merciamentes. Of which amerciamentes, or raunsoming of bondmen, some Lordes stewards say, that it is rightful, for as much as a churle hath no temporel thing, that it ne is his lordes as they say. But certes, these lordshippes doe wrong, that bereue their bondmen, thinges that they neuer yaue hem. Augustinus de Ciuitate Dei. Libro. iv. Soth is that the condicion of thraldome, and the first cause of thraldome, was for sinne.

This may yese, that the offence deserued thraldome, but nat nature. Wherefore these Lordes ne should not moch glorifie hem in her Lordshippes, sith that they by naturall condicion, been not lordes ouer thralles, but for that thraldome came first by the desert of sinne. And more ouer, there as the Law saieth, that temporell goodes of bond folke, been the goods of her Lord: yea, that is for to vnderstond, the goods of the Emperour, to defend hem in her right, but not to robbe hem ne reue hem. Therefore saieth Seneca: Thy prudence should liue benignly with the thralles. Those that thou callest thy thralles, been Goddes people: and for humble people been Christes frends, they ben contubernial with the Lordes.

Thinke also, that of such seed as churles spring, of such seed spring Lordes: As well may the chorle be saued as ꝑ Lord. The same death that taketh the chorle, such death taketh the Lord. Wherefore I rede doo right so with the chorle, as thou wouldest that thy lord did with thee, if thou were in his plight. Euery sinfull man is a chorle to sinne: I rede thee Lord certes, that thou werk in such wise with thy chorles, that they rather loue thee than dread thee. I wote well, that there is degree aboue degree, as reason is, skill is that menne doe her deuour, there as it is due. But certes, extorcions, and dispite of your vnderlings is damnable.

And forthermore vnderstand well, that these Conquerours or Tyrauntes, make full oft thralles of hem, that been borne of as royall blood, as been they that hem conquere. This name of Thraldome was neuer erst knowe, till that Noe saied that his sonne Canan, should bee thrall to his brethren for his sinne. What say we than of hem, that pill and doe extorcions to holy Church: Certes, the sword that menne yeue first to a knight, whan hee is newe dubbed, signifieth that he should defend holy Church, and not robbe and pill it, and who so doth is Traitour to Christ. And as saieth sainct Augustine, they been the Deuilles Wolues, that strangle the Sheepe of Jesu Christ, and don worse than Wolues, for sothly, whan the Wolue hath full his womb, he stinteth to strangle shepe: But sothly, the pillours and destroiers of holy Church goods, ne doe not so, for they ne stint neuer to pill. Now as I haue saied, sith so is that sinne was first cause of thraldome, than is it thus, that at the time that all this world was in sinne, than was all this world in thraldome, and in subiection, but certes, sith the time of grace came, God ordained that some folke should be more hie in estate and in degree, and some folke more low, and that ech should bee serued in his estate.

And therefore, in some countrees there they bee thralles, whan they haue tourned hem to the faith, they make her thralles free out of the thraldome: Therefore, certes the Lord oweth to his man, that the man oweth to the lord. The Pope calleth himselfe seruaunt of the seruaundes of God, but for as the estate of holy Church, ne might not haue been, ne the common profite might not haue be kept,

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ne peace ne rest in earth, but if God had ordained that some man had hier degre, and some men lower: Therefore was soueraignte ordained to kepe, maintaine, and defend her vnderlinges and her subiectes in reason, as fer forth as it lieth in her power, and not to distroy ne confound hem. Wherefore I say, that those lords that been like wolues that deuour the possessions or the cattell of poore folkes wrongfully, without mercy or mesure, they shall receiue by the same measure that they haue mesured to poore folke, the mesure of Jesu Christ but it be amended. Now cometh discrete betwixt marchaunt and marchaunt. And thou shalt vnderstond that marchaundise is in two maners, that one is bodily, & that other is ghostly: that one is honest and lefull, & that other is dishonest and vnlefull. The bodely marchaundise that is lefull and honest is this: that there as God hath ordained that a reigne or a country is suffisaunt to himselfe, than it is honest and lefull that of haboundaunce of this country, menne helpe another country that is nedy: And therfore there must be marchauntes to bring fro one country to that other her marchaundise. That other marchaundise that menne haunten with fraud, and trechery, and disceit with leasinges and false othes, is right cursed and dampnable. Espirituell Marchandise is properly Simony, that is ententife desire to bie any thyng espirituell, that is a thing, which appertaineth to the saintuary of GOD, and to cure of the soule. This desire if so be that a manne doe his diligence to perfourme it, all be it that his desire ne take none effect, yet it is to him a deedly sinne, and if he be ordred, he is irreguler. Certes Simony is called of Simō magus, that would haue bought for temporell cattell, the yeft that GOD had yeue by the holy ghost to Saint Peter, and to ỳ Apostels: And therefore vnderstond, that he that selleth and he that bieth things espirituelles, ben called Simoniacks, be it by cattel, be it by procuring or by fleshly praier of his frendes. fleshly frends or espirituel frendes: fleshly in two maners, as by kinred or other frendes: Softly if they pray for hym that is not worthy and able, it is Simony if he take the benefice, and if he bee worthy and able there is none. That other maner is whan man or woman praieth for folk to auaunce hem only for wicked fleshly affeccīō which thei haue vnto the persons, and that is foule simony. But certes in seruice, for which menne yeuen thinges espirituell vnto her seruauntes, it must be vnderstond that the seruice must be honest, or els not, & also that it be without bargeining, and that the person be able. For as saith saint Damasen: All the sinnes of the world at regard of this sinne, are as thyng of nought, for it is the greatest sinne that may be after the sinne of Lucifer and of Antichrist: For by this sinne GOD forleseth the Church & the Soule, which he bought with his precious blood, by hem that yeue Churches to hem that ben not worthy, for they put in theues honds that steale the soules of Jesu Christ, and distroy his patrimony. By such vnworthy priests and curates haue leud menne lesse reuerence of the Sacramentes of holy Church, and such yeuers of churches put the childrē of Christ out, and put in the Church the Diuels owne sonnes: thei sel the soules that lambes should kepe to the wolf which strangleth hem: and therfore shall they neuer haue part of the pasture of lambes, that is the blisse of Heauen. Now cometh hasardry with his apertenants, as tables and rasles, of which commeth disceit, false othes, chidinges, and all rauinelle blaspheminges, and temptyngs of God, and hate of his neighbours, wast of goods, mispending of time, and sometime manslaughter. Certes hasardours ne mowe not be without great sinne. Of Auarice commeth also leasinges, theft, false witnesse, and false othes: and ye shall vnderstond that these be great sinnes, and expresse ayenst the commandementes of God, as I haue said. False witnesse is in word, and also in dede: In word, as for to bireue thy neighbours good name by thy false witnesse, or bireue him his cattell or his heritage, by thy false witnessing, whan thou for ire or for mede, or for enuy, beares false witnesse, or accuses him, or excuseth thy selfe falsely. Ware ye questmongers & notaries: certes for false witnessing was Susan in ful great sorow and paine, & many an other mo. The sin of theft is also expresse ayenst Gods hest, & in two manners, corporel and espirituel, the tēporel theft is: As for to take thy neibours cattell ayenst his will, be it by force or by sleight, be it by met or by measure: by stealinge also of false enditementes vpon him, and in borowing of thy neighbors cattell, in entent neuer to pay it ayen, and semblable thinges. Espirituel theft is sacrilege, that is to say, hurting of holy things sacred to christ

in two maners, by reson of the holy place, as churches or church yerdes: For which euery vilanous sinne that menne done in such places, may be called sacrilege, or euery violence in the semblable places. Also they that withdraw falsely the rightes that long to holy church and plesing. And generally sacrilege is to reue holy thing fro holy place, or vnholy thing, out of holy place, or holy thing out of vnholy place.

¶Reuelatio contra peccatum Auaricie.

NOw shal ye vnderstond, that releuing of Auarice is misericorde and pite largely taxed. And men might aske why ỳ misericorde and pitie are releuing of Auarice: Certes the auaricious mā sheweth no pitie ne misericorde to the nedefull man.

For he deliteth him in the keping of his treasure, and not in the relcuing ne releuing of his euin Christen. And therefore speake I first of misericorde. Than is misericorde (as saieth the Philosopher) a vertue, by which the corage of manne is stered, by the misease of him that is diseased. Upon which misericorde followeth pite, in performing and fulfilling of charitable workes of mercy, helping and comforting him that is miseased. And certes these thinges moue & stere a man to misericorde of Jesu Christ, that he yaue himselfe for our offence, and suffred death for misericorde, & foryaue vs our original sinnes, and therby released vs fro the paines of hell, and minished the paines of purgatory by penitens, and yeueth grace well to doe, and at last the blisse of Heauen. The speces of misericorde been for to lene, and also for to yeue: for to foryeue and release, & for to haue pite in hert and compassion of the mischiefe of his euin Christen, and also to chastise there as nede is. Another maner of remedy ayenst Auarice, is resonable largesse: but sothly here behoueth the consideracion of that grace of Jesu Christ, and of the temporell goods, and also of the goods perdurable that Jesu christ yafe to vs, and to haue remembraunce of the death which he shall receiue, he knoweth not whan, where, ne who: and also that he shall forgo all that he hath, saue onely that which he hath expended in good werkes.

But for as much, as some folke ben vnmeasurable, menne ought for to auoid and eschue foluh largesse, the which some people call wast.

Certes, he that is foole large, yeueth not his chattel, but he leseth his chattel.

Sothly what thing that he yeueth for veingloxy, as to minstrels and to folke that beare his renome in the worlde, he hath sinne therof and none almesse: Certes he leseth foule his good ỳ he ne seketh with the yeft of his good nothing but sinne. He is like to an horse that seketh rather to drink droup or troubled water, than for to drinke water of the clere wel. To hem apperteinen the said curling, that Christ shall yeue at the day of dome, to hem that shall be dampned.

Sequitur de Gula.

AFter Auarice cometh gloteny, which is expresse ayenst ỳ cōmādement of God. Gloteny is vnmesurable appetite to eate or to drink, or els to do inough to the vnmeasurable appetite and disordeined coueitise to eat or to drinke. This sinne corrupteth all this world, as is wel shewed in the sinne of Adam and of Eue. Looke also what saieth sainct Poule of gloteny. Many (saith he) gone, of which I haue often said to you, and now I say it weping, that been the enemies of the crosse of Christ, of which the end is death, and of which her wombe is her God and her glory, in confusion of hem that so deuour earthly thinges. He that is vsed to this sinne of gloteny, he ne may no sinne withstond, he must be in seruage of all vices, for it is the Deuils hourd, there he hideth and resteth him. This sinne hath many speces: The first is dronkenesse that is the horrible sepulture of mannes reason: and therefore whan a manne is dronke he hath lost his reason: And this is deedly sinne. But sothly whan that a manne is not wont to strong drinke, and parauenture ne knoweth not the strength of the drinke, or hath febleese in his heed, or hath trauailed, through which he drinketh the more, all be he sodainly caught with drink, it is no deedly sinne, but venail. The second spece of gloteny is, that the spirit of a manne wexeth all troubled, for dronkennesse bireueth him the discrecion of his wit.

The third maner spece of Glotony is whan a manne deoureth his meat, and hath not

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rightfull manner of eating. The fourth is, whan through the great abundaunce of his meat, the humours in his body been distempered. The fifth is, forgetfulnesse by to moch drinking, for which sometime a man forgetteth er the morning, what he did on the euening before.

In other maner ben distinct the speces of glotony, after sainct Gregory. The first is, for to eate before time to eat. The second is, whan a man giueth him to delicate meat, or drinke. The third is, whã men take to moch ouer measure. The fourth is, curiolite, with great entent to make & apparell his meat. The fifth is, for to eat to gredely.

These ben the fiue fingers of the deuilles hond, by which he draweth folke to sinne.

¶ The remedy ayenst Glotony.

AYenst Glotony, the remedy is abstinence, as saieth Galiene: but that I hold nat meritorious, if he doe it for the heale of his body. Sainct Augustine woll that abstinence bee doen for vertue, and with pacience. Abstinence (saith he) is little worth, but if a man haue good will thereto, and but if he bee enforced by pacience and charite, and that men doe it for Goddes sake, and in hope to haue blisse in heauen.

The fellowes of abstinence be attemperaunce, that holdeth the meane in all thinges. Also shame that eschueth all dishonesty. Sufficiaunce, that seketh no rich meats ne drinkes, ne doth not force of outragious, apareling of meat. Measure also, that restraineth by reason, the vnmeasurable appetite of eating. Sobernesse also, that restraineth the outrage of drinke. Sparing also, that restraineth the delicate ease, to sit long at meat, wherfore some folke standen of her owne will whan they eat, bicause they woll eat at lesse leasure.

De luxuria.

AFter Glotony cometh lechery, for these twoo sinnes been so nigh cosins, ỳ oft time they woll nat depart. God wote this sin is full displeasant to God for he said himself: doe no lechery. And therefore he putteth great paines ayenst this sinne.

For in the old law, if a woman thrall wer take in this sinne, she should bee beat with staues to death. And if she were a gentil woman, she should be slaine with stones. And if she were a Bishops doughter, she should be brent by Goddes commaundement.

More ouer by the siune of Lechery, God drowned all the world, and after that he brẽt fiue cities with thunder and lightning, and sanke hem into hell.

Now let vs speak thã of the said stinking sinne of Lecherie, that menne call auoutry of wedded folke, that is to say, if that one of hem been wedded or els both. Sainct Jhon saieth, that auouterers shall bee in hell, in a stanke brenning of fire and of Brumstone, for the stench of the ordure: certes the breaking of this Sacrament, is an horrible thing: it was made of God himselfe in Paradise, and confirmed by Jesu Christ, as witnesseth. S. Mathew in the Gospel: A manne shall leue father and mother, & take him to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh.

This Sacrament betokeneth the knitting together of Christ and holy Churche. And not onely that God forbade auoutry in deed, but also he commaunded that thou shouldest not coueit thy neighbours wife. In this hest saieth sainct Augustine, is forboden all manner couetise to doe Lechery. Lo, what saieth sainct Mathew in the Gospell, that who so seeth a woman, to couetise of his lust, he hath doen Lechery with her in his hart. Here may ye see, that not onely the deed of this sinne is forboden, but also the desire to that sinne. This cursed sinne anoieth greuously hem that it haunt: and first to her soule, for he obligeth it to sinne, and to paine of death, which is perdurable. Unto the body anoieth it greuously also, for it drieth him and wasteth, and shenteth him, and of his blood he maketh Sacrifice to the fend of helle: It wasteth his catteil and his substaunce. And certes, if it be a foule thing, a manne to wast his chatteil on women: yet it is a fouler thing, whan that for such ordure women dispend vpõ menne, her chatteil and her substaunce. This sinne as saith the prophete, taketh from manne and woman, her good fame and her honour, and it is full delectable, and pleasant to the deuill. For therby winneth he ỳ more part of this wretched worlde. And right as a Marchaunte deliteth him most in that chaffare, which he

hath most auauntage and profite of, right so deliteth the fend in this ordure.

This is that other hond of the deuil, with fiue fingers, to catch the people to his vilany. The first is the folish loking of the foolishe woman and of the folish man, that fleeth right as the Basilicock or cocatrice fleeth folke by venim of his sight, for the couetise of the eyen foloweth the couetise of the hart. The second finger is the vilanous touching in wicked manere. And therfore saith Salomon: that who so toucheth and handeleth a woman, he fareth as the manne that handeleth the scorpion, which stingeth and sodainly sleeth through his enuenuming, or as who so that toucheth warm pitch blemisheth his fingers. The third is foule words, which fareth like fire, which right anon brenneth the hart. The fourth finger is the kissing: And truly he were a great foole that would kisse the mouthe of a brenning ouen or of a fornеis. And more fooles ben they that kisse in villany, for that mouth is the mouth of hell, and namely these old dotards holours, which woll kisse and flicker, and besie hem self though they may nought do. Certes thei ben like to houndes: For an hound whan he cometh nigh to the roser, or by other bēches, thoughe so bee that they may not pisse, yet woll he heue vp his leg and make a countenaunce to pisse. And for that many manne weneth that he may not sinne for no licorousnesse that he doth with his wife, Truely that opinion is false: God wote a manne may slee him selfe with his owne knife, and make him selfe dronk with his owne tonne. Certes be it wife, be it child, or any worldly thing, that he loueth befor god, it is his maumettre, and he is an idolastre. A manne should loue his wife by discrecion, patiently and attemperatly, and thā is she as though it were his suster. The fifth finger of the Diuelles hond is the stinking dede of lechery. Truly the fiue fingers of glotony the Deuill putteth in to the wombe of a man: And with his fiue fingers of lecherye he gripeth him by the reines, for to throw him into the fornеis of Hell, there as they shall haue the fire and the wormes that euer shall last, and weping and wailing, and sharpe hungre and thrust, grimnesse of Diuels, which shall all to trede hem withouten end. Of lechery as I said sourdeth & springeth diuers speces: as fornication, that is betweene man and woman which bee not maried, and is deedly sinne, and ayenst nature: All that is enemy and distruction to nature is ayenst nature. Perfay the reasō of a man telleth him well also that it is deedly sin, for as much as God forbade lechery. And samct Poule yeueth hem the reigne that nis dew to no wight but to hem that done deedly sinne. Another sinne of lechery is to bireue a maides maidenhed, for he þ so doth, certes he casteth a maiden out of the hiest degre that is in this present life, and bireueth her that precious fruite that the boke calleth þ hundreth fruits, I-ne can say it none other wise in English, but in Latine it hight (Centesimus fructus) Certes he that so doth is þ cause of many damages & villanies, mo than any manne can reken: right as he is cause of many domages somtime that beestes do in the feld, that breake the hedge or the closure throughwhich he distroieth that may not be restored: For certes no more may maidenheed be restored, than an arme that is smitte fro the body, may returne ayen and wex: She may haue mercy, this wote I well, if that she haue wil to doe penitence, but neuer shall it be that she nas corrupt. And all be it so that I haue spoke somewhat of auoutry, also it is good to shew the perilles that long to auoutry, for to eschewe that foule sinne. Auoutry in latine is for to say, approching of an other mannes bedde, through which those that sometime were one flesh, abandon her bodies to other persons. Of this sinne as saieth the wise man follow many harmes: First breaking of faith, and certes in faith is the keye of christendome: and whan that faith is broke and lost, sothly christendome stont beine and withoute fruit. This sinne is also theft, for theft generally is to reue a wight his thing ayenst his will. Certes, this is the foulest theft that may be, whan that a woman stealeth her body fro her husbond, and yeueth it to her holour to defoyle her, and stealeth her soule fro Christ, and yeueth it to the Deuill: This is a fouler theft than for to breake a church and steale away the chalice, for these auouterers breke the temple of God spiritуelly, and steale the vessel of grace that is the body and the soule: For which Christ shall distroy hem, as saieth samct Poule. Sothly of this theft douted greatly Joseph, whan that his Lordes wife prayed him of vilany, whan he said: Lo my Lady how my Lord hath take to me vnder my ward, all that he hath in this world, ne nothing of his things

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is out of my power, but onely ye that be his wife: and how should I than doe this wickednesse and sinne so horrible ayenst GOD, and ayenst my Lorde, God it forbidde. Alas, all to litell is such trouth now found. The third harme is the filth, through which they breake the commaundement of God, and defoile the auter of matrimony, that is Christ. For certes, in so much as the Sacrament of marriage is so noble and so digne, so much is it greater sinne for to breake it: For God made marriage in paradise in the estate of innocencie, to multiply mannekinde in the service of God, and therefore is the breaking thereof the more grievous, of which breaking come false heires oft time, that wrongfully occupy folkes heritages: and therefore will Christ putte hem out of the reigne of heauen, that is heritage to good folke. Of this breaking commeth also oft time that folke bywaare wedde or sinne with her owne kinred: and namely these harlots that haunt bordels of these foule women, that may be likened to a commune gonge, where as menne purge her ordure. What say wee also of putours that liue by the horrible sinne of putry, and constreine women to yeue to hem a certaine rent of her bodily putery, yea somtime of his owne wife or his childe, as done these bawdes: Certes, these ben cursed sinnes. Understond also that auoutrie is set gladly in the tenne commaundementrs betwene theft and manslaughter, for it is the greatest theft that may be, for it is theft of body and of soule, and it is like to homicide, for it kercueth a two and breaketh a two hem that first were made of one flesh. And therefore by the old law of GOD they should be slaine, but nathalesse by the law of Jesu Christ, that is law of pite, whan he said to the woman that was founde in auoutrie, and should haue be slaine with stones after the will of the Jewes, as was her law: Goe said Jesu Christ, and haue no more will to do sinne. Soothly the vengeaunce of auoutrie is awarded to the paines of hell, but if so be that it be disturbed by penitence. Yet been there mo speces of this cursed sinne, as whan that one of hem is religious or els both, or of folke that ben entred into order, as Subdeacon, Deacon, or Priest, or holpitaliers. And euer the hier that he is in order, the greater is the sinne. The things that greatly agredge her sinne is the breaking of her auow of chastite whan they receiued the order. And moreouer sothe is that holy order is chiefe of all the treasury of GOD and his especiall signe and marke of chastity, to shew that they ben toyned to chastity, which is the most precious life that is: and these ordred folke been specially titled to GOD and of the speciall meine of GOD, for which whan they doen deadly sinne, they ben the traitours of GOD and of his people, for they liue of the people. Priests ben Angels as by the dignity of her mysterie, but forsooth Saint Poule saieth, that Sathanas transfourmeth him in an Angell of light. Soothly the Priest that haunteth deadly sin, he may be likened to the Aungell of darkenesse, transfourmed in the Aungell of light, he semeth Aungell of light, but forsooth he is Aungell of darkenesse. Such Priests be the sonnes of Hely, as sheweth in the booke of Kings, that they were the sonnes of Beliall, that is the Deuill. Beliall is to say without iudge, and so fare they, hem thinketh they be free and haue no iudge, no more than hath a free Bull that taketh whiche Cow that him liketh in the towne. So fare they by women, for right as one fre Bull is inough for all a towne, right so is a wicked Priest corruption inough for all a parish, or for all a countrey: These Priests, as saieth the booke, ne can not minister the mistery of priesthood to the people, ne they knowe not God, they ne held hem not apaied, as saieth the boke, of sodden flesh that was to hem offred, but they toke by force the flesh that was raw. Certes, so these shrewes ne held hem not apayed of rosted and sodde flesh, with whiche the people fedde hem in great reuerence, but they woll haue raw flesh of folkes wines and her doughters, and certes these women that consent to her harlotry doen great wrong to Christ and to holy Church, all Hallowes, and all Soules, for they bereaue all these hem that should worshippe Christ and holy Church, and pray for christen Soules, and therfore haue such Priests and her lemmans also that consent to her lechery, the curling of all the court christen, till they come to amendement. The third spece of auoutry is somtime betwixt a manne and his wife, and that is whan they take no regarde in her assembling, but onely to her fleshly delight, as saieth sainct Jerome, and ne recken of nothing but that they ben assembled because they ben married, all is good inough, as they thinke: but in such folke hath the Deuill power, as said the Angell Raphael to Toby, for in her assembling they put Jesu Christ out of her

hert, and peue he[illegible] to all oꝛdure. The fourth spece is the assemble of hem that been of one affinite, oꝛ els of hem. with which her fathers oꝛ her kinred haue dealed in the sinne of lechery: This sinne maketh hem like to houndes, that take no kepe to kinrede. And certes parentele is in two manners: eyther ghostly oꝛ fleshly: ghostly as foꝛ to deale with his godsib, foꝛ right so as he that engendꝛeth a child is his fleshly father, right so is his Godfather his father espirituell: foꝛ which a woman may in no lesse sinne assemble with her Godsib, than with her owne fleshly bꝛother. The fifth spece is that abhominable sinne, of which abhominable sinne no man ought speake ne wꝛite, nathelesse it is openly reherced in holy wꝛit. This cursed sinne doen menne and women in diuers entent and in deuers manner: But though that holy wꝛitte spcke of hoꝛrible sinne, certes holy wꝛitte may not be defoiled, no moꝛe than the sunne that shineth on the dounghill. An other sin apperteineth to lechery that commeth sleping, and this sinne commeth often to hem that been maidens, and also to hem that be coꝛrupt, and this sinne menne call Polucion, that commeth of thꝛee maners: Somtime of languissbing of body, foꝛ the humours been to ranke and habundaunt in the body of man, somtime of infirmite, foꝛ feblenesse of the vertue retentife, as physike maketh mencion: Sometime foꝛ surfet of meat and dꝛinke, and somtime of vilainous thoughtes that been enclosed in mannes mind whan he goeth to slepe, which may not be without sinne, foꝛ which men must kepe hem wisely, oꝛ els may men sinne full greuously.

¶ Remedium contra peccatum luxurie.

NOw cometh ỳ remedy ayenst lechery, & that is generally chastite & cõtinẽce, that restrain all disoꝛdinate meuings ỳ come of fleshly talents. And euer ỳ greater merite shal he haue ỳ most restreineth the wicked chaufinges of the oꝛdour of this sinne, and this is in two maners: That is to say, chastice in mariage, and chastise in widowhede. Now shalt thou understond that matrimony is lefull assembling of man and woman that receiuen by vertue of this Sacrament, the bond thꝛough which they may not be departed in all her life, that is to say, while that they liue both. This, as saieth the boke, is: ful great sacrament, God made it as I haue said in paradise, and would himselfe be bꝛone in mariage: and foꝛ to halow mariage he was at a wedding, where as he tourned water into wine, which was the first miracle that he wꝛought in earth befoꝛe his disciples. Ꝛrue effect of mariage clenseth foꝛnication and replenisheth holy church of good linage, foꝛ that is the end of mariage, and chaungeth deedly sinne into beniall sin, bitwene hem that been wedded, and maketh the hertes as one of hem that been wedded, as well as the bodies.

Uery mariage was established by God, er that sinne began, whan naturall law was in his right point in Paradise. And it was oꝛdained that o man should haue but o woman, and o woman but o man, as saith saint Augustin, by may reasons.

First, foꝛ mariage is figured betwixt Chꝛist and holy church.

An other is foꝛ a man is heed of a woman, alway by oꝛdinaunce it should be so. Foꝛ if a woman had mo menne than one, than should she haue mo heedes than one, and that were a right hoꝛrible sinne before God, and also a woman might not please so many folke at ones: and also there should neuer be rest ne quiet among hem, foꝛ ech of hem would aske her owne right. And furthermoꝛe, no manne should know his owne engendꝛure, ne who should haue his heritage, and the woman should be the lesse beloued.

Now cometh how that a man should bere him with his wife, and namely in two thinges: that is to say, in sufferaunce and reuerence, as shewed Chꝛist whan he first made woman. Foꝛ he ne made her of the heed of Adam, foꝛ she should nat claime to great lordshippe, foꝛ there as the woman hath the maistry, she maketh to much bariaunce, there nede no mo ensamples of this, the experience all day, ought inough suffice.

Also certes, God ne made not woman of the foot of Adam, foꝛ she should not bee hold to low, foꝛ she cannot pacently suffre: but God made woman of the ribbe of Adam, foꝛ woman should be felow vnto man.

Man should bear him to his wife in faith, in trouth, and in loue (as saith sainct Poule) that a man should loue his wife, as Chꝛist loueth holy church, that loued it so well that he

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died for it: So should a man for his wife, if it were nede.

Now how that a woman should be subiect to her husband: that telleth S. Peter, first in obedience. And also as saieth the Decre: a woman that is a wife, as long as she is a wife, she hath none authority to swcare ne beare witnesse, without leaue of her housband, that is her Lord, alway he should be so by reason. She should also serue him in all honeste, and be attemperate of her array.

I woll wel that they should set her entent to please her husbonds, but nat by queintise of her array. Sainct Jerom saieth: Wiues that be apparelled in silke & precious purple, ne mowe not cloth hem in Jesu Christ. S. Gregory saieth also: ỳ no wight seketh precious array, but onely for vaingiory to be honoured the more of the people. It is a great foly, a woman to haue great array outward, and in her selfe be foule in ward. A wife should also bee measurable in looking, in bearing, and in laughing, and discrete in all her wordes & her deedes, and aboue all worldly thinges, she should loue her husband with all her hart, and to him be true of her body: so should an husbond be to his wife: For sith that all the body is the husbonds, so should her hart be, or elis ther is betwixt hem two, as in that no perfite mariage. Than shal menne vnderstond, that for three thinges, a manne and his wife flethly may assemble. The first is, for thentent of engendrure of children, to the seruice of God: for certes, that is the cause final of matrimony. Another cause is, to yeld ech of hem to other, the debts of her bodies, for neither of hem hath power ouer her own bodies. The third is, for to eschue lechery and vilany. The fowerth is, forsoth deadly sinne. As to the first is meritory: the second also, for as saith the Decre, that she hath merite of chastite, that yeldeth to her husbond the debt of her body, ye though it bee ayenst her liking and the lust of her hart. The third manner is veniall sinne, and truely scarcely may any of these bee without veniall sinne, for the corrupcion and for the delite. The fowerth maner is for to vnderstond, if they assemble onely for amorous loue, and for none of the forsaied causes, but for to accomplish the brenning delite, they recke not how oft, sothly it is deedly sinne: and that with sorow, some folke woll pain hem more to doe, than to appetite suffiseth.

The second maner of chastite, is for to be a cleane widow, and eschue the embracinges of a man, & desire the embracing of Jesu Christ. These been those that haue been wiues, and haue forgot her husbondes, and also women that haue doen lechery, and been receiued by penitẽce. And certes, if that a wife could kepe her all chast, by licence of her husband, so that she yeue neuer none occasion that he offend, it were her a great merite. This manner of women that obserueth chastite, in clothing and in countenaunce, abstinent in eating and drinking, in speaking, and in deede, she is the vessel or ỳ bore of the blessed Magdelain, that fulfilleth holy Church of good odour. The third maner of chastite is virginite, and it behoueth that she be holy in hart, and cleane of body, than is she spouse of Jesu Christ, and she is the life of Angels: she is the praising of this world, & she is as these martyrs in regalye: she hath in her, that tong may not tel, ne hart think. Virginite bare our lord Jesu Christ, and virgin was himself.

An other remedy against lechery, is specially to withdraw soch thinges, as yeue occasion to that vilany: as ease, eating, and drinking: for certes, whan the pot bouleth strongly, the best remedy is to withdraw the fire. Sleping long in great quiet, is also a great nourice to Lechery.

An other remedy ayenst lechery is that a manne or a woman eschue the company of hem, by which he doubteth to be tempted: For all be it so that the deed is withstond, yet is there great tẽptacion. Sothly, a white wall, although it ne brenne not fully, by slicking of the Candell, yet is the wall blacke of the flame. Full oft time I rede, that no man trust in his owne perfection, but he be stronger than Sampson, or holier than Daniell, or wiser than Salomon.

Now after that I haue declared you as I can, the seuen deadly sinnes, and some of her braunches, with her remedies. Sothly if I could, I would tell you the ten commaundementes, but so hie doctrine I put to diuines. Nathelesse I hope to God, they ben touched in this treatise ech of hem.

Sequitur secunda pars penitencie.

NOw for asmoche as the second part of penitence, stonte in confession of mouth, as I began in the first chap. I say sainct Augustine saieth: Sin is euery worde and euery deede, and all that

men coniect ayenst the law of Jesu Christ, and this is for to sinne in hart, in mouth, and in deed, by the fiue wittes, which been sight, hearing, smelling, tasting or sauour, and feling. Now is it good to vnderstand, that that agredgeth moch euery sinne. Thou shalt consider what thou art that doocst the sinne, whether thou be male or female, young or old, gentill or thrall, free or seruaunt, hole or sick, wedded or single, ordred or vnordred, wise or foole, clerke or seculer, if she be of thy kinrede bodily or ghostly, or no, if any of thy kinrede haue sinned with her or no, and many mo things.

An other circumstaunce is this, whether it be doen in fornication or in aduoutry or no, in maner of homicide or no, horrible great sinnes or smalle, and how long thou hast continued in sinne. The third circumstaunce is, the place there thou hast doen sin, whether in other mennes houses, or in thine owne, in field, in church or in churchyard, in church dedicate or no. For if the church be hallowed, and man or woman spill his kind within that place, by way of sinne or wicked temptation, the church is enterdited, and the priest that did such a vilany, the tearme of all his life, he should no more sing Masse, and if he did, he should doe dedly sinne, at euery time that he so song Masse. The fowerth circumstaunce is, by which mediatours or by which messangers, or for enticement, or for consentment, to beare company with fellowshippe. For many a wretch for to beare company, will go to the deuill of hell. Wherfore, they that egge or consent to the sinne, been parteners of the sinne, and of the temptacion of the sinner. The fifth circumstaunce is, how many times that he hath sinned, if it be in his mind, and how oft he hath fallen. For he that oft falleth in sinne, he dispiseth the mercy of God, and encreaseth his sinne, and is vnkind to Christ, and he weyeth the more feble to withstand sinne, and sinneth the more lightly, and the later riseth, and is more slow to shriue him, and namely to him that is his confessour. For which that folke whan they fall ayen to her old folies, either they leaue their old confessour, or els they depart her shrift in diuers parts. But soothly such departed shrift, deserueth no mercy of God for her sinnes. The sixt circumstaunce is, why that a man sinneth as by temptaciō: and if himselfe procure that temptacion, or by the exciting of other folke, or if he sin with a woman by force or by her assent, or if the woman maugre her hed, haue be a forced or none. This shall she tell, whether it were for couetise or pouerte, or if it were by her procurement or no, and such other thinges. The seuenth circumstaunce is, in what manner he hath doe his sinne, or how that she hath suffred that folke haue doe to her. And the same shall the manne tell plainly, with all the circumstaunces, & whether he hath sinned with common bordell women or none, or doen his sinne in holy times or none, in fasting time or none, or before his shrift, or after his latter shrift, and hath paraunture broke thereby his penaunce enioyned, by whose helpe or whose counsaile, by sorcery or craft, all must be told, and all these thinges after as they be great or smale and grudge the conscience of manne or woman. And eke the priest that is thy iudge, may the better be auised of his iudgement in yeuing of penaunce, and that is after thy confession. For vnderstond well that after time that a man hath defoiled his baptime by sinne, if he wol come to saluacion there is none other way but by penaunce, shrift, and satisfaction, and namely by the two, if there be a confessour to whom he may shriue him, and the third if he haue life to performe it. Than shall a man loke and consider, that if he wol make a trew and a profitable confession, there must be foure conditions. First it must be in sorowfulnesse of hert, as saith the king Ezechiel to God, I wol remembre me all the yeres of my life in bitternesse of my hert. This condicion of bitternesse hath fiue signes. The first is, that confession must be shamefast, not for to couer ne hide her sinne, for he hath offended his lord God and defouled his soule. And hereof saith S. Augustin: The hert trauelleth for shame of his sinne, and for he hath great shamefastnesse he is worthy to haue gret mercy of god, which was the confession of the Publican, that would nat heaue vp his eyen to heauen for he had offended God of heauen: for which shamefastnesse he had anon the mercy of god. And thereof saith sainct Augustin: that such shamfull folke be next foryeuenesse & mercy.

An other signe is humilite in confession of which saith saint Peter: Humbleth you vnder the might of GOD: the hond of God is strong in confession, for therby god forgeueth thee thy sinnes, for he alone hath the power. And this humilite shal be in hert, and in outward signes: For right as he hath humilite

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to God in his hert, right so should he humble his body outward to the preest, that sitteth in Goddes stede. For which in no maner, sith that Christ is soverain, and the preest meane and mediatour betwixt Christ & the sinner, & the sinner is last by way of reason. Than should not the sinner sitte as hie as his confessour, but knele before him or at his fete, but if sicknesse cause it: For he shall not take hede who sitteth there, but in whose place he sitteth. A manne that hath trespassed to a Lord, and commeth to aske mercy and make his accord, and sitteth him doune by him, men would hold him outragious and not worthy so soone for to have remission of his trespace.

The third signe is, how thy shrift should be full of teares if thou may, and if thou may not wepe with thy bodily eyen, than wepe in thine hert, which was the confession of saint Peter. For after that he had forsake Jesu Christ, he went out and wept full bitterly.

The fourth signe is, that thou ne lette not for shame to shew thy confession: Such was the confession of Magdalein, that ne spared for no shame of hem that were at the feest, to go to our lord Jesu christ and beknow to him her sinnes. The fifth signe is, that a manne or a woman be obeisaunt to receive the penaunce that hem is enioined. For certes Jesu Christ, for the offences of man was obedient to death. The second condicion of very confession is, that it be hastely done. For certes, if a man had a deedly wound, euer the lenger that he tarieth to heale himself, the more would it corrupt and hast him to his death, and also the wound would be the worse for to hele. And right so fareth sinne, that long time is in a manne unshewed. Certes a man ought hastely shew his sinnes for many causes, as for drede of death, that cometh oft sodainly, and no certaine what time it shall be, ne in what place, and also the drenching of o sinne draweth on an other: and also the lenger that he tarrieth the farther he is fro Christ. And if he abide to his last day, scarcely may he shrive him or remembre him of his sinnes, or repent for the greuous malady of his death. And for as much as he ne hath in his life herkened Jesu Christ whan he hath spoken, he shal cry to Jesu Christ at his last day, and scarcely woll he herken him. And understond that this condicion must have four things.

Thy shrift must be prouded before and auised. for wicked hast doth no profit, if a man shrive him of his sinnes: be it of Pride, or envy, and so forth with the speces and circumstaunces of sinne. And that he have comprehended in his mind the nombre and greatnesse of his sinnes, and how long he hath lien in sin. And also that he hath be contrite for his sinnes, and in stedfast purpose (by the grace of God) neuer ayen to fall to sinne. And also that he drede and counterfait himselfe that he flie the occasion of sinne, to whiche he is enclined. Also thou shalt shrive thee of all thy sinnes to o manne, and nat part to o manne and part to another. That is to understond, in entent to depart thy confession for shame or drede, for it is but strangling of thy soule. For certes Jesu Christ is entirely all good, in him is none imperfection, and therfore either he forgeveth al perfitly, or els neuer a deale, I say nat that if thou be assigned to thy penitencer for certaine sinne, that thou art bounde to shewe him all the remenaunt of thy sinnes, of which thou hast be shriue of thy curate, but if it like to the of thy humilite, this is no part of thy shrift. Ne I say not there as I speake of division of confession, that if thou have licence to shrive the to a discreete and an honest preest where thee liketh, and by licence of thy curate, that thou ne maiest well shrive thee to him of all thy sinnes. Lette no sinne be untold as ferre as thou hast remembraunce. And whan thou shalt be shriven to thy curate, tell him all thy sins ý thou hast do sith thou were last shriue. This is no wicked entent of division of shrift.

Also the very shrift asketh certaine condicions. First, that thou shrive the by thy free wil, nat constrained for shame of folke, sicknesse, ne such other thinges. For it is reason, that he that trespaceth by his free will, that by his free will he confesse his trespace, and that none other man tel his sin but himselfe, ne he shall nat nay ne deny his sin, ne wrath him ayenst the preest for admonesshing him to leaue his sin. The second condition is that thy shrift be lawfull, that is to say, that thou shrivest the. And also the preest that hereth thy confession be verely in the faith of holy church, and that a man ne be not dispeired of the mercy of Jesu Christ, as Caim or Judas. And also a man must accuse himselfe of his owne trespace & not an other, but he shal blame and wite himselfe and his owne malice of his sinne, and none other. But nathe-

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les, if ỳ an other man be occasion or enticer of his sinne, or the estate of a person be such by ỳ which his sinne is agredged, or els that he may not plainly shrine him, but he tel the person with which he hath sinned, than may he tell, so that his entent ne be not to back bite the person, but onely to declare his confession.

Thou ne shalt not also make no leasings in thy confession for humilite, paraventure, to say that thou hast committed & doon such sinnes, as of which ỳ thou ne wer never guilty. For saint Augustin saith, if that thou because of thine humilite, makest leasings on thy self, though thou wer not in sinne before yet art thou than in sinne through thy leasing. Thou must also shew thy sinne, by thin owne proper mouth, but thou be dombe, and not by no lettre: for thou that hast doen the sinne, shalt have the shame therfore. Thou shalt not eke paint thy confession, with faire subtell wordes, to couer the more thy sinne: for thã begilest thou thy self, & nat the priest, thou must tel it plain, be it never so foule ne horrible. Thou shalt also shrine the to a priest that is discrete to counsaile thee, and also thou shalt not shrive thee for vainglory, ne for ypocrisie, ne for no cause, but only for the love and fear of Jesu Christ, and heale of thy soule. Thou shalt nat also ren to the priest sodainly, to tell him lightly thy sinne, as who saith, to tell a iape or a tale, but aduisedly & with good deuocion: & generally shrine thee oft, if thou oft fall, oft arise by confession. And though thou shrine thee ofter than ones of the sinne, which thou hast be shriven of, it is the more merit. And as saith saint Augustine, thou shal have the more lightly forgyuenesse and grace of GOD, both of sinne and pain. And certes ones a yere at lest, it is lawfull to be houseled, for surely ones a yere all things renouellen.

Now have I told you of very confession, that is the second part of penitence.

Explixit secunda pars penitentie:
et sequitur tertia pars.

THe third part of penitence is Satisfaction, and that stont most generally in almes dede and bodily paine. Now ben there three manner of almose. Contricion of hart, where a man offreth himself to God. Another is, to have pite of defaut of his neighbour. And ỳ third is, in giuing of good counsaile, ghostly and bodily, where as men have nede, and namely in sustenaunce of mannes sode. And take kepe that a mã hath nede of these thinges generally, he hath need of food of clothing, and of herbergow: he hath nede of charitable counsaile, visiting in prison: in sickenesse, and sepulture of his body. And if thou maiest not visite the nedefull in prison in thy person, visite hem with thy message & yefts. These ben generally the almes & workes of charity, of hem that have temporell richesse, or discrecion in counsailing. Of these workes shalt thou heare at the day of dome.

These almes shalt thou doe of thine own propper things, and hastely & prively if thou maiest: but natheless if thou maiest nat do it prively, thou shalt not forbeare to doe almes though men see it, so that it be not doe for thanke of the world, but only for thanke of Jesu Christ. For as witnesseth saint Mathew. Capi. v. A citee may not bee hid that is set on a mountain, ne men light nat a lãtern, to put it vnder a bussell, but set it upon a candilsticke, to yeue light to menne in the hous. Right so shull your light, light before menne, that they may se your good workes, and glorifie our father that is in heauen.

Now as to speak of bodily pain, it stont in prayers, waking, fasting, vertuous teaching of orisons. And ye shall vnderstond, that orisons, or prayers, is to say, a pitous will of hart, that setteth it in God, & expresseth by word outward to remeue harmes, and have thinges spirituell and perdurable, and somtime temporell thinges. Of which orisons certes in the orison of the Pater noster: hath Jesu Christ enclosed most thinges. Certes it is priuileged of three things in his dignite, for which it is more digne than any other prayer, for that Jesu Christ himself made it, and it is short, for it should be learned ỳ more lightly, and to hold it the more easie in hart, and helpe himself the ofter with that orison: And for a man should be the lesse wery to say it, and nat excuse him to lerne it, it is so short and easie, and for it comprehẽdeth in it self. all good prayers. The exposicion of this holy prayer, that is so excellent and digne, I refer to the maisters of theology, saue thus moch will I say, that whã thou prayest, that God should forgeue the thine offẽces, as thou forgeuest hem that have offended thee: bee well ware that thou bee nat out of charite. This

holy

holy orison aminisheth also veniall sinne, and therfore it appertaineth specially to penitẽce.

This prayer must be truly said, and in parfit faith, and that men pray to God ordinately, discretly, and devoutly, and alway a man shall put his will, to be subiect to the will of God. This orison must also be said with great humblesse, and full pure and honestly, and not to the annoyaunce of any man or woman. It must also be continued with the workes of charity. It availeth also ayenst the vices of the soule: for as saith Saint Jerom, by fasting been saued the viees of the flesh, and by prayer the vices of the soule.

After this thou shalt understond, that bodily prayer stont in waking. For Jesu Christ saith: wake ye and pray, that ye ne enter into wicked temptation. Ye shull understond also, that fasting stont in three things: in forbearing of bodily meat and drinke, in forbearing of worldely iollity, and in forbearing of deadly sinne: this is to say, that a man shall kepe him fro dedly sinne with all his might.

And thou shalt understond also, that God ordained fasting, and to fasting pertaineth foure things. Largenesse to poore folke, gladnesse of heart spirituall: not to be angry ne anoied, ne grutch for he fasteth, and also reasonable houre to eate by measure, that is to say, a man shall not eat in untime, ne sit the lenger at the table for he fasteth.

Than shalt thou understond, that bodily paine stont in discipline, or teaching by word or writing, or by ensample. Also in wearing of heer or stamin, or of habergeons on her naked flesh for Christs sake, and that such manner penaunces, ne make nat thine heart bitter or angry, ne annoied of thy selfe, for better is to cast away thine heer than to cast away the sweteneſſe of Jesu Christ. And therefore saith sainct Poule: clothe you, as they that ben chosen of God in heart, of misericorde, debonairte, suffraunce. and soch manner of clothing, of which Jesu Christ is more pleased than with the heeres or herbergeons.

Than is discipline also in knocking of thy breast, in scourging with roddes, in kneling, in tribulacion, in suffring pacientlp wronges that been doen to thee, and also in pacient suffring of sickneſſe, or leſing of worldly goods or cattell, or wife, child, or other frends.

Than shalt thou understond, which thinges distourbe penaunce, and that is in fower manners, dread, shame, hope, and wanhope, that is disperacion. And for to speake first of drede, for which he weneth that he may suffre no penaunce. There ayenst is remedy, for to thinke that bodily penaunce, is but short and little, at regard of the pain of hell, that is so cruell and so long, that it lasteth without end.

Now ayenst the shame that a man hath to shriue him, and namely these Ipocrites, that would be hold so parfite, that they haue no nede to shriue hem. Ayenst that shame should a man thinke, that by way of reason, that he that hath nat be ashamed to doe foule thinges, certes him ought not be ashamed, for to doe faire thinges, and that is confessions. A manne should also think, that God seeth and knoweth all his thoughts, and all his werkes: fro him may nothing be hid ne couered. Men should also remember hem of the shame that is to come at the day of dome, to hem that be nat penitent, and shriuen in this present life: for all the creatures in yearth and in hell shall see apertly, all that they hid in this world.

Now for to speake of the hope of hem, that been so negligent and slow to shriue hem: that stondeth in two manners. That one is, that he hopeth for to liue long, and for to purchase moch richeſſe for his delite, and than he woll shriue him: And as he saith, him semeth than timely inough to come to shrift. Another is, of Surquidry that he hath in Christs mercy. Ayenst the first vice, he shall thinke that our life is in no likerneſſe, and also that all the riches in this world been in aduẽture, and passe as a shadow on the wal. And as saieth sainct Gregory, that it apparteineth to the great rightwiſeneſſe of God, that neuer shall the paine stint of hem, that neuer would withdraw hem fro sinne her thankes, but euer continued in sinne: for that perpetuall will to doe sinne, shall they haue perpetuall paine. Wanhope is in two manners. The first wanhope is, in the mercy of God. That other is, that they think that they ne might not long perseuer in goodnes.

The first wanhope cometh of that, he demeth that he hath sinned so greatly and so oft, and so long lien in sinne, that he shall not be saued. Certes ayenst that cursed wanhope should he thinke, that the Passion of Jesu Christ, is more strong for to vnbind, than sinne is strong for to bind. Ayenst the second wanhope he shall thinke, that as often as he falleth, he may rise again by penitence: and though hee neuer so long hath lien in sinne,

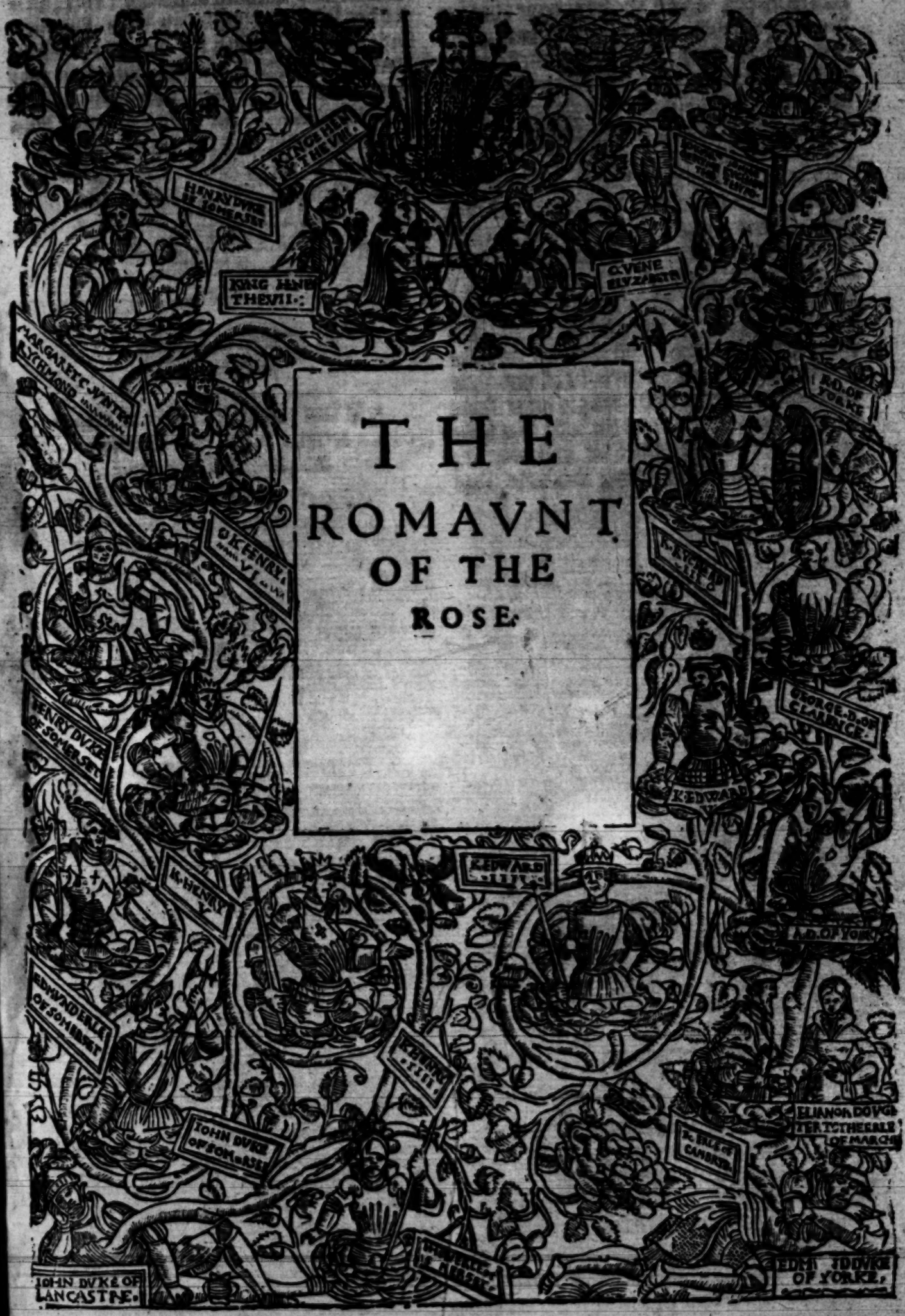
the

the mercie of Ihesu is alway ready to receiue him to mercy. Ayenst the wanhope that hee demeth he should not long persieuere in goodnesse, he shall thinke that the feblenesse of the deuill may nothing doe, but if men woll suffer him, & also he shall haue strength of the helpe of Jesu Christ, and of all holy church, and the protection of angels, if him list.

Than shall men understonde, what is the fruict of penaunce, and after the wordes of Jesu Christ, it is endlesse blisse of heauen. There ioy hath neuer end no contrarite of woe ne grenaunce: there all harmes been passed of this present life, there as is the sikernesse fro the paine of hell, there as is the blissefull company, that reioyce hem euermo, eueriche of others ioy: there as the body of man that sometime was foule and darke, is more cleare than the Sunne: there as the body that somtime was sicke, fraile, and feble, and mortall, is immortall, and so strong and hole, that there ne may nothing appaire it: there as is neither hunger, thurste, ne colde, but euery soule replenished with the sight of the parfite knowing of God. This blissefull reigne may men purchase by pouerte espirituell, and the glory by lowenesse, the plenty of ioy by hunger and thurst, and the rest by trauaile, and the life by death, and mortification of sinne: to whiche life he vs bring, that bought vs with his precious bloodde. Amen.

¶ Here endeth the Parsons tale.

¶ Thus endeth the booke of Cauntorbury tales. And hereafter followeth the Romaunt of the Rose.



THE ROMAVNT OF THE ROSE.

THE

Many menne saine that in
swevenings
Ther nis but fables and
lesings
But menne may some
sweven sene
which hath bin that false
ne bene
But afterward ben apparaunt
This may I draw to warraunt
In Authour that hight Macrobes
That halt not dremes false ne lees
But undoth us the auntioun
That whilom mette king Cipioun
And who so saith, or weneth it be
Iape or els nicete
To wene that dremes after fall
Let who so list a fole me call
For this trow I, and say for me
That dremes signifiaunce be
Of good and herme to many wights
That dremen in her slepe a nights
Full many things couertly
That fallen after all openly
Within my twenty yere of age
Whan that loue taketh his vorage
Of yong folke, I went soone
To bed, as I was wont to done
And fast I slept, and in sleping
Me mette such a swevening
That liked me wonders wele
But in that sweven is neuer a dele
That it nis afterward befall
Right as this dreme woll tell us all.
Now this dreme woll I rime aright
To make your herts gay and light
For loue it prayeth, and also
Commaundeth me that it be so
And if there any aske me
whether that it be he or she,
How this booke, which is here
Shall hite, that I rede you here
It is the Romaunt of the Rose
In which all the art of loue I close.
The mater faire is of to make
God graunt me in gree that she it take
For whom that it begonnen is
And that is she, that hath wis
So mokell prise, and therto she
So worthy is beloued to be
That she well ought of prise and right
Be cleped Rose of euery wight
That it was Mey me thought tho
It is fiue yere or more ago
That it was Mey, thus dremed me
In time of lone and iolite,
That all thing gynneth waxen gay
For there is neither buske nor hay
In Mey, that it nill shrouded bene
And it with new leues wrene
These woddes ebe recoueren grene
That dry in winter ben to sene
And the erth wexeth proud withall
For swote dewes that on it fall
And the poor estate forgette
In which that winter had it sette
And than be come the ground so proud
That it woll haue a new shroud
And maketh so queint his robe and fayre
That it had hewes an hundred payre
Of grasse and flours, inde and pers
And many hewes full diuers
That is the robe I mene iwis
Through which the ground to praisen is
The birds that han left her song
While they han suffred cold full strong
In wethers grille, and derke to sight
Ben in Mey, for the sunne bright
So glad, that they shew in singing
That in her hert is such liking
That they mote singen and ben light
Than doth the nightingale her might
To maken noise, and singen blith
Than is blisful many a sith
The chelaundre, and the popingay
Than yong folke entenden aie
For to ben gay and amorous
The time is than so sauourous
Hard is his hert that loueth nought
In Mey, whan all this mirth is wrought
Whan he may on these braunches here
The small birds singen clere
Her blisful swete song pitous
And in this seson delitous
Whan loue affirmeth all thing
Me thought one night, in my sleping
Right in my bed, ful redily
That it was by the morow erly
And vp I rose, and gan me cloth
Anon I wash mine honds both
A siluer nedil forth I drow
Out of an aguiler queint inow
And gan this nedill threde anone
For out of toune me list to gone
The soune of middes for to here
That on the buskes singen clere
That in the swete seson that lefe is
With a threde basting my sleuis
Alone I went in my playing
The smale foules song herkening

That pained hem full many a paire
To sing on bowes blossomed faire
Jolife and gay, full of gladnesse
Toward a Riuer gan I me dresse
That I herd renne fast by
For fairer plaieng none saw I
Than plaien me by that riuere
For from an hill that stode there nere
Come doune the streme full stiffe and bold
Clere was the water, and as cold
As any welle is, soth to saine
And soothely lasse it was than saine
But it was straiter, wele away
And neuer saugh I er that day
The water that so wele liked me
And wonder glad was I to se
That lusty place, and that riuere
And with that water that ran so clere
My face I wash, tho saw I wele
The botome ipaued euerdele
With grauell, full of stones shene
The medowes sott, sote, and grene
Beet right on the water side
Full clere was than the morow tide
And full attempre out of drede
Tho gan I walken thorow the Mede
Downward aye in my playing
The riuers side coosting.
And whan I had a while igone
I saw a Garden right anone
Full long and brode, and euerdele
Enclosed was, and walled wele
With hie wales enbatailed
Portrayed without, and well entailed
With many riche portreitures
And both yet images and peintures
Gan I behold beisly
And I woll tell you redely
Of thilke images the semblaunce
As ferre as I haue remembraunce.
A midde saw I hate stond
That for her wrath and ire, and onde
Semed to be a mmoresse
An angry wight a chideresse
And full of gile, and fell corage
By semblaunt was that like image
And she was nothing wele araid
But like a wode woman afraid
Vfrounced foule was her vilage
And grinning for dispitous rage
Her nose snorted vp for tene
Full hidous was she for to sene
Ful foule and rusty was she this
Her heed iwrithen was twis
Full grimly with a great towaile.
An image of an other entaile
A lift halfe was her fast by
Her name aboue her herd saw I
And she was called Felony
Another image that Villany
Ycleped was, saw I and fond
Upon the wall on her right hond
Villany was like soondele
That other image, and trusteth wele
She semed a wicked creature
By countenaunce in portreiture
She semed be full dispitous
And eke full proud, and outragious
Well could he paint I vndertake
That such an image could make
Full foule and chorlich semed she
And eke villeinous for to be
And litel could of norture
To worshippe any creature.
And next was painted Couetise
That eggeth folke in many a gise
To take and neue right nought againe
And great tresours vp to laine
And that is she, that for vsure
Leneth to many a creature
The lasse for the more winning
So couetous is her brenning
And that is she for pennes feele
That techeth for to robbe and steele
These theues, and these smale harlotes
And that is routh, for by her throtes
Full many one hongeth at the last
She maketh folke compasse and cast
To taken other folkes thing
Through robbery, or miscoueiting
And that is she that maketh trechours
And she maketh false pledours
That with her termes and her domes
Do maidens, children, and eke gromes
Her heritage forgo
Full croked were her honds two
For couetise is euer wood
To gripen other folkes good
Couetise, for her winning
Full lefe had other mennes thing
Another image set saugh I
Next Couetise fast by
And she was cleped Auarice
Full foule in painting was that vice
Full sad and caitife was she eke
And also grene as any leke
So nel hewed was her colour
Her semed to haue liued in langour
She was like thing for hunger deed
That lad her life onely by breed

Eneden

Kneden with eisel strong and egre
And thereto she was lene and megre
And she was clad full poorely
All in an olde torne courtpy
As she were all with dogges torne
And bothe behinde and eke before
Clouted was she beggerly.
I mantel hong her fast by
Upon a bench weake and small
A burnette cote hong therewithall
Furred with no menuere
But with a furre rough of heere
Of lambeskinnes heauy and blacke
It was full olde I vnder take
For Auarice to clothe her wele
Ne hasteth hee neuer a dele
For certainly it were her lothe
To wearen of that like clothe
And if it were forwearied, she
Would haue full great nicite
Of clothing, er she bought her newe
Al were it bad of woll and hewe.
This Auarice helde in her hande
A purse that honge by a bande
And that she hid and bonde so strong
Men must abyde wonder long
Out of the purse er there come ought
For that ne commeth in her thought
It was not certaine her entent
That fro that purse a peny went.
And by that image nigh ynough
Was painted Enuy that euer lough
Nor neuer well in her hert ferde
But if she either sawe or herde
Some great mischaunce, or great disese
Nothing may so much her plese
As mischiefe and misaventure
Or whan she seeth discomfiture
Upon any worthy man fall
That lyketh her well withall
She is full glad in her corage
If shee see any great linage
Be brought to naught, in shamefull wise
And if a man in honour rise
Or by his wit or by his prowesse
Of that she hath great heauinesse
For trusteth well she goeth nie wood
Whan any chaunce happeth good
Enuy is of such crueltie
That faith ne trouth holdeth she
To frende ne felowe, badde or good
Ne she hath kinne none of her blood
That she nis full her enemy
She nolde, I dare saine hardely
Her owne father fared welc
And sore adyeth she euery dele
Her malice, and her male talent
For she is in so great torment
And hate such, whan folke doth good
That nigh she melteth for pure wood
Her hert kerueth and so breketh
That God the people well awreketh.
Enuy ywis shall neuer let
Some blame vpon the folke to set
I trowe that if Enuy ywis
Knew the best man that is
On this side or beyonde the see
Yet somewhat lacken him would shee
And if he were so hende and wise
That she ne might all abate his prise
Yet would she blame his worthinesse
Or by her wordes make it lesse
I sawe Enuy in that painting
Had a wonderfull loking
For she ne looked but awrie
Or ouerthwart, all baggingly
And she had a foule visage
She might looke in no visage
Of man ne woman, forth right plaine
But shette her one eye for disdaine
So for Enuie brenned she
Whan she might any man see
That faire, or worthie were, or wise
Or els stode in folkes prise.
Sorowe was painted next Enuie
Upon that wall of maisonrie
But wel was seene in her colour
That she had lued in langour
Her semed to haue the iaundice
Not halfe so pale was Auarice
Ne nothing like of cleanesse
For sorowe, thought, and great distresse
That she had suffred day and night
Made her yelow, and nothing bright
Full sad, pale, and megre also
Was neuer wight yet halfe so wo
As that her semed for to be
Nor so fulfilled with yre, as she
I trow that no wight might her plese
Nor do that thing that might her ese
Nor she ne would her sorow slake
Nor comfort none vnto her take
So deepe was her wo begonne
And eke her hert in angre ronne
A sorowfull thing well semed she
Nor she had nothing slowe be
For to scratchen all her face
And for to rent in many place
Her clothes, and for to teare her swire
As she that was fulfilled of ire

And all to torne laie eke her heere
About her shulders, here and there
As she that had it all to rent
For angre and for maie talent.
And eke I tell you certaily
How that she wept full tenderly
In world nis wight so hard of harte
That had seen her sorrowes smarte
That nolde haue had of her pitie
So wo begon a thing was she
She all to dasht her selfe for wo
And smote togider her hondes two
To sorowe was she full ententife
That wofull recheleſſe caitife
Her rought little of playing
Or of clipping or kissing
For who so sorowfull is in harte
Him lust not to plaie ne starte
Nor for to dauncen, ne to sing
Ne may his harte in temper bring
To make ioye on euen or morowe
For ioy is contrary vnto sorowe.
Elde was painted after this
That shorter was a foote ywis
Than she was wont in her yonghede
Unneth her selfe she might fede
So feble and eke so olde was she
That faded was all her beautie
Full salowe was waxen her colour
Her hedde for hore was white as flour
Iwis great qualme ne were it none
Ne sinne, although her like were gone
All worn was her body vnwelde
And drie and dwined all for elde
A foule forwelked thing was she
That whilome round and soft had be
Her heeres shoken fast withall
As from her hed they would fall
Her face frounced and forpined
And both her hondes lorne fordwined
So old she was, that she ne went
A foote, but it were by potent
The time that passeth night and daye
And restleſſe trauaileth aye
And stealeth from vs iolily
That to vs semeth sikerly
That it in one point dwelleth euer
And certes it ne resteth neuer
But goeth so fast, and passeth aye
That there nis man that thinke maie
What time that now present is
Asketh at these clerkes this
For men thinke it redily
Three times be en passed by
The time that may not soiourne
But goeth, and may neuer retourne
As water that downe renneth aye
But neuer droppe retourne maye
There may nothing as time endure
Ne tall, nor earthly creature
For all thing is frette and shall
The time eke that chaungeth all
And all doeth waxe, and forfret be
And all thing destroyeth he
The time that eldeth our aunceſtours
And eldeth kings and Emperours
And that vs all shall ouercomen
Er that death vs shall haue nommen
The time that hath all in welde
To elden folke had made her elde
So inly, that to my weting
She might helpe her selfe nothing
But tourned ayen vnto childhede
She had nothing her selfe to lede
Ne witte ne pithe in her hold
More than a childe of two yere old.
But natheleſſe I trowe that shee
Was faire sometime, and fresh to see
When she was in her rightfull age
But she was past all that passage
And was a doted thing becomen
A furred cappe on had she nommen
Well had she clad her selfe and warme
For colde might els doen her harme
These old folke haue alwaie cold
Her kinde is such, whan they been old.
An other thing was doen there write
That semed like an Ipocrite
And it was cleped Pope Holie
That like is she, that prively
Ne spareth neuer a wicked deede
When men of her taken none heede
And maketh her outward precious
With pale visage and pitous
And semeth a simple creature
But there nis no misauenture
That she ne thinketh in her corage
Full like to her was thilke Image
That maked was like her semblaunce
She was full simple of countenaunce
And she was clothed and eke shod
As she were for the loue of God
Yolden to Religion
Such semed her deuocion.
A Psalter helde she fast in honde
And busily shee gan to fonde
To make many a faint prayere
To God, and to his sainctes dere
Ne she was gaie, fresh, ne iolife
But semed to be full ententife

To good werkes, and to faire
And therto she had on an haire
Ne certes she was fatte nothing
But semed werry for fasting
Of colour pale and dedde was she
From her the gates ate warned be
Of Paradise, that blisfull place
For soch folke maken leane her grace
As Christ saieth in his Euangile
To get hem prise in toune a while
And for a little glory veigne
They lesen God and eke his reigne.
And alderlast of euerichone
Was painted Pouert all alone
That not a peny had in hold
Although she her clothes sold
And though she should an honged be
For naked as a worme was she
And if the weather stormy were
For cold she should haue died there
She ne had on but a strait old sacke
And many a clout on it there stacke
This was her cote, and her mantele
No more was there neuer a dele
To cloth her with, I vndertake
Great leaser had she to quake
And she was put, that I of talke
Ferre fro these other, vp in an halke
There lurked, and there coured she
For poore thing where so it be
Is shamefast, and dispised aie
Accursed may well be that daie
That poore man conceiued is
For God wote all to sely iwis
Is any poore man well ifed
Or well araied or icled
Or well beloued, in soch wise
In honour, that he may arise.
All these things well auised
As I haue you er this deuised
With gold and asure ouer all
Depainted were vpon the wall
Square was the wall, and high somdele
Enclosed, and barred weale
In stede of hedge, was that gardin
Come neuer shepherd therein
Into that gardin, well wrought
Who so that me coud haue brought
By ladders, or els by degre
It would well haue liked me
For soch solace, soch ioy, and ply
I trow that neuer man ne sey
As was in that place delicious
The gardin was not daungerous
To herborow birds many one
So rich a yere was neuer none
Of birds song, and braunches grene
Therein were birds mo I wene
Than ben in all the realme of Fraunce
Full blisfull was the accordaunce
Of swete petous song they made
For all this world it ought glade
And I my selfe so mery ferd
Whan I her blisfull songs herd
That for an hundred pound would I
If that the passage openly
Had be vnto me free
That I nold entren for to see
Thassemble, God kepe it fro care
Of birds, which therein ware
That songen through her mery throtes
Daunces of loue, and mery notes.

Whan I thus heard foules sing
I fell fast in a waimenting
By which art, or by what engin
I might come into that gardin
But way I couth find none
Into that gardin for to gone.
Ne nought wist I if that there were
Either hole or place where
By which I might haue entre
Ne there was none to teach me
For I was all alone iwis
For wo and anguish of this
Till at last bethought I me
That by no way ne might it be
That there nas ladder ne way to pace
Or hole, into so faire a place
Tho gan I go a full great paas
Enuiron, euen in compas
The closing of the square wall
Till that I found a wicked small
So shette, that I ne might in gone
And other entre was there none.

Vpon this doore I gan to smite
That was fetis, and so lite
For other way could I not seke
Full long I shoke, and knocked eke
And stode full long all herkening
If that I heard any wight coming
Till that the doore of thilke entre
A maiden curteis opened me
Her heere was as yelow of hew
As any basen scoured new
Her flesh tender as is a chike
With bent browes, smoth and slike
And by measure large were
The opening of her yen clere

Her nose of good proporcion
Her yen gray, as is a faucon
With swete breath, and well fauoured
Her face white, and well coloured
With little mouth and round to se
A cloue chinne eke had she
Her necke was of good fassion
In length and greatnesse by reason
Without bleine, scabbe, or roine
Fro Hierusalem vnto Burgoine
There nis a fairer necke twis
To fele how smoth and soft it is
Her throte also white of hew
As Snow on braunch inowed new
Of body full well wrought was she
Men neden not in no countre
A fairer body for to seke
And of fine Orfrais had she eke
A chapelet, so semely on
Ne neuer wered maid vpon
And faire aboue that chapelet
A rose garland had she set
She had a gay mirrour
And with a rich gold treasour
Her hedde was tressed queintly
Her sleues sewed ketously
And for to kepe her honds faire
Of gloues white she had a paire
And she had on a cote of Grene
Of cloth of Gaunt, withouten wene
Well semed by her aparaile
She was not wont to great trauaile
For whan she kempt was feteously
And well araied and richely
Than had she doen all her iourne
For mery and well begon was she
She lad a lusty life in May
She had no thought, by night ne day
Of nothing, but if it were onely
To graicth her well and vncouthly.

Whan that this doore had opened me
This May, semely for to se
I thonked her as I best might
And asked her how that she hight
And what she was, I asked eke
And to me was nought vnmeke
Ne of her answere daungerous
But faire answerd, and saied thus
Lo sir, my name is Idlenesse
So clepe men me, more and lesse
Full mighty and full rich am I
And that of one thing namely
For I entend to nothing
But to my ioy, and my playing
And for to kembe and tresse me
Acquainted am I and priue
With Mirth, Lord of this gardin
That fro the lond of Alexandrin
Made the trees hither be set
That in this gardin ben iset
And whan the trees were woxen an hight
This wall, that stant here in thy sight
Did Mirth enclosen all about
And these Images all without
He did hem both entaile and paint
That neither ben iolife ne quaint
But they ben full of sorow and wo
As thou hast seen a while ago.

AND oft time him to solace
Sir Mirth cometh into this place
And eke with him cometh his meine
That liuen in lust and iolite
And now is Mirth therein, to here
The birds how they singen clere
The Mauis and the Nightingale
And other ioly birds smale
And thus he walketh to solace
Him and his folke, for swetter place
To plaien in, he may not find
Although he sought one in till Ind
The aither fairest folke to se
That in this world may found be
Hath Mirth with him in his rout
That folowen him alwaies about
Whan Idlenesse had told all this
And I had harkened well twis
Than saied I to dame Idlenesse
Now also wisely God me blesse
Sith Mirth, that is so faire and fre
Is in this yerd, with his meine
Fro thilke assemble, if I may
Shall no man werne me to day
That I this night ne mote it se
For well wene I there with him be
A faire and ioly company
Fulfilled of all curtesie
And forth without words mo
In at the wicket went I tho
That Idlenesse had opened me
Into that gardin faire to se.

And whan I was in twis
Mine hart was full glad of this
For well wend I full sikerly
Haue ben in Paradise yearthly
So faire it was, that trusteth well
It semed a place espirituell
For certes at my deuise

There

There is no place in Paradise
So good in for to dwell or be
As in that gardin thought me
For there was many a birde singing
Throughout the yerde all thringing
In many places were Nightingales
Alpes, Finches, and Wodwales
That in her swete song delitin
In thilke places as they habiten.
There might men see many flockes
Of Turtels and Lauerockes
Chalaundres fele sawe I there
That werie nigh forsongen were
And Thrustels, Terins, and Mauise
That songen for to winne hem prise
And eke to surmount in her song
That other birdes hem among
By note made faire seruise
These birdes, that I you deuise
They song her song, as faire and wele
As angels doen espirituell
And trusteth me, whan I hem heard
Full lustie and well I feard
For neuer yet such melodie
Was heard, of man that might die
Such swete song was hem among
That me thought it no birdes song
But it wonder like to be
Song of Meremaidens of the see
That for her singing is so clere
Though we Meremaidens clepe hem here
In English, as is our vsaunce
Men clepe hem Sereins in Fraunce.

ENtentife weren for to sing
These birdes, that not vnkonning
Were of the craft, and apprentise
But of song subtill and wise
And certes, whan I heard her song
And sawe the grene place emong
In harte I went so wonder gate
That I was neuer erst, er that daie
So iolife, nor so well bego
Ne mery in harte, as I was tho
And than wist I, and sawe full well
That ydelnesse me serued well
That me put in such iolitie
Her frende well ought I for to be
Sith shee the dooze of that gardin
Had opened, and me let in.

From hens forth, how that I wrought
I shall you tell, as me thought
First whereof Mirth serued there
And eke what folke there with him were.

Without fable I woll discrine
And that gardin eke as bliue
I wol you tellen after this
The faire fassion all ywis
That well wrought was for the nones
I maie not tell you all atones
But as I may and can, I shall
By order tellen you it all.
Full faire seruice, and eke full swete,
These birdes maden as they sete
Layes of loue, full well souning
They songen in their largoning
Some hie, and some eke lowe song
Upon the braunches grene yspring
The swetenesse of her melodie
Made all mine harte in reuelrie.
And whan that I heard I trowe
These birdes singing on a rowe
Than might I not withholde me
That I ne went in for to see
Sir Mirthe, for my desiring
Was him to seen ouer all thing
His countenaunce and his manere
That sight was to me full dere.

THo went I forthe on my right honde
Doune by a little pathe I fond
Of Mintes full, and Fenell grene
As fast by without wene
Sir Mirth I founde and right anon
Unto sir Mirthe gan I gon
There as he was him to solace
And with him, in that lustie place
So faire folke and so fresh had he
That whan I sawe, I wondred me
Fro whens such folke might come
So faire they weren all and some
For they weren like, as to my sight
To angels, that been fethered bright.
These folke, of which I tell you so
Upon a karole wenten tho
A Ladie karoled hem, that hight
Gladnesse, blisfull and light
Well could she sing and lustely
None halfe so well and semely
And cothe make in song such refraining
It sate her wonder well to sing
Her voice full clere was and full swete
She was not rude ne vnmete
But couthe ynough for such doing
As longeth vnto karolling
For she was wont in euery place
To singen first, folke to solace
For singing moste she gaue her to
No craft had she so lefe to doe.

The

Tho mightest thou karolles seen
And folke daunce and merie been
And made many a faire tourning
Upon the greene grasse springing
There mightest thou see these Flutours
Minstrals and tho toglours
That well to sing did her paine
Some long songs of Lorraine
For in Lorraine her notes be
Full sweter than in this countre
There was many a Tymbestere
And saylours, that I dare well swere
Cothe her craft full parfitly
The Timbres vp full subtelly
They cast and hent full oft
Upon a finger faire and soft
That they failed neuer mo
Full fetis damoiseis two
Right yong, and full of semelyhede
In kirtels, and none other wede
And faire tressed euery tresse
Had Mirth doen for his noblesse
Amidde the carole for to daunce
But hereof lyeth no remembraunce
How that they daunsed queintly
That one would come all priuely
Ayen that other, and whan they were
Togither almoste they threwe yere
Her mouthes so, that through her plaie
It seemed as they kist alwaie
To daunsen well couthe they the gyse
What should I more to you deuise
Ne could I neuer thens go
Whiles that I sawe hem daunce so
Upon the karoll wonder fast
I gan beholde, till at last
A Ladie gan me for to espie
And she was cleped Curtesie
The worshipfull, the debonaire
I praye to God euer fall her faire
Full Curtesly she called me
What doe ye there Beau sire (qd she)
Come, and if it like you
To dauncen, daunseth with vs nowe
And I without tarying
Went into the karoling
I was abashed neuer a deale
But it to me liked right weale
That Curtesie me cleped so
And bad me on the daunce go
For if I had durst certaine
I would haue karolled right faine
As man that was to daunce right blithe
Than gan I loken oft sithe
The shape, the bodies, and the cheres
The countenaunce and the maneres
Of all the folke that daunced there
And I shall tell what they were.

Full faire was Mirthe, full long and high
A fairer man I neuer sigh
As rounde as aple was his face
Full roddie and white in euery place
Fetis he was and well beseie
With merely mouth, and eyen greie
His nose by measure wrought full right
Crispe was his heere, and eke full bright
His shulders of large brede
And smalish in the gyrdelstede
He seemed like a purtreiture
So noble he was of his stature
So faire, so iolie, and so fetise
With limmes wrought at poinct deuise
Deliuer, smerte, and of great might
Ne sawe thou neuer man so light
Of beard vneth had he nothing
For it was in the first spring
Full yong he was, and merie of thought
And in samette, with birdes wrought
And with golde beaten full fetously
His bodie was clad full richely
Wrought was his robe in straunge gyse
And all to slittered for queintise
In many a place, lowe and hie
And shode he was with great maistrie
With shone decoped, and with lace
By durie, and by solace
His lefe a rosen chapelet
Had made, and on his hedde it set.
And wete ye who was his lefe
Dame Gladnesse there was him so lefe
That singeth so well with glad corage
That from she was twelue yere of age
She of her loue graunt him made
Sir Mirth her by the finger hade
Daunsing, and shee him also
Great loue was atwixt hem two
Bothe were they faire and bright of hewe
She semed like a rose newe
Of colours, and her flesh so tender
That with a Brere small and tender
Men might it cleue, I dare well saie
Her forhedde frounceles all plaie
Bent were her browes two
Her eyen graie, and glad also
That laughden aye in her semblaunt
Fitll of the mouthe by couenaunt
I wot not what of her nose I shall discriue
So faire hath no woman aliue,
Her heere was yelowe, and clere shining

I wot no lady so liking.
Of Oxtraies fresh, was her garland
I which seen haue a thousand
Saw neuer twis no garland yit
So well wrought of like as it
And in an ouer gilt samite
Clad she was, by great delite
Of which her lecke a robe werde
The merrier she in her heart ferde
And next her went, on her other side
The God of loue, that can deuide
Loue, and as him liketh it be
But he can cherles daunten, he
And maken folkes pride fallen
And he can well these lords thrallen
And ladies put at low degre
Whan he may hem to proud se.

This God of loue of his fascion
Was like no knaue, ne quistron
His beauty greatly was to prise
But of his robe to deuise
I drede encombred for to be
For not iclad in like was he
But all in floures and flourettes
Ipainted all with amorettes
And with losenges and scochons
With birds, Liberds, and Lions
And other beasts wrought full weale
His garment was euery deale
Ipourtraied and iwrought with floures
By diuers medeling of coloures
Floures there were of many gise
Iset by compace in a sise
There lacked no floure to my dome
Ne not so much as floure of brome
Ne violet, ne eke perwinke
Ne floure none, that men can on thinke
And many a rose leafe full long
Was intermedled there emong
And also on his head was set
Of roses red a Chapelet
But Nightingales a full great rout
That flyen ouer his head about
The leaues felden as they flyen
And he was all with birds wryen
With Popingay, with Nightingale
With Chalaundre, and with Wodewale
With Finch, with Larke, & with Archangel
He semed as he were an angell
That down were comen fro heuen clere
Loue had with him a bachelere
That he made alwaies with him be
Swete Loking, cleped was he
This bacheler stood beholding
The daunce, and in his hand holding
Turke bowes two, full well deuised had he
That one of hem was of a tre
That beareth a fruit of sauour wicke
Full croked was that foule sticke
And knottie here and there also
And blacke as berry, or any slo.
That other bowe was of a plant
Without wemme, I dare warrant
Full euen and by proporcion
Trectes and long, of full good facion
And it was painted well and twhitten
And ouer all diapred and witten
With ladies and with bacheleres
Full lightsome and glad of cheres
These bowes two held Swete Loking
That semed like no gadling
And ten broad arrowes held he there
Of which flue in his hond were
But they were shauen well and dight
Nocked and fethered a right
And all they were with gold begon
And strong pointed euerichon
And sharpe for to kerue wele
But iron was there none ne stele
For all was gold, men might se
Out take the fethers and the tre.

The swiftest of these arrowes flue
Out of a bow for to driue
And best fethered for to flie
And fairest eke was cleped Beautie
That other arrow that hurteth lesse
Was cleped (as I trow) Simplesse
The third cleped was Fraunchise
That fethered was in noble wise
With valour and with curtesie
The fourth was cleped Company
That heauy for to shoten is
But who so shoteth right iwis
May therwith doen great harme and wo
The fift of these, and last also
Faire Semblaunt men that arrow call
The least grieuous of hem all
Yet can it make a full great wound
But he may hope his fores sound
That hurt is with that arrowe iwis
His wo the bette bestowed is
For he may soner haue gladnesse
His langour ought be the lesse.

Fiue arowes were of other gise
That been full foule for to deuise
For shaft and end both for to tell
Were also blacke as fend in hell

The

The first of hem is called Pryde
That other arow next him beside
It was cleped Vilany
That arow was, as with felony
Enuenimed, and with spitous blame
The third of hem was cleped Shame
The fowerth Manhope cleped is
The fift the New thought iwis

These arowes that I speake of here
Were all fiue on one manere
And all were they resemblable
To hem was well sitting and able
The foule croked bow hidous
That knotty was, and all ronous
That bow semed well to shete
The arrowes fiue, that been vnmete
And contrary to that other fiue
But though I tell not as bliue
Of her power, ne of her might
Herafter shall I tellen right
The soth, and eke significaunce
As ferre as I haue remembraunce
All shall be saied I vndertake
Er of this booke an end I make.

Now come I to my tale againe
But alderfirst, I woll you saine
The fashion and the countenaunces
Of all the folke that on the daunce is
The God of Loue iolife and light
Ladde on his hond a Lady bright
Of high prise, and of great degre
This Lady called was Beaute
And an arow, of which I told
Full well thewed was she hold
Ne she was derke ne broune, but bright
And cleare as the Moone light
Again whom all the Sterres semen
But small candels, as we demen
Her flesh was tender as dew of floure
Her cheare was simple as bird in boure
As white as Lily or Rose in rise
Her face gentill and treatise
Fetis she was, and smale to se
No wintred browes had she
Ne popped her, for it neded nought
To winder her, or to paint her ought
Her tresses yelowe, and long straughten
Vnto her heles doune they raughten
Her nose, her mouth, and ye and cheke
Well wrought, and all the remnaunt eke
A full great fauour and a swote
Me thought in mine hart rote
As help me God, whan I remember
Of the fassion of euery member
In world is none so faire a wight
For yong she was, and hewed bright
Sore pleasaunt, and ferts with all
Gent, and in her middle small
Beside Beaute yede Richesse
An high Lady of great noblesse
And great of price in euery place
But who so duelt to her trespace
Or till her folke, in werke or dede
He were full hardy out of drede
For both she helpe and hinder may
And that is not of yesterday
That rich folke haue full great might
To help, and eke to greue a wight
The best and greatest of valour
Didden Richesse full great honour
And busie weren her to serue
For that they would her loue deserue
They cleped her Lady great and small
This wide world her dredeth all
This world is all in her daungere
Her court hath many a lesingere
And many a traitour enuious
That ben full busie and curious
For to dispreise, and to blame
That best deseruen loue and name
To forne the folke hem to begilen
These lesingours hem preise and smilen
And thus the world with word anointen
But afterward they prill and poincten
The folke, right to the bare bone
Behind her back whan they ben gone
And foule abaten folkes prise
Full many a worthy man and wise
Han hindred, and idoen to die
These lesingours with her flattery
And maketh folke full straunge be
There as hem ought ben priue
Well cuill mote they thriue and thee
And cuill arriued mote they bee
These lesengeours full of enuy
No good man loueth her company.

Richesse a robe of purple on had
Ne trow not that I lie or mad
For in this world is none it lich
Ne by a thousand deale so rich
Ne none so faire, for it full weale
With Orfreis laied was euerydeale
And purtreid in the ribanings
Of Dukes stories, and of Kings
And with a bend of gold tasseled
And knoppes fine of gold amiled
About her necke of gentill entaile

was

Was shet the riche Thenesaile
In which there was full great plentie
Of stones clere, and faire to see.
Richesse a girdle had vpon
The bokell of it was of stone
Of vertue great, and mokell of might
For who so bare the stone so bright
Of venim durst him nothing doubt
While he the stone had him about
That stone was greatly for to loue
And till a riche mannes behoue
Worth all the golde in Rome, and Frise
The Mourdant wrought in noble gise
Was of a stone full precious
That was so fine and vertuous
That whole a man it couth make
Of palsie, and of tothe ake
And yet the stone had such a grace
That he was seker in euery place
All thilke day not blinde to been
That fasting might that stone seen
The barres were of gold full fine
Upon a tissue of Satin
Full heauie, great, and nothing light
In eueriche was a besaunt wight.
Upon the tresses of Richesse
Was set a circle for noblesse
Of brende golde, that full light shone
So faire trowe I was neuer none
But he were konning for the nones
That could deuise all the stones
That in that circle shewen clere
It is a wonder thing to here
For no man could preise or gesse
Of hem the value or richesse
Rubies there were, Saphirs, Ragounces
And Emeraudes, more than two vnces
But all before full subtilly
A fine Carboncle set sawe I
The stone so clere was and so bright
That all so lone as it was night
Men might seen to go for nede
A mile or two, in length and brede
Such light sprang out of the stone
That Richesse wonder bright shone
Both her hedde, and all her face
And eke about her all the place.
Dame Richesse on her honde gan lede
A yong man full of semelyhede
That she best loued of any thing
His lust was much in housholding
In clothing was he full ketise
And loued well to haue hors of prise
He wende to haue reproued be
Of theft or murder, if that he
Had in his stable an hackenaie
And therefore he desired aie
To been aqueinted with Richesse
For all his purpose, as I gesse
Was for to make great dispence
Without en warning or defence
And Richesse might it well sustaine
And her dispences wele maintaine
And him alwaie such plentie sende
Of golde and siluer for to spende
Without lacking or daungere
As it were pourde in a garnere.

And after on the daunce went
Largesse, that set all her entent
For to been honourable and free
Of Alexanders kinne was shee
Her moste ioye was ywis
Whan that she yaf, and saied: haue this,
Not Auarice the foule caitife
Was halfe to gripe so ententife
As Largesse is, to yeue and spende
And God alwaie ynowe her sende
So that the more she yaue awaie
The more ywis she had alwaie
Great loos hath Largesse, and great prise
For bothe wise folke and vnwise
Were wholy to her bandon brought
So well with yeftes hath she wrought.
And if she had an enemie
I trowe that she couth craftely
Make him full soone her frende to be
So large of yeftes, and wise was she
Therfore she stode in loue and grace
Of riche and poore in euery place
A full great foole is he ywis
That both riche and poore, and nigard is
A Lord may haue no maner vice
That greueth more than Auarice
For Nigard neuer with strength of hand
May winne him great lordship or land
For frendes all to fewe hath he
To doen his will performed be
And who so woll haue frendes here
He may not holde his treasour dere
For by ensample tell I this
Right as an Adamant ywis
Can drawen to him subtelly
The Iron, that is layed therby
So draweth folkes hartes ywis
Siluer and golde that yeuen is.
Largesse had on a robe fresh
Of riche purpure Sarlinesse
Well formed was her face and clere
And opened had she her colere

For she right there had in present
Unto a Lady made present
Of a Golde brocher, ful well wrought.
And certes it misstate her nought
For through her smocke wrought with silke
The flesh was seen as white as milke
Largesse, that worthie was and wise
Held by the honde a knight of prise
Was sibbe to Arthour of Bretaigne
And that was he that bare the enseigne
Of worship, and the Gonfaucoun
And yet he is of such renoun
That menne of him say faire things
Before Barons, Erles, and Kings
This knight was comen al newly
Fro tourneying fast by
There had he done great chiualrie
Through his vertue and his maistrie
And for the loue of his lemman
He cast doune many a doughty man.
And next him daunced dame Fraunchise
Arayed in full noble gise
She nas not broune ne dunne of hewe
But white as snowe yfallen newe
Her nose was wrought at point deuise
For it was gentil and tretise
With eyen glad, and browes bent
Her heere doune to her heles went
And she was simple as doue on tree
Ful debonaire of hert was shee.
She durst neither say ne do
But that, that her longeth to
And if a manne were in distresse
And for her loue in heuinesse
Her hert would haue full great pitie
She was so amiable and free
For were a manne for her bestadde
She would ben right sore adradde
That she did ouer great outrage
But she him holpe his harme tawage
Her thought it all a vilanie
And she had on a suckeny
That not of hempe herdes was
So faire was none in all Arras
Lorde it was riddeled fetisly
There nas not a point trucly
That it nas in his right assise
Full well yclothed was Fraunchise
For there nis no clothe sitteth bette
On damoselle, than doth roket te
A woman wel more fetise is
In roket te, than in cote ywis
The white roket te riddeled faire
Betokeneth chastitie debonaire
And swete was she that it bere

By her daunced a Bachelere
I cannot tellen you what he hight
But faire he was and of good hight
All had he ben, I saie no more
The lordes sonne of Windesore.
And next that daunced Curtesye
That praised was of lowe and hie
For neither proude ne fole was she
She for to daunce called me
I pray God giue her good grace
For whan I come first into the place
She nas not nice, ne outrageous
But wise and ware, and vertuous
Of faire speche, and faire answere
Was neuer wight missaide of here
She bare no rancour to no wight
Clere broune she was, and thereto bright
Of face and body auenaunt
I wotte no lady so plesaunt
She were worthie for to bene
An Empresse or crounced Queene.
And by her went a knight dauncing
That worthy was and well speking
And full well coude he done honour
The knight was faire and stiffe in stour
And in armour a semely man
And wel beloued of his lemman.
Faire Idelnesse than laugh I
That alway was me fast by
Of her haue I without faile
Tolde you the shape and apparaile
For (as I saide) Lo, that was shee
That did to me so great bountie
She the gate of that gardin
Undid, and let me passen in
And after daunced as I gesse.
And she fulfilled of lustinesse
That nas not yet xii. yere of age
With hert wilde, and thought volage
Nice she was, but she ne mente
None harme ne sleight in her entent
But only luste and iolitie
For yong folke, wel weten ye
Haue litell thought, but on her play
Her lemman was beside alway
In such a gise that he her kiste
At all times that him liste
That all the daunce might it see
They make no force of pleautie
For who so spake of hem wel or wele
They were ashamed neuer a dele
But men might sene hem kisse there
As it two yong doues were
For yong was thilke Bachelere
Of beautie wot I non his pere

And

And he was right of such an age
As Youth his lefe, and such corage
The lusty folke that daunced there
And also other that with hem were
That weren all of her meine
Full hende folke, wise and free
And folke of faire porte truely
There were all comenly.
Whan I had seene the countenaunces
Of hem that ladden thus these daunces
Than had I will to go and see
The gardin that so liked mee
And loken on these faire Laurelles
On Pine trees, Cedres, and Olimeres
The daunces than ended were
For many of hem that daunced there
Were with her loues went away
Under the trees to haue her play.

A Lorde they liued lustely
A great foole were he sikerly
That nolde his thankes such life lede
For this dare I saine out of drede
That who so might so well fare
For better life durst him not care
For there nis so good paradise
As to haue a loue at his deuise
Out of that place went I tho
And in that gardin gan I go
Playing a long full merely.
The God of Loue full hastely
Unto him Sweete Looking clept
No lenger would he that she kept
His bowe of Gold, that shone so bright
He had him bent anon right
And he full soone set an ende
And at a braide he gan it bende
And tooke him of his arowes fine
Full sharpe and redy for to dryue.
Now God that sitteth in maiestie
Fro deedly woundes he kepe me
If so be that he had me shete
For if I with his arowe mete
It had me greeued fore ywis
But I that nothing wist of this
Went vp and doune, full many a waie
And he me folowed fast alwaie
But no where would I rest me
Till I had in all the gardin be.

The Gardin was by measuring
Right euen and square by compassing
It as long was as it was large
Of fruite had euery tree his charge
But it were any hidous tree
Of which there were two or three.
There were, and that woste I full wele
Of Pomgarnettes a full great dele
That is a frute full well to like
Namely to folke whan they ben sike
And trees there were great foison
That baren nuttes in her season
Such as men nutmegges call
That swote of sauour ben withall
And Almandres great plentie
Figges, and many a Date tree
There weren, if men had nede
Through the Gardin, in length and brede
There was eke wexing many a spice
As Clowe, Gilofre, and Licorice
Ginger, and Grein de Paris
Canell, and Setewale of pris
And many a spice delitable
To eaten whan men rise fro table.
And many homely trees there were
That Peches, Coines, and Apples bere
Medlers, Plommes, Peeres, Chesteins
Cherise, of which many one faine is
Notes, Aleis, and Bolas
That for to seen it was solas
With many high Laurer, and Pine
Was renged clene all that gardine
With Cipres, and with Olyueris
Of which that nigh no plentie here is.
There were Elmes great and strong
Maples, Alfbe, Oke, Alpes, Planes long
Fine Ewe, Popler, and Lindes faire
And other trees full many a paire.
What should I tell you more of it?
There were so many trees yet
That I should all encombred be
Er I had reckened euery tree.
These trees were set that I deuise
One from another in assise
Fiue fadome or syxe, I trowe so
But they were hie and great also
And for to kepe out well the Sunne
The croppes were so thicke ynonne
And euery braunch in other knitte
And full of greene leaues sitte
That Sunne might there none discende
Lest the tender grasses shende
There might men Does and Roes ysee
And of Squirels full great plentie
From bow to bow alway leping
Connies there were also playing
That comen out of her clapers
Of sondry colours and maners
And maden many a tourneying
Upon the freshe grasse syzinging

In places fawe I welles there
In which there no frogges were
And faire in shadowe was euery well
But I ne can the nombre tell
Of streames small that by deuise
Wirth had done come through condise
Of which the water in renning
Gan make a noise full liking.
About the brinkes of these welles
And by the streames ouer all elles
Sprang vp the grasse as thicke yet
And soft as any veluet
On which men might his lemman ley
As on a fetherbed to play
For the earth was full soft and swete
Through moysture of the wel wete
Sprong vp the sote grene gras
As faire, as thicke, as muster was
But much amended it the place
That thearth was of such a grace
That it of floures hath plentie
That both in Somer and Winter be.
There sprang the violet all newe
And freshly perwinke riche of hewe
And floures yelowe, white, and rede
Such plentie grewe there neuer in mede
Full gaie was all the ground and queint
And poudred, as men had it peint
With many a fresh and sondry floure
That casten vp full good sauour.
I wol not long holde you in fable
Of all this garden delectable
I mote my tong stinten nede
For I ne may withouten drede
Naught tellen you the beautie all
Ne halfe the bountie there withall.
I went on right honde and on lefte
About the place, it was not lefte
Till I had all the garden bene
In the erters that men might sene.
And thus while I went in my playe
The God of loue me folowed ayes
Right as an Hunter can abide
The beest, till he seeth his tide
To shoten at goodnes to the deere
Whan that him nedeth go no nere.
And so befell, I rested me
Besides a well vnder a tree
Which tree in Fraunce men call a Pine
But sithe the time of king Pepine
Ne grewe there tree in mannes sight
So faire, ne so wel wore in hight
In all that yarde so high was none
And springing in a marble stone
Had nature set, the sothe to tell
Vnder that Pine tree a well
And on the border all without
Was written in the stone about
Letters small, that saiden thus
Here starfe the faire Narcissus.
Narcissus was a bachelere
That loue had caught in his daungere
And in his nette gan him so straine
And did him so to wepe and plaine
That nede him must his life forgo
For a faire lady that hight Echo
Him loued ouer any creature
And gan for him such paine endure
That on a time she him tolde
That if he her louen nolde
That her behoued nedes die
There laie none other remedie.
But natheleslle for his beautie
So feirs and daungerous was he
That he nolde graunten her asking
For weping, ne for faire praying.
And whan she herde him werne her so
She had in hert so great wo
And toke it in so great despite
That she without more respite
Was deed anon: but ere she deide
Ful pitously to God she preide
That proude herted Narcissus
That was in loue so daungerous
Might on a day ben hampered so
For loue, and ben so hote for wo
That neuer he might to ioye attaine
Than should he feele in euery vaine
What sorowe true louers maken
That ben so vilainously forsaken.

This praier was but reasonable
Therfore God helde it ferme and stable
For Narcissus shortly to tell
By auenture came to that well
To rest him in the shadowing
A day, whan he come from hunting.
This Narcissus had suffred paines
For renning all daie in the plaines
And wes for thurst in great distresse
Of herte, and of his werinesse
That had his breth almost benomen
Whan he was to that wel ycomen
That shadowed was with braunches grene
He thought of thilke water shene
To drinke, and fresh him wele withall
And doune on knees he gan to fall
And forth his necke and heed out straught
To drinke of that well a draught
And in the water anon was sene

His

His nose, his mouth, his eyen shene
And he thereof was all abashed
His owne shadow had him betrashed
For wel wend he the forme see
Of a childe of great beautie
Well couth loue him wreke tho
Of daunger and of pride also
That Narcillus sometime him bere
He quite him well his guerdon there
For he mused so in the well
That shortly the sothe to tell
He loued his owne shadowe so
That at last he starfe for wo
For when he sawe that he his will
Might in no maner way fulfill
And that he was so fast caught
That he him couthe comfort naught
He lost his witte, right in that place
And deyed within a litell space
And thus his warison he tok
For the lady that he forlook.
Ladies I praie ensample taketh
Ye that ayenst your loue mistaketh
For if her death be you to wite
God can full wel your whyle quite.

Whan that this letter, of which I tell
Had taught me that it was the well
Of Narcillus in his beautie
I gan anon withdrawe me
Whan it fell in my remembraunce
That him betide such mischaunce
But at the laste than thought I
That scathelesse, full sikerly
I might vnto the well go
Wherof shuld I abashen so
Unto the well than went I me
And doune I louted for to see
The clere water in the stone
And eke the grauel, which that shone
Doune in the botome, as siluer fine
For of the well, this is the fine
In world is none so clere of hewe
The water is euer fresh and newe
That whelmeth vp, with waues bright
The mountenaunce of two finger hight
About it is gralle springing
For moyst for thicke and well lyking
That it ne may in Winter die
No more than may the Sea be drie.

Doune at the botome set sawe I
Two crustall stones craftely
In thilke fresh and faire well
But o thing sothly dare I tell;
That ye wol hold a great meruaile
Whan it is tolde withouten faile
For whan the Sunne clere in sight
Cast in that well his beames bright
And that the heat descended is
Than taketh the cristall stone twis
Againe the sunne an hundred hewes
Blew, yelow, and reed that fresh and new is
Yet hath the marueilous cristall
Such strength, that the place ouer all
Both foule and tre, and leues grene
And all the yard in it is sene
And for to done you to vnderstond
To make ensample woll I fond
Right as a mirrour openly
Sheweth all thing that stondeth therby
As well the colour, as the figure
Withouten any couerture
Right so the cristall stone shining
Withouten any disceiuing
The entrees of the yerd acculeth
To him that in the water museth
For euer in which halfe that ye be
Ye may well halfe the garden se
And if ye turne, ye may right wele
Sene the remenaunt euery dele
For there is none so litel thing
So hid ne closed with shitting
That it ne is sene, as though it were
Painted in the cristall there
This is the mirrour perilous
In which the proud Narcillus
Sey all his faire face bright
That made him sith to lie vpright
For who so loke in that mirrour
There may nothing bene his socour
That he ne shal there se somthing
That shall him lead into laughing
Full many a worthy man hath it
Yblent, for folke of greatest wit
Ben soone caught here and waited
Withouten respite ben they baited
Here commeth to folke of new rage
Here chaungeth many wight courage
Here lithe no rede ne witte therto
For Venus sonne, dan Cupido
Hath sowen there of loue the seed
That helpe ne lithe there none, ne red
So cercleth it the well about
His ginnes hath he set without
Right for to catch in his panters
These Damosels and Bachelers
Loue will none other bird catch
Though he set either nette or latch
And for the sede that here was sowen

This well is cleped as well is knowen
The well of Loue of very right
Of which there hath full many wight
Spoken in bookes diuerſly
But they ſhull neuer ſo verily
Diſcription of the well here
Ne elſe the ſothe of this matere
As ye ſhull, whan I haue ſnde
The craft that her belongeth to.

ALway me liked for to dwell
To ſene the chriſtall in the well
That ſhewed me full openly
A thouſand things faſt by
But I may ſay in ſory houre
Stode I to loken or to powre
For ſithen I ſore ſighed
That mirrour hath me now entriked
But had I firſt knowen in my wit
The vertue and ſtrengthes of it
I nolde not haue mused there
We had bette ben els where
For in the ſnare I fell anone
That had bitrelſhed many one
In thilke Mirrour ſaw I tho
Among a thouſand things mo
A roſer charged full of roſis
That with an hedge about incloſis
Tho had I ſuch luſt and enuie
That for Paris ne for Pauie
Nolde I haue left to gone and ſe
There greateſt heape of roſes be
Whan I was with this rage hent
That caught hath many a man and ſhent
Toward the Roſer gan I go
And whan I was not farre there fro
The ſauour of the roſes ſwote
We ſmote right to the heart rote
As I had all embaumed me
And if I ne had endouted me
To haue ben hated or aſſailed
My thankes woll I not haue failed
To pull a roſe of all that rout
To beare in mine hond about
And ſmellen to it where I went
But euer I dread me to repent
And leaſt it grieued or forthought
The Lord that thilke gardin wrought
Of roſes there were great wone
So faire were neuer in Rome
Of knoppes cloſe, ſome ſaw I there
And ſome well better woxen were
And ſome there ben of other moiſon
That drow nigh to her ſeaſon
And ſpedde hem faſt for to ſpred
I loue well ſuch roſes red
For broad roſes and open alſo
Ben paſſed in a day or two
But knoppes will freſh be
Two daies at leaſt, or elſe thre
The knoppes greatly liked me
For fairer may there no man ſe
Who ſo might haue one of all
It ought him ben full leſe withall
Might I garlond of hem getten
For no riches I would it letten
Amongs the knoppes I chooſe one
So faire, that of the remenaunt none
Ne preiſe I halfe ſo well as it
Whan I auiſe in my wit
For it ſo well was enlumined
With colour red, as well fined
As nature couth it make faire
And it hath leaues full well foure paire
That kind hath ſet through his knowing
About the red roſes ſpringing
The ſtalke was as rube right
And thereon ſtood the knop vpright
That it ne bowed vpon no ſide
The ſwote ſmell ſprong ſo wide
That it died all the place about
Whan I had ſmelled the ſauour ſwote
No will had I fro thence yet go
But ſomdele nere I went it tho
To take it, but mine hond for drede
Ne durſt I to the Roſe bede
For thiſtles ſharpe of many maners
Nettles, thornes, and hoked briers
For much they diſturbied me
For ſore I dradde to harmed be.

THe God of Loue, with bow bent
That all day ſet had his talent
To purſue and to ſpien me
Was ſtonding by a figge tre
And whan he ſaw how that I
Had choſen ſo intentikely
The bothum more vnto my pay
Than any other that I ſay
He toke an arow, full ſharply whet
And in his bowe whan it was ſet
He ſtraight vp to his eare drough
The ſtrong bow, that was ſo tough
And ſhot at me ſo wonder ſmart
That through mine eye vnto mine hart
The takell ſmote, and depe it went
And therewithall ſuch cold me hent
That vnder clothes warme and ſoft
Sithen that day I haue ſhuered oft
Whan I was hurt thus in ſtound

I fell doune plat vnto the ground
Mine heart failed, and faunted aie
And long time in swoune I laie
But whan I came out of swouning
And had wit, and my feling
I was all mate, and wend full weale
Of blood, haue lorne a full great deale
But certes the arrow that in me stood
Of me ne drew no droppe of blood
For why, I found my wounds all drie
Than toke I with mine hondes tweie
The arow, and full fast it out plight
And in the pulling sore I sight
So at the last the shaft of tre
I drough out with the fethers thre
But yet the hoked hedde twig
The which Beauty called is
Gan so depe in mine heart pace
That I it might not arace
But in mine heart still it stood
All bled I not a drop of blood
I was both anguishous and trouble
For the perill that I saw double
I nist what to say or doe
Ne get a leach my wounds to
For neither through graile ne rote
Ne had I helpe of hope ne bote.
But to the bothum euer mo
Mine heart drew, for all my woo
My thought was in none other thing
For had it ben in my keping
It would haue brought my life againe
For certes euenly, I dare well saine
The sight only and the sauour
Alegged much of my langour
Than gan I for to draw me
Toward the bothum faire to se
And Loue had get him in his throw
Another arow into his bow
And for to shote gan him dresse
The arowes name was Simplesse
And whan that Loue gan nigh me nere
He drow it vp withouten were
And shot at me with all his might
So that this arow anon right
Throughout eigh as it was round
Into mine heart hath made a wound
Than I anon did all my craft
For to drawen out the shaft
And therewithall I sighed eft
But in mine heart the head was left
Which aie increased my desire
Unto the bothum drow I nere
And euermo that me was wo
The more desire had I to go
Unto the Roser, where that grew
The fresh bothum, so bright of hew
Better me were to haue letten be
But it behoued nede me
To doen right as mine heart badde
For euer the body must be ladde
After the heart, in wele and wo
Of force togither they must go
But neuer this archer would fine
To shoot at me with all his pine
And for to make me to him mete
The third arrow he gan to shete
Whan best his time he might espie
The which was named Curtesie
Into mine heart he did auale
A swoune I fell, both dead and pale
Long time I lay, and stired nought
Till I abraied out of my thought
And fast than I auised me
To draw out the shaft of tre
But euer the head was left behind
For ought I couth pull or wind
So sore it sticked whan I was hit
That by no craft I might it slit
But anguishous and full of thought
I felt such woo, my wound aie wrought
That sommoned me alway to go
Toward the Rose, that pleased me so
But I ne durst in no manere
Because the archer was so nere
For euermore gladly as I rede
Brent child of fire hath much drede
And certes yet for all my pein
Though that I sigh yet arrowes rein
And ground quarels, sharpe of stele
Ne for no paine that I might fele
Yet might I not my selfe withhold
The faire roser to behold
For Loue me yaue such hardiment
For to fulfill his commandement
Upon my feet I rose vp than
Feble, as a forwounded man
And forth to gon might I set
And for the archer nold I let
Toward the Roser fast I drow
But thornes sharpe, mo than inow
There were, and also thistles thicke
And briers brumme for to pricke
That I ne might get grace
The rough thornes for to pace
To seen the Roses fresh of hew
I must abide, though it me rew
The hedge about so thicke was
That closed the Roses in compas
But o thing liked me right wele

I was so nigh, I might fele
Of the bothum the swote odour
And also see the fresh colour
And that right greatly liked me
That I so nere might it see
Such ioy anon thereof had I
That I forgate my malady
To seen I had such delite
Of sorowe and anger I was all quite
And of my woundes that I had thore
For nothing liken me might more
Than dwellen by the Roser aie
And thens never to passe awaie
But whan awhile I had be thare
The God of loue, which all to share
Mine harte with his arowes kene
Casteth him to yeue me woundes grene
He shote at me full hastely
An arowe named Companie
The which takell is full able
To make these Ladies merciable
Than I anon gan chaungen hewe
For greuaunce of my wounde newe
That I againe fell in swouning
And sighed sore in complaining.
Sore I complained that my sore
On me gan greuen more and more
I had none hope of Allegiaunce
So nigh I drowe to disperaunce
I rought of death, ne of life
Whether that loue would me drife
If me a martir would he make
I might his power not forsake
And while for anger thus I woke
The God of Loue an arowe toke
Full sharpe it was and pugnaunt
And it was called Faire semblaunt
The which in no wise would consent
That any louer him repent
To serue his loue, with harte and all
For any perill that may befall
But though this arowe was kene ground
As any rasour that is found
To cutte and kerue at the point
The God of Loue it had anoynt
With a precious oyntment
Some dele to yeue alegement
Upon the woundes that he hade
Through the body in my harte made
To helpe her sores, and to cure
And that they may the bette indure
But yet this arowe, without more
Made in mine harte a large sore
That in full great pain I abode
But aie the oyntment went abrode
Throughout my woundes large and wide
It spredе about in euery side
Through whose vertue, and whose might
Mine harte ioyfull was and light
I had been dedde and all to shent
But for the precious oyntment
The shaft I drowe out of the arowe
Roking for wo right wonder narowe
But the hedde, which made me smarte
Left behinde in mine harte
With other fower, I dare well saie
That neuer woll be take awaie
But the oyntment halpe me wele
And yet such sorowe did I fele
That all day I chaunged hewe
Of my woundes fresh and newe
As men might see in my visage
The arowes were so full of rage
So variant of diuersitie
That men in euerich might see
Both great anoie, and eke swetnesse
And ioye meint with bitternesse
Now were they easie, now were they wood
In hem I felt both harme and good
Now sore without allegement
Now softing with oyntment
It softened here, and pricked there
Thus ease and anger togither were.

The God of Loue deliuerly
Come lepande to me hastely
And saied to me in great iape
Yelde thee, for thou may not escape
Waie no defence anaile thee here
Therefore I rede make no daungere
If thou wolt yelde thee hastely
Thou shalt rather haue mercie
He is a foole in sickernesse
That with daunger or stoutnesse
Rebelleth, there that he should please
In such folie is little ease
Be meke, where thou must needes bowe
To striue ayen is not thy prowe
Come at ones, and haue ydoe
For I woll that it be so
Than yelde thee here debonairly
And I answered full humbly
Gladly sir, at your bidding
I woll me yelde in all thing
To your seruice I woll me take
For God defend that I should make
Ayen your bidding resistence
I woll not doen so great offence
For if I did, it were no skill
Ye may doe with me what ye will

Saue

Saue oz spill, and also so
Fro you in no wise may I go
My life, my death is in your honde
I may not laste out of your bonde
Plaine at your list I yelde me
Hoping in hert, that sometime ye
Comfort and ease shull me sende
Or els shortly, this is the ende
Without en health, I mote aie dure
But if ye take me to your cure
Comfort oz helth, how should I haue
Sith ye me hurte, but ye me saue
The helth of Loue mote be founde
Where as they taken first her wounde
And if ye list of me to make
Your prisoner, I woll it take
Of herte and will fully at gree
Wholic and plaine I yelde me
Without feining oz feintise
To be gouerned by your empyse
Of you I here so much pryse
I wol ben whole at your deuise
Foz to fulfill your liking
And repent foz nothing
Hoping to haue yet in some tide
Mercy, of that I abide
And with that couenant yelde I me
Anon doune kneling vpon my kne
Profering foz to kisse his fete
But foz nothing he would me lete.

And said, I loue thee both and preise
Sens that thine answere doth me ese
Foz thou answered so curtesly
Foz now I wote well vtterly
That thou art gentle by thy speche
Foz though a man ferre would seche
He should not finden in certaine
No such answere of no vilaine
Foz such a wozde ne might nought
Issue out of a vilaines thought
Thou shalt not lesen of thy speche
Foz thy helping woll I eche
And eke encresen that I maie
But first I woll that thou obaie
Fully foz thine auauntage
Anon to do me here homage
And sithe kisse thou shalt my mouthe
Which to no vilaine was neuer couthe
Foz to aproch it, ne foz to touche
Foz saufe of cherles I ne vouche
That they shall neuer neigh it nere
Foz curteis, and of faire manere
Wel taught, and ful of gentelnesse
He must ben, that shall me kisse
And also of full high fraunchise
That shall atteine to that empyse.

And first of o thing warne I thee
That paine and great aduersitee
He mote endure, and eke trauaile
That shal me serue, without faile
But there against ther to comforte
And with thy seruice to disporte
Thou maist full glad and toyfull be
So good a minister to haue as me
And lozd of so high renoun
I beare of loue the Gonfenoun
Of Curtesie the banere
Foz I am of the selfe manere
Gentill, curteis, meke, and free
That who euer ententife be
Me to honour, doubt, and serue
And also that he him obserue
Fro trespas and fro villanie
And him goueme in curtesie
With will and entencion
Foz when he first in my prison
Is caught, than must be vtterly
Fro thence forth full besily
Cast him gentill foz to be
If he desire helpe of me.

Anon without moze delaie
Without en daunger oz affraie
I become his man anone
And gaue him thankes many a one
And kneled doun with hondes ioynt
And made it in my pozte full queint
The ioye went to my herte rote
Whan I had killed his mouth so swote
I had such mirth and such liking
It cured me of languishing
He asked of me than hostages
I haue he saide taken fele homages
Of one and other, where I haue bene
Disseyned ofte, without en wene
These felons full of falsitie
Haue many sithes begyled me
And thzough her falshed her lust achiued
Wherof I repent, and am agreued
And I hem gette in my daungere
Her falsheed shut they die full dere
But foz I loue thee, I saie the plaine
I woll of thee be moze certaine
Foz the soze I woll nowe binde
That thou away ne shalt not winde
Foz to denien thy couenaunt
Oz done that is not auenaunt
That thou were false, it were great ruth
Sith thou semest so full of truth.

Sir, if thee list to vnderstande

I meruelle thee asking this demaund
For why or wherefore should ye
Hostages or borowes aske me
Or any other sikernesse
Sith ye wote in sothfastnesse
That ye me haue sur ypriled so
And whole mine harte taken me fro
That it woll bo for me nothing
But if it be at your bidding
Myne hart is yours, and mine right nought
As it behoueth, in deede and thought
Readie in all to worch your will
Whether so tourne to good or ill
So lore it lusteth you to please
No man thereof may you disease
Ye haue theron set such iustice
That it is wered in many wise
And if ye doubt it nolde obaie
Ye may therof doe make a kaie
And hold it with you for hostage
Now certes this is none outrage
(qd Loue) and fully I accorde
For of the body he is full Lorde
That hath the harte in his treasore
Outrage it were to aske more.

THan of his auenere he drough
A little keie fetise ynough
Which was of gold polished clere
And saied to me, with this keie here
Thine harte to me now woll I shet
For all my iowell loke and knet
I binde vnder this little keie
That no wight may cary awaie.
This keie is full of great pote
With which anone he touched me
Under the side full softly
That he mine harte sodainly
Without anoy had speered
That yet right nought it hath me deered.
Whan he had doen his will all out
And I had put him out of doubt
Sir I saied: I haue right great will
Your lust and pleasure to fulfill
Loke ye my seruice take at gree
By thilke faith ye owe to mee
I saie nought for recreaundise
For I nought doubt of your seruice.
But the seruaunt trauaileth in vaine
That for to serue doeth his paine
Vnto that lorde, which in no wise
Conne him no thanke for his seruice.

LOue saied, dismaie thee nought
Sith thou for succour hast me sought
In thanke thy seruice wol I take
And high of gree I woll thee make
If wickednesse ne hinder thee
But (as I hope) it shall nought be
To worship no wight by aduenture
Maie come, but he paine endure.
Abide and suffer thy distresse
That hurteth now, it shall be lesse
I wote my selfe what may the saue
What medicine thou wouldest haue.
And if thy truth to me thou kepe
I shall vnto thine helping ebe
To cure thy woundes and make hem clene
Where so they be old or greene
Thou shalt be holpen at worldes rewe
For certainly thou shalt well shewe
Where that thou seruest with good will
For to accomplishen and fulfill
My commaundements daie and night
Which I to louers yeue of right.

AMy sir, for Goddes loue saied I)
Er ye passe hens ententifely
Your commaundements to me ye saie
And I shall kepe hem if I maie
For hem to kepen is all my thought
And if so be I wote hem nought
Than may I vnwittingly
Wherefore I praie you entierly
With all mine harte, me to lere
That I trespace in no manere
The God of loue than charged me
Anon, as ye shall heare and see
Worde by worde, by right empryse
So as the Romaunt shall deuise.
The maister leseth his time to lere
When the disciple woll not here
It is but paine on him to swinke
That on his learning woll not thinke
Who so lust loue, let him entende
For now the Romance beginneth to amende
Now is good to heare in kaie
If any be that can it saie
And poinct it as the reason is
Set for other gate ywis
It shall nat well in all thing
Be brought to good vnderstanding
For a reader that poincteth ill
A good sentence may oft spill
The booke is good at the ending
Made of newe and lustie thing
For who so woll the ending here
The craft of loue he shall now lere
If that he woll so long abide
Till I this Romance maie vnhide

And

And bndo the ſignifiaunce
Of this dreame into Romaunce
The ſothfaſtneſſe that now is hid
Without couerture ſhall be kid
Whan I vndoen haue this dreaming
Wherein no worde is of leaſing.

VIllanie at the beginning
I woll (ſaid loue) ouer all thing
Thou leaue, if thou wolt be
False, and treſpace ayenſt me
I curſe and blame generally
All hem that louen villanie
For villanie maketh villaine
And by his deedes a choꝛle is ſeine.
Theſe villaines arne without pitie
Frendſhip, loue, and all bountie
I nill receiue vnto my ſeruice
Hem that been vilaines of empriſe.
But vnderſtonde in thine entent
That this is not mine entendement
To clepe no wight in no ages
Onely gentell for his linages
But who ſo is vertuous
And in his port not outrageous
Whan ſuch one thou ſeeſt thee beforne
Though he be not gentill borne
Thou maieſt well ſeine (this is in ſoth)
That he is gentil, becauſe he doth
As longeth to a gentil man
Of hem none other neme I can
For certainly withouten dreede
A choꝛle is demed by his deede
Of hie or lowe, as ye maie ſee
Or of what kinred that he be
Ne laie nought for none euill will
Thing that is to holden ſtill
It is no worſhip to miſſeie
Thou maieſt enſample take of Keie
That was ſomtime for miſſaying
Hated bothe of old and yong
As ferre as Gaweine the worthie
Was praiſed for his curteſie
Kaie was hated, for he was fell
Of worde diſpitous and cruell
Wherefore be wiſe and aquaintable
Goodly of worde, and reaſonable
Both to leſſe and eke to mare
And whan thou comeſt there men are
Loke that thou haue in cuſtome aie
Firſt to ſalue hem if thou may
And if it fall that of hem ſomme
Salue thee firſt, be not domme
But quite him curteſly anon
Without abydung, er they gon

For nothing eke thy tong applie
To ſpeake wordes of rybaudrie
To blame ſpeche, in no degree
Late neuer thy lippe vnbounden be
For I nought holde hun in good faith
Curteis that foule wordes saieth
And all women ſerue and preiſe
And to thy power her honour reiſe
And if that any miſſayere
Diſpiſe women, that thou maiſt here
Blame him, and bidde hun holde hun ſtill
And ſette thy might, and all thy will
Women and ladies for to pleaſe
And to do thing that may hem eaſe
That they euer ſpeake good of thee
For ſo thou maiſt beſt praiſed be.
Loke fro pride thou kepe thee wele
For thou maiſt both perceiue and fele
That pride is both foly and ſinne
And he that pride hath him within
Ne may his hert in no wiſe
Weken ne ſouplen to ſeruice
For pride is founde in euery parte
Contrarie vnto Loues arte
And he that loueth truely
Should him conteine iolily
Without pride in ſundry wiſe
And him diſguiſen in queintice
For queint aray, without drede
Is nothing proude, who taketh hede
For freſh aray, as men may ſee
Without pride may oft be.
Maintaine thy ſelfe after thy rent
Of robe and eke of garment
For many lithe faire clothing
A man amendeth in much thing.
And loke alway that they be ſhape
What garment that thou ſhalt make
Of him that can beſt do
With all that partaineth thereto
Pointes and ſleues be weil ſittande
Right and ſtreight on the hande
Of ſhone and bootes, newe and faire
Loke at the leſt thou haue a paire
And that they ſitte ſo fetouſly
That theſe rude may vtterly
Meruaile, ſith that they ſitte ſo plaine
How they come on or off againe
Weare ſtreight gloues with aumere
Of ſilke, and alway with good chere
Thou yeue, if thou haue richeſſe
And if thou haue nought ſpende the leſſe
Alway be mery, if thou maie
But waſt not thy good alwaie
Haue hatte of floures freſh as May

Chapelet of Roses of whitsondale
For such araie ne costneth but lite
Thine hondes wash, thy teeth make white
And let no filthe vpon thee be
Thy nayles blacke, if thou maiest see
Voide it awaie deliuerly
And kembe thine hedde right iolily
Farce not thy vilage in no wise
For that of loue is nat thempzise
For loue doth haten, as I finde
A beautie that cometh nat of kinde
Alwaie in harte I rede thee
Glad and mery for to be
And be as ioyfull as thou can
Loue hath no ioye of sorowfull man
That euill is full of curtesie
That knoweth in his maladie
For euer of loue the sickenesse
Is meint with swete and bitternesse
The sore of loue is meruailous
For now the louer ioyous
Now can he plain, now can he grone
Now can he singen, now maken mone
To daie he plaineth for heuinesse
To morowe he plaineth for tolnesse
The life of loue is full contrarie
Which stoundemeale can oft varie
But if thou canst mirthes make
That men in gree woll gladly take
Doe it goodly, I commaund thee
For men should where so euer they be
Doe thing that hem sitting is
For therof cometh good loos and pris
Wherof that thou be vertuous
Ne be not strange ne daungerous
For if that thou good ryder be
Prick gladly that men may see
In armes also if thou conne
Pursue till thou a name hast wonne
And if thy voice be faire and clere
Thou shalt maken no great daunger
Whan to sing they goodly praie
It is thy worshipe for to obaie
Also to you it longeth aie
To Harpe and Giterne, daunce and plaie
For if he can well foote and daunce
It may him greatly do auaunce
Among eke for thy Ladie sake
Songes and complaints that thou make
For that woll meuen in her harte
When they reden of thy smarte
Looke that no man for scarce thee holde
For that may greue thee manifolde
Reason woll that a louer be
In his yeftes more large and free
Than churles that been not of louing
For who thereof can any thing
He shall be leke aie for to yeue
In londes lore who so would leue
For he that through a sodain sight
Or for a killing anon right
Haue whole his hart, in will and thought
And to himselfe kepeth right nought
After this swift, it is good reason
He yeue his good in abandon.

NOw woll I shortly here reherce
Of that I haue saied in verse
All the sentence by and by
In wordes fewe compendiously
That thou the better maiest on hem thinke
Whether so it be thou wake or winke
For the wordes little greue
A man to kepe, whan it is bieue.
Who so with Loue woll gon or ride
He mote be curteies, and voide of pride
Merie, and full of iolitie
And of Largesse a loued be.

First I ioygne thee here in penaunce
That euer without repentaunce
Thou set thy thought in thy louing
To last without repenting
And thinke vpon thy mirthes swete
That shall folowe after whan ye mete.

And for thou true to Loue shalt be
I will, and commaund thee
That in one place thou set all whole
Thine harte, without halfen dole
For trecherie and liskernesse
For I loued neuer doublenesse
To many his harte that woll depart
Eueriche shall haue but little part
But of hem drede I me right nought
That in one place setteth his thought
Therefore in o place it set
And let it neuer thens flet
For if thou yeuest it in lening
I holde it but a wretched thing
Therfore yeue it whole and quite
And thou shalt haue the more merite
If it be lent, than after soon
The bountie and the thankes is doen
But in Loue, free yeuen thing
Requireth a great guerdoning.
Yeue it in yeft all quite fully
And make thy gift debonairly
For men that yeft holde more dere
That yeuen is with gladsome chere.

That

That gifte nought to praisen is
That man yeueth maugre his
Whan thou hast yeuen thine hert(as I
Haue said the here openly)
Than auentures shull the fall
Which hard and heuy ben with all
For oft whan thou bethinkest thee
Of thy loung, where so thou be
Fro folke thou must depart in hie
That none perceiue thy maladie
But hide thine harme thou must alone
And go forth sole, and make thy mone
Thou shalt no while be in o state
But whilom colde and whilom hate
Now reed as Rose, nowe yelowe and fade
Such sorow I trowe thou neuer hade
Cotidien, ne quarteine
It is not so full of peine
For often times it shal fall
In loue, among thy paines all
That thou thy selfe all holy
Forgetten shalt so vtterly
That many times thou shalt be
Still as an image of tree
Domme as a stone, without stering
Of fote or honde, without speaking.
Than sone after all thy paine
To memorie shalt thou come againe
A man abashed wonder sore
And after sighen more and more
For wit thou wele withouten wene
In such a state full oft haue bene
That haue the well of loue assaide
Where through thou art so dismaide.

After a thought shall take thee so
That thy loue is to serre thee fro
Thou shalt say(God)what may this be
That I ne may my lady see?
Mine hert alone is to her go
And I abide all sole in wo
Departed fro mine owne thoughe
And with mine eyen see right nought.
Alas mine eyen seene I ne may
My carefull herte to conuay
Mine hertes gude, but they be
I praise nothing what euer they see
Shul they abide than, nay
But gone and vilten without delay
That mine hert desireth so
For certainly, but if they go.
A foole my selfe I may well holde
Whan I ne see what mine hert wolde
Wherfore I wol gone her to sene
Or eased shall I neuer bene
But I haue some tokening
Than gost thou forth without dwelling
But oft thou failest of thy desire
Er thou maist come her any nere
And wastest in vaine thy passage
Than fallest thou in a newe rage
For want of sight, thou ginnest murne
And homwarde pensife thou dost returne
In great mischiefe than shalt thou be
For than againe shal come to thee
Sighes and plaintes with newe wo
That no itching pricketh so
Who wote it nought, he maie go lere
Of hem that bien loue so dere.
No thing thine hert appesen maie
That oft thou wolt gone and assaie
If thou maist sene by auenture
Thy liues toy, thine hertes cure
So that by grace, if thou might
Attaine of her to haue a sight
Than shalt thou done none other dede
But with that sight thine eyen fede
That faire fresh whan thou maist see
Thine hert shal so rauished be
That neuer thou wouldest thy thankes lete
Ne remoue, for to see that swete
The more thou seest in sothfastnesse
The more thou couitest of that swetnesse
The more thine herte brenneth in fire
The more thine herte is in desire
For who considereth euery dele
It may be likened wonder wele
The paine of loue vnto a fere
For euermore thou neighest nere
Thought, or who so that it be
For very sothe I tell it thee
The hotter euer shal thou brenne
As experience shall thee kenne
Where so comest in any coste
Who is next fire he brenneth moste
And yet forsooth for all thine hete
Though thou for loue swelt and swete
Ne for nothing thou felen may
Thou shalt not willen to passe away
And though thou go, yet must the nede
Thinke all day on her faire hede
Whom thou beheldest with so good will
And holde thy selfe begyled ill
That thou ne haddest none hardiment
To shewe her aught of thine entent
Thine hert full sore thou wolt dispise
And eke repreue of cowardise
That thou so dull in euery thing
Were domme for drede, without speaking.
Thou shalt eke thinke thou diddest foly

That thou were her so fast bie
And durst not auenture the to say
Some thing, er thou came away
For thou haddest no more wonne
To speke of her whan thou begonne
But yet she would for thy sake
In armes goodly the haue take
It should haue be more worthe to the
Than of tresour great plente
Thus shalt thou mourne and eke complain
And get encheson to gon again
Unto thy walke, or to thy place
Where thou beheld her fleshly face
And neuer for false suspection
Thou woldest find occasion
For to gone vnto her house
So art thou than desirous
A sight of her for to haue
If thou thine honour mightest saue
Or any erand mightest make
Thider, for thy loues sake
Ful saine thou woldest, but for drede
Thou gost not, lest that men take hede
Wherfore I rede in thy going
And also in thine againe comming
Thou be wel ware that men ne wit
Feine the other cause than it
To go that way, or fast bie
To heale well is no folie
And if so be it happe the
That thou thy loue there maist se
In liker wise thou her salew
Wherwith thy colour woll transmew
And eke thy bloud shal all to quake
Thy hew eke chaungen for her sake
But word and wit, with chere full pale
Shull want for to tell thy tale
And if thou maist so ferforth winne
That thou reason durst beginne
And woldest saine thre things or mo
Thou shalt ful scarsly saine the two
Though thou bethinke the neuer so wele
Thou shalt forgete yet somdele.

But if thou deale with trechery
For false louers mow all foly
Saun what hem lust withouten dred
They be so double in her falshed
For they in hert can thinke o thing
And saine another in her speking
And whan thy speech is ended all
Right thus to the it shal befall
If any word than come to mind
That thou to say hast left behind
Than thou shalt brenne in great martire
For thou shalt breme as any fire
This is the strife and eke the affraie
And the batell that lasteth aie
This bargaine end may neuer take
But if that she thy peace wil make
And whan the night is comen anon
A thousand angres shal come vpon
To bed as fast thou wolt the dight
Where thou shalt haue but smal delight
For whan thou wenest for to slepe
So ful of paine shalt thou crepe
Stert in thy bed about ful wide
And turne ful oft on euery side
Now downward grosse, and now vpright
And walow in wo the long night
Thine armes shalt thou sprede a brede
As man in warre were forwerede
Than shal the come a remembraunce
Of her shape and her semblaunce
Wherto none other may be pere
And wete thou wel without were
That the shal se somtime that night
That thou hast her, that is so bright
Naked bitwene thine armes there
All sothfastnesse as though it were
Thou shalt make castels than in Spaine
And dreme of ioy, all but in vaine
And the deliten of right nought
While thou so slombrest in that thought
That is so swete and delitable
The which in soth nis but a fable
For it ne shall no while last
Than shalt thou sigh and wepe fast
And say dere God, what thing is this
My dreme is turned all amis
Which was full swete and apparent
But now I wake it is al shent
Now yede this mery thought away
Twentie times vpon a day
I would this thought would come againe
For it aleyeth wel my paine
It maketh me full of ioyfull thought
It sleeth me that it lasteth nought
Ah lorde, why nil ye me succoure?
The ioye I trowe that I langoure
The death I would me should slo
While I lie in her armes two
Mine harme is harde withouten wene
My great vneasse full ofte I mene.

But would Loue do so I might
Haue fully ioye of her so bright
My paine were quitte me richely
Alas to great a thing aske I
It is but foly, and wrong wening

To

To aske so outragious a thing
And who so asketh folily
He mote be warned haſtily
And I ne wote what I may say
I am so ferre out of the way
For I would haue full great liking
And full great ioy of laſſe thing
For would she of her gentilneſſe
Withouten more, me ones kelle
It were to me a great guerdon
Relefe of all my paſſion
But it is hard to come thereto
All is but folly that I do
So high I haue mine heart ſet
Where I may no comfort get
I wote not where I say well or nought
But this I wote well in my thought
That it were better of her alone
For to ſtint my wo and mone
I looke on her I caſt goodly
That for to haue all vtterly
Of another all hole the play
Ah lord where I ſhall bide the day
That euer ſhe ſhall my lady be
He is full cured, that may her ſe
A God, whan ſhall the dawning ſpring?
To liggen thus is an angry thing
I haue no ioy thus here to lie
Whan that my loue is not me bie
A man to lien hath great diſeaſe
Which may not ſlepe, ne reſt in eaſe
I would it dawed, and were now day
And that the night were went away
For were it day, I would vp riſe
Ah ſlow ſunne ſhew thine empriſe
Spede the to ſpread thy beames bright
And chaſe the darkneſſe of the night
To put away the ſtounds ſtrong
Which in me laſten all to long
The night ſhalt thou continue ſo
Without reſt, in paine and wo
If euer thou knew of loue diſtreſſe
Thou ſhall now learne in that ſickneſſe
And thus enduring ſhalt thou lie
And riſe on morow vp erly
Out of thy bed, and harneis the
Er euer dawning thou maiſt ſe
All priuily than ſhalt thou gone
What whider it be thy ſelfe alone
For raine, or haile, for ſnow, for ſlete
Thider ſhe dwelleth, that is ſo ſwete
The which may fall aſlepe be
And thinketh but little vpon the
Than ſhalt thou go, full foule afeard
Loke if the gate be vnſpetd
And wait without in wo and paine
Full euill a cold in wond and raine
Than ſhalt thou go the dore before
If thou maiſt find any ſhore
Or hole, or reft, what euer it were
Than ſhalt thou ſtoupe, and lay to ere
If they within aſlepe be
I meane all ſaue thy lady fre
Whome waking if thou maiſt aſpie
Go put thy ſelfe in iopardie
To aske grace, and the bimene
That ſhe may wete without wene
That thou night no reſt haſt had
So ſore for her thou were beſtad
Women well ought pite to take
Of hem that ſorowen for her ſake
And loke for loue of that relike
That thou thinke none other like
For whan thou haſt ſo great anney
Shall kiſſe the er thou go awey
And hold that in full great deinte
And for that no man ſhall the ſe
Before the houſe, ne in the way
Loke thou be gone againe er day
Such comming, and ſuch going
Such heuinelle, and ſuch walking
Maketh louers withouten any wene
Under her clothes pale and lene
For Loue leueth colour ne clearneſſe
Who loueth true hath no fatneſſe
Thou ſhalt well by thy ſelfe ſe
That thou muſt needs aſſaied be
For men that ſhape hem other way
Falſely her ladies for to betray
It is no wonder though they be fat
With falſe othes her loues they gat
For oft I ſe ſuch loſengeours
Fatter than Abbots or Priours.
Yet with o thing I the charge
That is to ſay, that thou be large
Unto the maid, that her doth ſerue
So beſt her thanke thou ſhalt deſerue
Yeue her gifts, and get her grace
For ſo thou may thanke purchace
That ſhe the worthy hold and fre
Thy lady, and all that may the ſe
Alſo her ſeruants worſhip aye
And pleaſe as much as thou may
Great good through hem may come to the
Becauſe with her they ben priue
They ſhall her tell how they the fande
Curteis and wiſe, and wel doande
And ſhe ſhall praiſe well the more
Loke out of lond thou be not fore
And if ſuch cauſe thou haue, that the

Behoueth to gone out of countre
Leaue hole thine hert in hostage
Till thou againe make thy passage
Thinke long to see the swete thing
That hath thine hert in her keping
Now haue I told thee, in what wise
A louer shall doe me seruice
Do it than, if thou wolt haue
The mede, that thou after craue.

WHan Loue all this had boden me
I said him, sir how may it be
That louers may in such manere
Endure the paine ye haue saied here
I marualle me wonder fast
How any man may liue or last
In such paine, and such brenning
In sorow and thought, and such sighing
Ale vnrelesed wo to make
Whether so it be they slepe or wake
In such anoy continuelly
As helpe me God this marualle I
How man, but he were made of stele
Might liue a month, such paines to fele.

THe God of Loue than said me.
Frend, by the faith I owe to the
May no man haue good, but he it bie
A man loueth more tenderly
The thing, that he hath bought most dere
For wete thou well without were
In thanke that thing is taken more
For which a man hath suffred sore
Certes no wo ne may attaine
Unto the sore of loues paine
None cuill therto ne may amount
No more than a man count
The droppes that of the water be
For dry as well the great see
Thou mightest, as the harmes tell
Of hem that with Loue dwell
In seruice, for peine hem sleeth
And that ech man would flie the deeth
And trow they should neuer escape
Nere that hope couth hem make
Glad as man in prison sete
And may not getten for to ete
But Barly bread, and water pure
And lieth in vermin and in ordure
With all this yet canne he liue
Good hope such comfort hath him yeue
Which maketh wene that he shall be
Deliuered and come to liberte
In fortune is full trust
Though he lie in straw or dust
In hope is all his sustaining
And so for louers in her wening
Which Loue hath shette in his prisoun
Good hope, is her saluacioun
Good hope (how sore that they smert)
Yeueth hem both will and hert
To prefer her body to martire
For Hope so sore doth hem desire
To suffre ech harme that men deuise
For ioy that afterward shall arise.

HOpe in desire catch victory
In hope of Loue is all the glory
For hope is all that Loue may yeue
Nere hope, there should no lenger liue
Blessed be hope, which with desire
Auaunceth louers in such manire
Good hope is curteise for to please
To kepe Louers from all disease
Hope kepeth his lond, and woll abide
For any perill that may betide
For hope to louers, as most chiefe
Doth hem endure all mischefe
Hope is her help whan mister is
And I shall yeue ther eke twis
Thre other things, that great solace
Doth to hem that be in my lace
The first good that may be found
To hem that in my lace be bound
Is Swete thought, for to record
Thing wherwith thou can accord
Best in thine hert where she be
Thinking in absence is good to the
Whan any louer doth complaine
And lieth in distresse, and in paine
Than Swete thought shall come as blithe
Away his angre for to drive
It maketh louers to haue remembraunce
Of comfort, and of high pleasaunce
That Hope hath hight him for to winne
For thought anone than shall beginne
As ferre God wot, as he can find
To make a mirrour of his mind
For to behold he woll not let
Her person he shall afore him set
Her laughing eyen persaunt and clere
Her shape, her forme, her goodly chere
Her mouth, that is so gracious
So swete, and eke so saucrous
Of all her feiters he shall take hede
His eyen with all her limmes fede.
Thus Swete thinking shall aswage
The paine of louers, and her rage
Thy ioy shall double without gesse
Whan thou thinkest on her semelinesse

Or

Or of her laughing, or of her chere
That to the made thy lady dere
This comfort woll I that thou take
And if the next thou wolt forsake
Which is not lesse sauerous
Thou shouldest not ben to daungerous

The second shall be swete speche
That hath to many one be lech
To bring hem out of wo and were
And helpe many a bachelere
And many a lady sent socour
That haue loued paramour
Through speking, whan they might here
Of her louers to hem so dere
To me it voideth all her smert
The which is closed in her hert
In hert it maketh hem glad and light
Speche whan they mow haue sight
And therfore now it cometh to mind
In old dawes as I find
That Clerkes witten that her knew
There was a lady fresh of hew
Which of her loue made a song
On him for to remembre among
In which she said, whan that I here
Speken of him that is so dere
To me it voideth all smert
Iwis he sitteth so nere mine hert
To speke of him at eue or morow
It cureth me of all my sorow
To me is none so high plesaunce
As of his person daliaunce
She wist full well that Swete speking
Comforteth in full moch thing
Her loue she had full well assaid
Of him she was full well apaid
To speke of him her ioy was set
Therefore I rede the that thou get
A felow that can well concele
And kepe thy counsaile, and wel hele
To whom go shew holly thine hert
Both well and wo, ioy and smert
To get comfort to him thou go
And preuely betwene you two
Ye shall speke of that goodly thing
That hath thine hert in her keping
Of her beaute and her semblaunce
And of her goodly countenaunce
Of all thy state, thou shalt him say
And aske him counsaile how thou may
Do any thing that may her plese
For it to the shal do great ese
That he may wete thou trust him so
Both of thy wele and of thy wo
And if his hert to loue be sette
His company is moch the bette
For Reson woll he shew to the
All vtterly his priuite
And what she is he loueth so
To the plainly he shall vndo
Without drede of any shame
Both tell her renome and her name
Than shall he forther ferre and nere
And namely to thy lady dere
In liker wise, ye euery other
Shall helpen as his owne brother
In trouth without doublenesse
And kepen close in sikernesse
For it is noble thing in fay
To haue a man thou darst say
Thy preuy counsaile euery dele
For that woll comfort the right wele
And thou shalt hold the well apaied
Whan such a frend thou hast assaied.

The third good of great comfort
That preueth to louers most disport
Cometh of sight and beholding
That cleped is Swete loking
The which may none ese do
Whan thou art ferre thy lady fro
Wherfore thou prese alway to be
In place, where thou maist her se
For it is thing most amerous
Most delitable and sauerous
For to aswage a mannes sorow
To sene his lady by the morow
For it is a full noble thing
Whan thine eyen haue meting
With that relike precious
Whereof they be so desirous
But all day after soth it is
They haue no drede to faren amis
They dreden neither wind ne raine
Ne non other maner paine
For whan thine eyen were thus in blisse
Let of her curtesie iwisse
Alone they can not haue her ioy
But to the hert they conuoy
Part of her blisse to him thou send
Of all this harme to make an end
The eye is a good messangere
Which can to the hert in such manere
Tidings send, that hath sene
To void him of his paines clene
Wherof the hert reioyseth so
That a great party of his wo
Is voided, and put away to slight
Right as the derknesse of the night

Is chased with clerenesse of the moone
Right so is all his wo full soone
Deuoided clene, whan that the sight
Beholden may that fresh wight
That the hert desireth so
That all his derkenesse is ago
For than the hert is all at ese
Whan they seen that may hem plese
Now haue I declared the all out
Of that thou were in drede and dout
For I haue told the faithfully
What the may curen vtterly
And all Louers that woll be
Faithfull, and full of stabilite
Good hope alway kepe by thy side
And swete thought may eke abide
Swete Loking and swete Speech
Of all thine harmes they shalbe lech
Of euery thou shalt haue great plesaunce
If thou canst bide in sufferaunce
And serue well without fauntise
Thou shalt be quite of thine empryse
With more guerdoun, if that thou liue
But all this time this I the yeue.

THe God of Loue whan all the day
Had taught me, as ye haue herd say
And enformed compendously
He vanished away all sodainly
And I alone left all soole
So full of complaint and of doole
For I saw no man there me by
My wounds me greued wonderly
Me for to curen nothing I knew
Saue the bothum bright of hew
Wheron was sette holly my thought
Of other comfort knew I nought
But it were through the God of Loue
I knew nat cle to my behoue
That might me ease or comfort gette
But if he would him entermette
The Roser was withouten dout
Closed with an hedge without
As ye to forne haue herd me saine
And fast I bested and would faine
Haue passed the hay, if I might
Haue getten in by any sleight
Unto the bothum so faire to se
But euer I dradde blamed to be
If men would haue suspection
That I would of entencion
Haue stole the Roses that were there
Therfore to enter I was in fere
But at the last, as I bethought
Wheder I should passe or nought

I saw come with a gladde chere
To me, a lusty Bachelere
Of good stature and of good height
And Bialacoil forsoth he height
Sonne he was to Curtesie
And he me graunted full gladlie
The passage of the vtter hay
And said, sir: how that ye may
Passe, if your will be
The fresh Roser for to se
And ye the swete sauour fele
Your warrans may right wele
So thou the kepe fro foly
Shall no man do the vilany
If I may helpe you in ought
I shall not faine, dredeth nought
For I am bound to your seruice
Fully deuoid of feintise
Than vnto Bialacoil said I
I thanke you sir full hertely
And your behest take at gre
That ye so goodly profer me
To you it cometh of great fraunchise
That ye me profer your seruise
Than after full deliuerly
Through the brers anon went I
Wherof encombred was the hay
I was well plesed, the soth to say
To se the bothum, faire and swote
So fresh spring out of the rote.

AND Bialacoil me serued wele
Whan I so nigh me might fele
Of the bothum the swete odour
And so lusty hewed of colour
But than a chorle foule him betide
Beside the Roses gan him hide
To kepe the Roses of that Rosere
Of whom the name was Daungere
This chorle was hid there in the greues
Couered with grasse and with leues
To spie and take whom that he fond
Unto that Roser put an hond
He was not soole, for there was mo
For with him were other two
Of wicked maners, and euill fame
That one was cleped by his name
Wicked tong, God yeue him sorow
For neither at eue ne at morow
He can of no man good speke
On many a iust man doth he wreke
There was a woman eke that hight
Shame, that who can reken right
Trespace was her fathers name
Her mother Reson, and thus was shame

Brought

Wrought of these like two
And yet had Trespace neuer ado
With Reason, ne neuer ley her by
He was hidous and so vgly
I meane this, that Trespace hight
But Reason conceiueth of a sight
Shame of that I speake afore
And whan that Shame was thus bore
It was ordained that Chastite
Should of the Roser Lady be
Which of the bothums more and las
With sondry folke assailed was
That she ne wiste what to do
For Venus her assaileth so
That night and day fro her she stall
Bothums and Roses our all
To Reason than prayeth Chastite
Whom Venus hath semed ouer the see
That she her doughter would her lene
To kepe the Roser fresh and grene
Anon Reason to Chastite
Is fully assented, that it be
And graunted her, at her request
That Shame, because she is honest
Shall kepet of the Roser be
And thus to kepe it, there were three
That none should hardy be ne bold
(Were he young or were he old)
Againe her will away to bere
Bothoms ne Roses that there were
I had well sped, had I nat been
Awaited with these thre and seen
For Bialacoil that was so faire
So gracious and debonaire
Quitte him to me full curtesly
And me to please bad that I
Should drawe to the bothom nere
Prese in to touch the Rosere
Which bare the Roses, he yafe me leue
This graunt ne might but litell greue
And for he saw it liked me
Right nigh the bothom pulled he
A leafe all grene, and yaue me that
The which full nigh the bothom sat
I made of that leafe full queint
And whan I felt I was aqueint
With Bialacoil and forgiue
I wend all my will had be
That wert I hardy for to tell
To Bialacoil how me befell
Of Loue, that toke and wounded me
And saied sir, so mote I the
I may no ioy haue in no wise
Upon no side, but it arise
For sith (if I shall not faint)
In heart I haue had so great paine
So great annoy and such affray
That I ne wote what I shall say
I rede your worth to deserue
Leuer me were, that annes kerue
My body should in pieces small
Than in any wise it should fall
That ye wrothed should been with me
Say boldly thy will (qd. he)
I will be wroth if that I may
For nought that thou shalt to me say,

Than said I sir, nor you displease
To knowen of my great disease
In which only Loue hath me brought
For paines great, disease and thought
Fro day to day it doth me dye
Suppose ye not sir that I lie
In me fiue wounds did he make
The sore of which shall neuer slake
But ye the bothom graunt me
Which is most pallaunt of beaute
My life, my death, and my martyre
And treasour that I most desire
Than Bialacoil affraied all
Said sir, it may not fall
That ye desire it may not arise
What would ye shend me in this wise?
A mokell fole than I were
If I suffred you away to bere
The fresh bothom so faire of sight
For it were neither skill ne right
Of the Roser ye broke the rind
Or take the Rose afore his kind
Ye are not curteis to aske it
Let it still on the Roser sit
And let it grow till it amended be
And perfectly come to beaute
I nold that it pulled were
Fro the Roser that it bere
To me it is so lefe and dere
With that anon stert out Daungere
Out of the place where he was hidde
His malice in his chere was kidde
Full great he was and blacke of hewe
Sturdy and hidous who so him knewe
Like sharpe bristons his haire was growe
His eyes red sparkling as the fire glowe
His nose frounced full kirked stood
He come criand as he were wood
And said, Bialacoil tell me why
Thou bringest hider so boldly
Him that is nigh the Roser
Thou worchest in a wrong maner
He thinketh to dishonour thee

Thou art well worthy to haue maugre
To let him of the Rosere witte
Who setueth a Fellone is euill quitte
Thou wouldest haue doen great bounte
And he with shame would quite thee
Fly heng se low, I rede thee go
It wanteth little he woll thee slo
For Bialacoil ne knew thee nought
When thee to serue he set his thought
For thou wolt shame him if thou might
Both again reason and right
I woll no more in thee affie
That comest so slightly for tespie
For it proueth wonder wele
Thy sleight and treason euery dele
I durst no more make there abode
For the chorle, he was so wode
So gan he thrette and manace
And through the hay he did me chace
For fe are of him I trembled and quoke
So chorlishly his hedde he shoke
And saied, if eft he might me take
I should nat from his honds scape
Than Bialacoil is fled and mate
And I all soole disconsolate
Was left alone in pain and thought
For shame to death I was nigh brought
Than thought I on my high foly
How that my body vtterly
Was yeue to pain and to martire
And thereto had I so great ire
That I ne durst the haies passe
There was no hope, there was no grace
I trow neuer man wist of pain
But he were laced in loues chain
Ne no man, and soth it is
But if he loue, what anger is
Loue holdeth this hell to me right wele
When pain (he saied) I should fele
No hart may thinke, ne tong sain
A quarter of my wo and pain
I might not with the anger last
Mine hart in point was for to brast
When I thought on the Rose, that so
Was through Daunger cast me fro
A long while stode I in that state
Till that me saw so madde and mate
The Lady of the high ward
Which from her toure loked thiderward.

Reason men clepe that Lady
Which from her toure deliuerly
Come doune to me without more
But she was neither yong ne hore
Ne high ne low, ne fatte ne lene
But best, as it were in a meane
Her yen two were clere and light
As any candell, that brenneth bright
And on her hedde she had a croune
Her semed well an high personne
For round enuiron her crounet
Was full of rich stones fret
Her goodly semblaunt by deuise
I trow was made in Paradise
For nature had neuer soch a grace
To forge a werke of soch compace
For certain, but if the letter lie
God himself, that is so hie
Made her after his image
And yafe her sith soch auauntage
That she hath might and seignory
To kepe men from all foly
Who so woll trow her lore
Ne may offenden neuermore.

And while I stode this derke and pale
Reason began to me her tale
For she saied, alhaile my swete frend
Foly and childhod woll thee shend
Which thee haue put in great affray
Thou hast bought dere the time of May
That made thine hart mery to be
In euill time thou wentest to se
The gardin, whereof Idlenesse
Bare the key and was maistresse
When thou yedest in the daunce
With her and had acquaintaunce
Her acquaintaunce is perillous
First soft, and after noious
She hath trashed without wene
The God of Loue had thee nat sene
Ne had Idlenesse thee conueid
In the berger, where Mirth him pleid
If Foly haue surprised thee
Doe so that it recouered be
And be well ware to take no more
Counsaile, that greueth after sore
He is wise, that woll himself chastise
And though a yong man in any wise
Trespasse emong, and doe Foly
Let him nat tary, but hastely
Let him amend what so be mis
And eke I counsaile ther iwis
The God of Loue wholly forgete
That hath thee in soch pain sete
And thee in hart tourmented so
I can not seen how thou maiest go
Other waies to garisoun
For daungere, that is so feloun
Felly purposeth thee to werrey

which is full cruell the soth to sey.
AND yet of Daunger cometh no blame
In reward of my doughter Shame
Which hath the Roses in her ward
As she that may be no musard
And wicked tong is with these two
That suffreth no man thider go
For er a thing be doe he shall
where that he cometh ouer all
In fourty places, if it be sought
Say thing that neuer was don ne wrought
So moch traison is in his male
Of falsenesse for to saine a tale
Thou dealest with angry folke iwis
wherefore to the better is
From these folke away to fare
For they woll make thee liue in care
This is the cuill that loue they call
wherein there is but foly all
For loue is foly euery deil
who loueth, in no wise may doe well
Ne set his thought on no good werke
His schole he leseth, if he be a clerke
Or other craft eke, if that he be
He shall not thriue therein, for he
In loue shall haue more passioun
Than Monke, Hermite, or Chanoun
This pain is hard out of measure
The ioy may ere no while endure
And in the possession
Is moch tribulation
The ioy is so short lasting
And but in hap is the getting
For I se there many in trauaile
That at last foule faile
I was nothing thy counsailer
When thou were made the homager
Of God of Loue to hastely
where was no Wisedome but Foly
Thine hart was ioly, but not sage
When thou were brought in soch a rage
To yeld thee so redely
And to Loue of his great maistry

I Rede thee Loue away to driue
That maketh thee recch not of thy liue
Thy Foly more fro day to day
Shall grow, but thou it put away
Take with thy teeth the bridell fast
To daunt thy hart, and eke the cast
If that thou maiest to get the defence
For to redresse thy first offence
Who so his hart alway woll leue
Shall find emong that shall him greue
When I her heard thus me chastice
I answerd in full angry wise
I praied her cesse of her speach
Either to chastice me or teach
To bidde me my thought refrein
which Loue hath caught in his demein
What wene ye Loue woll consent
(That me assaieth with bow bent)
To draw mine hart out of his hond
which is so quickly in his bond
That ye counsaile may neuer be
For when he first arested me
He toke mine hart so sore him till
That it is nothing at my will
He thought it so him for to obey
That he it sparred with a key
I pray you let me be all still
For ye may well, if that ye will
Your words wast in idlenesse
For vtterly, withouten gesse
All that ye saine is but in vain
Me were leuer die in the pain
Than Loue to me ward should arette
Falshede or treason on me sette
I woll me get pris or blame
And Loue true to saue my name
Who that me chastiseth, I him hate
With that word Reason went her gate
When she saw for no sermoning
She might me fro my foly bring
Than dismaied I left all soole
Forwery, forwandred as a foole
For I ne knew no cherisaunce
Than fell into my remembraunce
How Loue badde me to purvey
A felow, to whom I might sey
My counsaile and my priuite
For that should moch auaile me
With that bethought I me, that I
Had a felow fast by
True and siker, curteis, and hend
And he called was by name a frend
A truer felow was no where none
In hast to him I went anone
And to him all my woo I told
Fro him right nought I would withhold
I told him all without were
And made my compleint on Daungere
How for to say he was hidous
And to meward contrarious
The which through his cruelte
Was in point to haue meimed me
With Bialacoil when he me sey
Within the gardin walke and pley
Fro me he made him for to go
And I be left alone in wo

I durst no lenger with him speake
For Daunger saied he would be wreake
Whan that he saw how I went
The fresh bothom for to hent
If I were hardy to come nere
Bitwene the hay and the Rosere.

This frend whan he wist of my thought
He discomforted me right nought
But saied felow, be not so madde
Ne so abashed nor bestadde
My self I know full well Daungere
And how he is fiers of chere
At prime temps, Loue to manace
Full oft I haue been in his case
A felon first though that he be
After thou shalt him souple se
Of long passed I knew him wele
Ungoodly first though men him fele
He woll meke after in his bearing
Been, for seruice and obeissing
I shall thee tell what thou shalt do
Mekely I rede thou go him to
Of hart pray him specially
Of thy trespace to haue mercy
And hote him well here to please
That thou shalt neuer more him displease
Who can best serue of flatery
Shall please Daunger most vtterly.

My frend hath saied to me so weale
That he me ased hath somedeale
And eke allegged of my tourment
For through him had I hardement
Again to Daunger for to go
To preue if I might meke him so

TO Daunger came I all ashamed
The which afore me had blamed
Desiring for to please my wo
But ouer hedge durst I nat go
For he forbode me the passage
I found him cruell in his rage
And in hys hond a great bourdoun
To him I kneled low adoun
Full meke of port, and simple of chere
And saied sir, I am comen here
Only to aske of you mercy
That greueth me full greatly
That euer my life I wrathed you
But for to amend I am come now
With all my might, both loud and still
To doen right at your owne will
For Loue made me for to do
That I haue trespassed hiderto
Fro whom I ne may withdraw mine hart
Yet shall I neuer for ioy ne smart
(What so befall good or ill)
Offend more again your will
Leuer I haue endure disease
Than doe that should you displease.

I You require, and pray that ye
Of me haue mercy and pite
To stint your ire that greueth so
That I woll sweare for euermo
To be redressed at your liking
If I trespace in any thing
Saue that (I pray thee) graunt me
A thing, that may nat warned be
That I may loue all onely
None other thing of you aske I
I shall doen all twis
If of your grace ye graunt me this
And ye may nat letten me
For well wote ye that loue is fre
And I shall louen soch that I will
Who euer like it well or ill
And yet ne would I for all Fraunce
Doe thing to doe you displeasaunce.

Than Daunger fill in his entent
For to forgeue his male talent
But all his wrath yet at last
He hath released, I praied so fast
Shortly (he saied) thy request
Is nat to mokell dishoneste
Ne I woll nat werne it thee
For yet nothing engreueth me
For though thou loue thus euermore
To me is neither soft ne sore
Loue where that thee list, what retcheth me
So ferre fro my Roses be
Trust not on me for none assay
In any time to passe the hay.
Thus hath he graunted my praiere
Than went I forth withouten were
Unto my frend, and told him all
Which was right ioifull of my tale
(He saied) now goeth well thine affaire
He shall to thee be debonaire
Though he afore was despitous
He shall hereafter be gracious
If he were touched on some good vein
He should yet rewen on thy pein
Suffer I rede, and no bost make
Till thou at good mes maiest him take
By suffraunce, and words soft
A man may ouercome oft
Him, that afore he had in drede

In bokes sothly as I rede
Thus hath my frende with great comfort
Auaunced me with high disport
Which would me good, as much as I
And than anon full sodainly
I toke my leaue, and streight I went
Unto the haie for great talent
I had to seen the fresh bothom
Wherein laie my saluation
And Daunger toke kepe, if that I
Kepe him couenaunt truely
So sore I drede his manasing
I durst not breake his bidding
For least that I were of him shent
I brake not his commaundement
For to purchase his good will
It was for to come there till
His mercie was to ferre behinde
I kept, for I ne might it finde
I complained and sighed sore
And languished euermore
For I durst nat ouergo
Unto the Rose I loued so
Throughout my deming vtterly
That he had knowledge certainly
Than Loue me ladde in such wise
That in me there was no sentise
Falshedde, ne no trecherie
And yet he full of villanie
Of disdaine, and crueltie
On me ne would haue pitie
His cruell will for to refrain
Tho I wept alwaie, and me complain.

AND while I was in this turment
Were come of grace, by God sent
Fraunchise, and with her Pitie
Fulfilde the bothom of bountie
They go to Daunger anon right
To ferther me with all her might
And helpe in worde and in deede
For well they sawe that it was nede.
First of her grace dame Fraunchise
Hath taken of this emprise
She saied, Daunger great wrong ye doe
To worch this man so much woe
Or pinen him so angerly
It is to you great villanie
I can not see, why ne how
That he hath trespalled againe you
Saue that he loueth, wherefore ye should
The more in charitie of him hold
The force of loue maketh him doe this
Who would him blame he did amis
He leueth more than he may doe
His pain is harde, ye may see lo
And Loue in no wise would consent
That ye haue power to repent
For though that quicke ye would him slo
Fro loue his harte may nat go.
Now swete sir, is it your ease
Him for to anger or displease
Alas, what may it you auaunce
To doen to him so great greuaunce
What worship is it again him take
Or on your man a werre make
Sith he so lowly euery wise
Is redy, as ye iuste deuise
If Loue haue caught him in his lace
You for to beie in euery caas
And been your subiect at your will
Should ye therfore willen him ill
Ye should him spare more all out
Than him that is bothe proude and stout
Curtesie would that ye succoure
Hem, that been meke vnder your cure
His harte is hard that will not meke
Whan men of mekenesse him beseke

THis is certain, saied Pitie
We see oft that Humilitie
Both ire, and also felonie
Uenquisheth, and also melancolie
To stonde forth in such duresse
This crueltie and wickednesse
Wherefore I pray you sir Daungere
For to maintene no lenger here
Such cruell werre again your man
Is wholly yours as euer he can
Nor that ye worchen no more wo
Upon this caitife, that languisheth so
Which will no more to you trespace
But put him wholly in your grace
His offence ne was but lite
The God of loue it was to wite
That he your thrall so greatly is
And if ye harme him ye done amis
For he hath had full hard penaunce
Sith that ye reft him thaquaintaunce
Of Bialacoil, his moste ioie
Which all his paines might acoie
He was before anoyed sore
But than ye doubled him well more
For he of blisse hath been full bare
Sith Bialacoil was fro him fare
Loue hath to him great distresse
He hath no nede of more duresse
Uoided from him your ire I rede
Ye may not winnen in this dede
Maketh Bialacoil repaire again

And

And haueth pitie vpon his pain
For Fraunchise woll, and I Pite
That mercifull to him ye be
And sith that she and I accorde
Haue vpon him misericorde
For I you pray, and moneste
Nought to refusen our requeste
For he is hard and full of thought
That for vs two woll doe right nought
Daunger ne might no more endure
He meked him vnto measure.

I woll in no wise, saieth Daungere
Deuy, that ye haue asked here
It were to great vncurtesie
I woll ye haue the company
Of Bialacoil, as ye deuise
I woll him let in no wise
To Bialacoil than went in hie
Fraunchise, and saied full curteslie
Ye haue to long be deignous
Unto this louer, and daungerous
Fro him to withdraw your presence
Which hath doe to him great offence
That ye not would vpon him se
Wherfore a sorowfull man is he
Shape ye to pay him, and to please
Of my loue if ye woll haue ease
Fulfill his will, sith that ye know
Daunger is daunted and brought low
Through helpe of me and of Pite
You dare no more aferd be
I shall do right as ye will
Saieth Bialacoil, for it is skill
Sith daunger woll that it so be
Than Fraunchise hath him sent to me

BIalacoil at the beginning
Salued me in his comming
No straungenesse was in him seen
No more than he ne had wrathed been
As faire semblaunt than shewed he me
And goodly, as afore ne did he
And by the hond without doubt
Within the hay right all about
He lad me with right good chere
All enuiron the vergere
That daunger had me chased fro
Now haue I leaue ouer all to go
Now am I raised at my deuise
Fro hell vnto Paradise
Thus Bialacoil of gentilnesse
With all his pain and businesse
Hath shewed me only of grace
The ekters of the swote place

I saw the Rose whan I was nigh
Was greater woxen, and more high
Fresh, roddy, and faire of hew
Of colour euer ilich new
And whan I had it long sene
I saw that through the leues grene
The Rose spred to spaunthing
To seen it was a goodly thing
But it ne was so spred on brede
That men within might knowe the sede
For it couert was and close
Both with the leaues and with the Rose
The stalke was euen and grene vpright
It was thereon a goodly sight
And well the better without wene
For the seede was not seen
Full faire it spradde the God of blesse
For such another, as I gesse
Afore ne was ne more vermaile
I was abawed for marueile
For euer the fairer that it was
The more I am bounden in loues laas
Long I abode there soth to saie
Till Bialacoil I gan to praie
Whan that I sawe him in no wise
To me warnen his seruice
That he me would graunt a thing
Which to remember is well sitting
This is to saine, that of his grace
He would me yeue leisar and space
To me that was so destrous
To haue a kissing precious
Of the goodly fresh Rose
That so swetely smelleth in my nose
For if it you displeased nought
I woll gladly, as I haue sought
Haue a kisse thereof freely
Of your yeft, for certainly
I woll none haue, but by your leue
So lothe me were you for to greue.

HE saied, frende so God me spede
Of Chastitie I haue such drede
Thou shouldest not warned be for me
But I dare not for Chastitie
Again her dare I not misdoe
For alwaie biddeth she me so
To yeue no louer leaue to kisse
For who thereto may winnen ywisse
He of the surplus of the praie
My life in hope to get some daie
For who so kissing may attain
Of Loues pain hath (soth to sain)
The best and moste auenaunt
And earnest of the remenaunt.

Of

Of his answere I sighed sore
I durst assay him tho no more
I had such drede to greue him ate
A man should not to much assate
To chafe his frend out of measure
Nor put his life in auenture
For no man at the first stroke
Ne may not fell doune an oke
Nor of the reisins haue the wine
Till grapes be ripe and well afine
Be sore empressed, I you enstire
And drawen out of the pressure
But I forpeined wonder strong
Though that I abode right long
After the kisse, in paine and wo
Sith I to kisse desired so
Til that renning on my distresse
There come Venus the goddesse
(Which aie werrieth Chastite)
Came of her grace to socour me
Whose might is know ferre and wide
For she is mother of Cupide.

The God of loue, blind as stone
That helpeth louers many one
This lady brought in her right hond
Of brenning fire a blasing brond
Wherof the flame and hote fire
Hath many a Lady in desire
Of Loue brought, and sore hette
And in her seruice her hert is sette
This Lady was of good entaile
Right wonderful of apparaile
By her atire so bright and shene
Men might perceiue well and sene
She was not of Religioun
Nor I nil make mencioun
Nor of robe, nor of tresour
Of broch, neither of her rich attour
Ne of her girdel about her side
For that I nil not long abide
But knoweth well, that certainly
She was arraied richely
Deuoid of pride certaine she was
To Bialacoil she went a pas
And to him shortely in a clause
She said, sir, what is the cause
Ye ben of port so daungerous
Unto this louer, and dainous
To graunt him nothing but a kisse
To warne it him ye done amisse
Sith well ye wot, how that he
Is Loues seruaunt, as ye may se
And hath beaute, where through is
Worthy of Loue to haue the blis
How he is semely beheld and see
How he is faire, how he is free
How he is swote, and debonaire
Of age yong, lusty, and faire
There is no Lady so hautaine
Duchesse, Countesse, ne Chastelaine
That I nold hold her vngoodly
For to refuse him vterly
His breth is also good and swete
And eke his lippes roddy and mete
Only to plaine, and to kisse
Graunt him a kisse of gentilnesse
His teth arne also white and clene
Me thinketh wrong withouten wene
If ye now warne him, trusteth me
To graunt that a kisse haue he
The lasse ye help him that ye hast
And the more time shull ye wast
Whan the flame of the very mond
That Venus brought in her right hond
Had Bialacoil with his hete smete
Anone he bad me withouten lete
Graunt to me the Rose kisse
Than of my paine I ganne to lisse
And to the Rose anon went I
And kissed it ful faithfully
There nede no man aske, if I was blith
Whan the sauour soft and lith
Stroke to mine hert without more
And me allegged of my sore
So was I ful of ioy and blisse
It is faire soch a floure to kisse
It was so swote and sauerous
I might not be so anguishous
That I mote glad and ioly be
Whan that I remembre me
Yet euer among sothly to saine
I suffre noy and much paine.

The see may neuer be so still
That with a litell wind at will
Ouerwhelme, and tourne also
As it were wood in wawes go
After the calme the trouble soone
Mote folow, and chaunge as the moone
Right so fareth Loue, that seld in one
Holdeth his anere, for right anone
Whan they in ease wene best to line
They ben with tempest all forbrine
Who serueth Loue, can tel of wo
The stoundmele ioy mote ouergo
Now he hurteth, and now he sureth
For seld in o point Loue endureth.

Now is it right me to procede

How Shame gan medle and take hede
Through whom fel angers I haue hade
And how the strong wall was made
And the Castell of hyde and length
That God of Loue wan with his strength
All this in Romance will I set
And for no thing ne will I let
So that it liking to her be
That is the floure of beaute
For she may best my labour quite
That I for her Loue shal endite
Wicked tong that the couine
Of euery Louer can deuine
Worst, and addeth more somdele
(For Wicked tong saith neuer wele
To meward bare he right great hate
Espiyng me erly and late
Til he hath sene the great chere
Of Bialacoil and me yfere
He might not his tongue withstond
Worse to report than he fond
He was so ful of cursed rage
It sat him wele of his linage
For him an Irish woman bare
His tong was filed sharpe and square
Poignaunt and right keruing
And wonder bitter in speking
For whan that he me gan espy
He swore (affirming sikerly)
Bitwene Bialacoil and me
Was euill aquaintaunce and pryne
He spake therof so folily
That he awaked Iealousy
Which all afrated in his rising
Whan that he herd iangling
He ran anon as he were wode
To Bialacoil there that he stode
Which had leuer in this caas
Haue ben at Reines or Amias
For sote hote in his fellony
To him thus said Iealousy
Why hast thou ben so negligent
To kepen, whan I was absent
This verger here left in thy ward e
To me thou haddest no regard
To trust (to thy confusion)
Him thus, to whom suspection
I haue right great, for it is nede
It is welt shewed by the dede
Great faut in the now haue I found
By God anon thou shalt be bound
And fast locken in a Toure
Without refuite or socoure,

For shame to long hath be the fro
Ouer loome she was ago
Whan thou hast lost both dryde and fere
It semed well she was not here
She was besy in no wise
To kepe the and chastice
And for to helpen Chastite
To kepe the Roser, as thinketh me
For than this boy knaue so boldly
Ne should not haue be hardy
In this verge had such game
Which now me tourneth to great shame.

Bialacoil nist what to say
Ful faine he would haue fled away
For feare haue hid, nere that he
All sodainly toke him with me
And whan I saw he had so
This Ielousie take vs two
I was astoned, and knew no rede
But fledde away for very dryde

Than Shame came forth full simply
She wend haue trespaced ful greatly
Humble of her port, and made it simple
Wearing a vaile in stede of wimple
As Nonnes done in her Abbey
Bicause her hert was in affray
She gan to speke within a throw
To Ielousie, right wonder low
First of his grace she besought
And said sir, ne leueth nought
Wicked tong, that false espie
Which is so glad to faine and lie
He hath you made through flatering
On Bialacoil a false leasing
His falsnesse is not now a newe
It is to long that he him knewe
This is not the first day
For Wicked tong hath custome aie
Yong folkes to bewrie
And false lesinges on hem lie,

Yet neuertheles I se among
That the loigne it is so long
Of Bialacoil, hertes to lure
In Loues seruice for to endure
Drawing such folke him to
That he hath nothing with to do
But in sothnesse I trow nought
That Bialacoil had euer in thought
To do trespace or vilanie
But for his mother Curtelie
Hath thaught him euer to be
Good of aqueintaunce and pryne

For

For he loueth none heuinesse
But mirth and play, and all gladnesse
He hateth all trechours
Soleine folke and enuious
For ye woten how that he
Woll euer glad and ioyful be
Honestly with folke to play
I haue be negligent in good fey
To chastise him, therfore now I
Of hert I cry you here mercy
That I haue ben so rechelees
To tamen him withouten lees
Of my foly I me repent
Now woll I hole set mine entent
To kepe both low and still
Bialacoil to do your will
Shame Shame (said Jelousy)
To be bitrashed great drede haue I
Lechery hath clombe so hie
That almost blered is mine eie
No wonder is, if that drede haue I
Ouer all reigneth Lechery
Whose might groweth night and dey
Both in Cloistre and in Abbey
Chastite is werried ouer all
Therfore I woll with siker wall
Close both Roses and Rosere
I haue to long in this manere
Left hem vnclosed wilfully
Wherfore I am right inwardly
Sorowfull, and repent me
But now they shall no lenger be
Vnclosed, and yet I drede sore
I shall repent ferthermore
For the game goeth all amis
Counsaile I must new twis
I haue to long trusted the
But now it shal no lenger be
For he may best in eurey cost
Disceiue, that men trusten most
I se well that I am nigh shent
But if I set my full entent
Remedy to puruey
Wherfore close I shall the wey
From hem that woll the Rose espy
And come to wait me vilony
For in good faith and in trouth
I woll not let for no slouth
To liue the more in likernesse
Do make anon a fortresse
Than close the Roses of good sauour
In middes shall I make a tour
To put Bialacoil in prison
For euer I drede me of treson
I trow I shall him kepe so
That he shal haue no might to go
About to make company
To hem that thinke of vilany
Ne to no such as hath been here
Afore, and found in him good chere
Which han assailed him to shend
And with her trowandise to blend
A foole is eith to begile
But may I liue a litel while
He shal forthinke his faire semblaunt
And with that word came Drede auaunt
Which was abashed, and in great fere
When he wist Jelousie was there
He was for drede in such affray
That not a word durst he say
But quaking stode ful stil alone
(Till Jelousie his way was gone)
Saue Shame, that him not forsoke
Both Drede and she ful sore quoke
That at last Drede abraid
And to his Cosin Shame said.

Shame (he said) in sothfastnesse
To me it is great heuinesse
That the noise so ferre is go
And the sclaunder of vs two
But sith that it is befall
We may it not againe call
When ones sprong is a fame
For many a yere without en blame
We haue ben, and many a day
For many an Aprill, and many a May
We han passed, not shamed
Till Jelousie hath vs blamed
Of mistrust and suspection
Causeless, without encheson
Go we to Daunger hastely
And let vs shew him openly
That he hath not a right wrought
When that he set not his thought
To kepe better the purprise
In his doing he is not wise
He hath to vs do great wrong
That hath suffred now so long
Bialacoil to haue his will
All his lusts to fulfill
He must amend it vtterly
Or els shal he vilanously
Exiled be out of this lond
For he the warre may not withstond
Of Jelousie, nor the greke
Sith Bialacoil is at mischeke.

TO Daunger Shame and Drede anon
The right way ben gon

The chorle they found hem afore
Ligging vnder an hawthorne
Under his heed no pilow was
But in the stede a trusse of gras
He slombred, and a nappe he toke
Till Shame pitously him spoke
And great manace on him gan make
Why slepest thou, whan thou should wake
(Md. Shame) thou dost vs vilany
Who trusteth the, he doth foly
To kepe roses or bothoms
Whan they ben faire in her sesons
Thou art wore to familiere
Where thou should be straunge of chere
Stout of thy port, redy to greue
Thou doest great foly for to leue
Bialacoil here in to call
The yonder man, to shenden vs all
Though that thou slepe, we may here
Of Ielousie great noise here
Art thou now late, rise vp an hie
And stoppe sone and deliuerly
All the gappes of the hay
Do no fauour, I the pray
It falleth nothing to thy name (blame
To make fayre semblant, where thou mayste

If Bialacoil be swete and fre
Dogged and fel thou shouldest be
Froward and outragious iwis
A chorle chaungeth that curteis is
This haue I herd oft in saiyng
That man may for no daunting
Make a sperhauke of a bosard
Al men wol hold the for musard
That debonaire haue founden the
It sitteth the nought curteis to be
To do men plesaunce or seruise
In the it is recreaundise
Let thy werkes ferre and nere
Be like thy name, which is Daungere
Than all abawed in shewing
Anon spake Drede, right thus saiyng
And said, Daunger I drede me
That thou ne wolt besy be
To kepe that thou hast to kepe
Whan thou shouldest wake, thou art a slepe
Thou shalt be greued certainly
If the aspie Ielousy
Or if he find the in blame
He hath to day assailed Shame
And chased away, with great manace
Bialacoil out of this place
And sweareth shortly that he shall
Enclose him in a sturdy wall
And all is for thy wickednesse
For that the faileth straungenesse
Thine hert I trow be failed all
Thou shalt repent in speciall
If Ielousie the soth knew
Thou shalt forthinke, and sore rew,

With that the chorle his clubbe gan shake
Frowning his eien gan to make
And hidous chere, as man in rage
For ire he brent in his visage
Whan that he herd him blamed so
He said, out of my witte I go
To be discomfite I haue great wrong
Certes I haue now lined to long
Sith I may not this closer kepe
All quicke I would be doluen depe
If any man shall more repayre
In to this garden for foule or fayre
Mine hert for ire goth a fere
That I let any enter here
I haue do folly now I se
But now it shall amended be
Who setteth fote here any more
Truly he shall repent it sore
For no man more into this place
Of me to entre shall haue grace
Leuer I had with swerdes twaine
Throughout mine hert, in euery vaine
Perced to be, with many a wound
Than slouth should in me be found
From henceforth by night or day
I shall defend it if I may
Withouten any exception
Of eth maner condicion
And if I it any man graunt
Holdeth me for recreaunt,

Than Daunger on his fete gan stond
And hent a burdon in his hond
Wroth in his ire ne left he nought
But through the herber he hath sought
If he might find hole or trace
Where through that me mote forth by pace
Or any gappe, he did it close
That no man might touch a rose
Of the Roser all about
He shitteth euery man without
Thus day by day Daunger is wers
More wonderfull and more diuers
And feller eke, than euer he was
For him ful oft I sing alas
For I ne may nought, through his ire
Recouer that I most desire
Mine hert alas, wol brest a two

For

For Bialacoil I wrathed so
For certainly in euery membre
I quake, whan I me remembre
Of the bothum, which I wold
Full oft a day sene and behold
And whan I thinke vpon the kisse
And how moch ioy and blisse
I had through the sauour swete
For want of it I grone and grete
Me thinketh I fele yet in my nose
The swete sauour of the Rose
And now I wote that I mote go
So ferre the fresh floures fro
To me full welcome were the deth
Absence therof (alas) me sleth
For whilom with this Rose, alas
I touched nose, mouth, and face
But now the death I must abide
But Loue consent an other tide
That ones I touch may and kisse
I trow my paine shal neuer lisse
Theron is all my couetise
Which brent my hert in many wise
Now shal repaire againe sighing
Long watch on nights, and no sleping
Thought in wolbing, turment, and wo
With many a turning to and fro
That halfe my paine I can not tell
For I am fallen into hell
From paradise and welth, the more
My turment greueth more, and more
Anoieth now the bitternesse
That I to forne haue felt swetnesse
And wicked tonge, through his falshede
Causeth all my wo and drede
On me he laieth a pitous charge
Bicause his tong was to large.

Now it is time shortly that I
Tel you somthing of Jelousy
That was in great suspection
About him left he no mason
That stone could lay, ne querrour
He hired hem to make a tour
And first the Roses for to kepe
About hem made he a dich depe
Right wonder large, and also brode
Upon the which also stode
Of squared stone, a sturdy wall
Which on a cragge was founded all
And right great thicknesse eke it bare
About it was founded square
An hundred fadome on euery side
It was all lich long and wide
Lest any time it were assailed
Ful wel about it was batailed
And round enuiron eke were set
Ful many a rich and faire touret
At euery corner of this wall
Was set a tour ful principall
And euerich had without fable
A portcolise defensable
To kepe of enemies, and to greue
That there her force would preue
And eke amidde this purprise
Was made a tour of great maistrise
A fairer saugh no man with sight
Lage and wide, and of great might
They dradde none assaut
Of ginne, gonne, or skaffaut
The temprure of the morter
Was made of licour wonder dere
Of quicke lime persaunt and egre
The which was tempred with vinegre
The stone was hard of Adamaunt
Wherof they made the foundemaunt
The tour was round made in compas
In all this world no richer was
Ne better ordained there withall
About the tour was made a wall
So that betwixt that and the tour
Roses were set of swete sauour
With many Roses that they bere
And eke within the castel were
Springolds, Gonnes, Bowes, and Archers
And eke about at corners
When seine ouer the wall stond
Great engins, who were nerehond
And in the kernels here and there
Of arblasters great plenty were
None armour might her stroke withstond
It were foly to preace to hond
Without the dich were listes made
With wal batailed large and brade
For men and horse should not attaine
To nigh the dich ouer the plaine
Thus Jelosie hath enuiron
Sette about his garnison
With walles round, and dich depe
Only the Roser for to kepe
And Daunger erly and late
The keyes kept of the vtter gate
The which opened toward the eest
And he had with him at leest
Thurty seruants echone by name
That other gate kept Shame
Which opened, as it was couth
Toward the part of the South
Sergeaunts assigned were her to
Full many, her will for to do

Than Drede had in her bailly
The keping of the constablery
Toward the North I vnderstond
That opened vpon the left hond
The which for nothing may be sure
But if she do besy cure
Erly on morow, and also late
Stongly to shette and barre the gate
Of euery thing that she may se
Drede is aferd, where so she be
For with a puffe of litell wind
Drede is astonied in her mind
Therfore for stealing of the Rose
I rede her nat the yate vnclose
A foules flight would make her fle
And eke a shadow if she it se.

THan Wicked tong full of Enuy
With souldiers of Normandy
As he that causeth all debate,
Was keper of the fourth gate
And also to the tother thre
He went ful oft for to se
Whan his lotte was to walke a night
His instruments would he dight
For to blow and maketh soune
After than he hath encheloune
And walken oft vpon the wall
Corners and wicketes ouer all
Ful narow serchen and espie
Though he nought fond, yet would he lie
Discordaunt euer fro armony
And distoned from melody
Controue he would, and foule faile
With hornpipes of Cornwaile
In floites made he discordaunce
And in his musike with mischaunce
He would seine with notes new
That he fond no woman trew
Ne that he saw neuer in his life
Vnto her husbond a trew wife
Ne none so ful of honeste
That she nil laugh and mery be
Whan that she hereth or may espy
A man spoken of Lechery
Euerich of hem hath some vice
One is dishoneft, another is nice
If one be ful of vilanie
An other hath a licorous eie
If one be ful of wantonesse
An other is a chidersse.

Thus Wicked tong, God yeue him shame
Can put hem euerichone in blame
Without desert and causeless

He lieth, though they ben giltless
I haue pity to sene the sorow
That waketh both euen and morow
To innocents doe such grenaunce
I pray God yeue him euill chaunce
That he euer so besy is
Of any woman to seine amis
Eke Jelousie God confound
That hath made a toure so round
And made about a garison
To sette Bialacoil in prison
The which is shette there in the tour
Ful long to hold there soiour
There for to liue in penaunce
And for to do him more grenaunce
Which hath ordained Jelouly
An old becke for to espie
The maner of his gouernaunce
The which Deuil in her enfaunce
Had lerned of louers art
And of his pleis toke her part
She was expert in his seruise
She knew ech wrench and euery gise
Of Loue, and euery while
It was hard her to begile
Of Bialacoil she toke aie hede
That euer he liueth in wo and drede
He kept him coy and eke priue
Leest in him she had hadde se
Any foly countenaunce
For she knew all the old daunce
And after this whan Jelousie
Had Bialacoil in his Baillie
And shette him vp that was so fre
For sure of him he would be
He trusteth sore in his castell
The strong werke him liketh well
He dradde nat that no glotons
Should steale his Roses or bothoms
The Roses weren assured all
Defenced with the strong wall
Now Jelousie full well may be
Of drede deuoid in liberte
Whether that he slepe or wake
For of his Roses may none be take.

BVt I (alas) now mourn shall
Because I was without the wall
Ful much dole and mone I made
Who had wist what wo I had
I trow he would haue had pite
Loue to dere had sold me
The good that of his loue had I
I went about it al quemtly
But now through dubling of my paine

I see he woll it sell again
And me a newe bargain lere
The which all out the more is dere
For the solace that I haue lorne
Than I had it neuer aforne
Certain I am full like in deede
To him that cast in earth his seede
And hath ioye of the newe springing
When it greneth in the ginning
And is also faire and fresh of floure
Lustie to seen, swote of odoure
But er he it in his sheues shere
May fall a wether that shall it dere
And make it to fade and fall
The stalke, the greine, and floures all
That to the tillers is forlorn
The hope that he had to sone
I drede certain that so fare I
For hope and trauaile sikerly
Been me biraft all with a storme
The floure nill seden of my corne
For Loue hath so auaunced me
When I began my priuitie
To Bialacoil all for to tell
Whom I ne founde froward ne fell
But toke agree all whole my plaie
But Loue is of so harde assaie
That all at ones he reued me
When I went best abouen to haue be
It is of Loue, as of fortune
That chaungeth oft, and nill contune
Which whilom woll of folke smile
And glombe on hem an other while
Now frende, now foe, shait her sele
For a twincling tourneth her whele.
She can writhe her hedde awaie
This is the concourse of her plaie
She can arcise that doeth mourne
And whirle adoune and ouertourne
Who sitteth hiest, but as her lust
A foole is he that woll her trust
For it is I that am come doune
Through charge and reuolucioun
Sithe Bialacoil mote fro me twin
Shette in her prison ponde within
His absence at mine harte I fele
For all my ioye and all mine hele
Was in him, and in the Rose
That but you woll, which him doeth close
Open, that I may him see
Loue woll not that I cured be
Of the paines that I endure
Nor of my cruell auenture.

AH, Bialacoil mine owne dere
Though thou be now a prisonere
Kepe at least thine harte to me
And suffer not that it daunted be
Ne let not ielousie in his rage
Putten thine harte in no seruage
Although he chastice thee without
And make thy bodie vnto him lout
Haue harte as hard as Diamaunt
Stedfast, and naught pliaunt
In prison though thy bodie be
At large kepe thine heart free
A true harte will not plie
For no manace that it may drie
If ielousie doth thee pain
Quite him his while thus again
To venge thee at least in thought
If other waie thou maiest nought
And in this wise subtelly
Worche, and winne the maistrie
But yet I am in great affraye
Least thou doe nat as I saie
I drede thou canst me great maugre
That thou emprisoned art for me
But that not for my trespace
For through me neuer discouered was
Yet thing, that ought be secre
Well more annoie is in me
Than is in thee of this mischaunce
For I endure more hard penaunce
That for the sorowe almost I sinke
When I remember me of my wo
Full nigh out of my witte I go.
Inward mine harte I feele blede
For comfortlesse the death I drede
Owe I nat well to haue distresse
When false, through her wickednesse
And traitours that arne enuious
To noyen me, be so corragious.
Ah, Bialacoil full well I see
That they hem shape to deceiue thee
To make thee buxum to her lawe
And with her cord thee to drawe
Where so hem lust, right at her will
I dread they haue thee brought there till
Without comfort, thought me slaeth
This game would bring me to my death
For if your good will I lese
I mote be dedde I may not chese
And if that thou forsete me
Mine harte shall neuer in liking be
Nor els where finde solace
If I be put out of your grace
As it shall neuer been I hope

Than should I fall in wanhope
Alas, in wanhope: nay parde
For I woll neuer dispeired be
If hope me faile, than am I
Ungracious and vnworthy
In hope I woll comforted be
For Loue, whan he betaught her me
Saied, that Hope where so I go
Should aie be releef to my wo.
But what and she my bales bete
And be to me curteis and swete
She is in nothing full certain
Louers she put in full great pain
And maketh hem with wo to dele
Her faire beheste deceiueth fele
For she woll behote sikerly
And failen after vtterly.
Ah, that is a full noyous thing
For many a louer in louing
Hangeth vpon her, and trusteth fast
Which lese her trauaile at the last.
Of thing to commen she wote right nought
Therefore if it be wisely sought
Her counsaile Folie is to take
For many times, whan she woll make
A full good silogisme, I drede
That afterward there shall in dede
Folow an euill conclusion
This put me in confusion
For many times I haue it seen
That many haue begyled been
For trust that they haue set in hope
Which fell hem afterward a slope.

BVt natheleste yet gladly she would
That he that woll him with her hold
Had all times her purpose clere
Without deceipt or any where
That she desireth sikerly
Whan I her blamed I did foly
But what auaileth her good will
Whan she ne may staunche my stound ill
That helpeth little that she maie doe
Out take beheste vnto my wo
And heste certain in no wise
Without yefte is not to prise.

Whan heste and deede a sonder vary
They doen a great contrary
Thus am I posted vp and doune
With dole, thought, and confusioune
Of my disease there is no nomber
Daunger and Shame me encomber
Drede also, and Jelosie
And wicked Tong full of enuie
Of which the sharpe and cruell yre
Full oft me put in great martire
They haue my ioy fully let
Sith Bialacoil they haue beshet
Fro me in prison wickedly
Whom I loue so entierly
That it woll my bane be
But I the sooner may him see.
And yet more ouer worst of all
There is set to kepe, foule her befall
A Rimpled becke ferre ronne in rage
Frouning and yelowe in her visage
Which in awaite lyeth day and night
That none of hem may haue a sight.

NOw mote my sorowe enforced be
Full sothe it is that Loue yaf me
Three wonder yeftes of his grace
Which I haue lorne now in this place
Sith they ne may without drede
Helpen but little who taketh hede
For here auaileth no Swete thought
And swete Speache helpeth right nought
The third was called swete Loking
That now is lorne without lesing.

Yeftes were faire, but nat for thy
They helpe me but simply
But Bialacoil looked be
To gone at large and to be free
For hym my life lyeth all in dout
But if he come the rather out.
Alas I trowe it woll nat been
For how should I euermore him seen?
He may nat out and that is wrong
Because the toure is so strong
How should he out or by whose prowesse
Of so strong a forteresse?
By me certain it nill be doe
God wotte I haue no witte thereto
But well I wote I was in rage
Whan I to Loue did homage
Who was the cause (in sothfastnesse)
But her selfe dame Idelnesse?
Which me conueide through faire praiere
To enter into that faire vergere
She was to blame me to leue
The which now doeth me sore greue
A fooles worde is nought to trowe
Ne worth an apple for to lowe
Men should hem snubbe bitterlie
At prime temps of his folie
I was a foole, and she me leued
Through whom I am right nought releued
She accomplished all my will

That

That now me greueth wonder ill.

REason me saied what should fall
A foole my self I may well call
That loue aside I had not laied
And trowed that Dame Reason saied
Reason had both skill and right
Whan she me blamed with all her might
To medle of Loue, that hath me shent
But certain now I woll repent.

AND should I repent? Nay parde
A false traitour, than should I be
The deuils engins would me take
If I my loue would forsake
Or Bialacoil falsly betray
Should I at mischiefe hate him? nay
Sith he now for his curtesie
Is in prison of Ielousie
Curtesie certain did he me
So moch, that it may not yolden be
Whan he the hay passen me lete
To kisse the Rose, faire and swete
Should I therefore corse him maugre
Nay certainly, it shall nat be
For Loue shall neuer yeue good will
Here of me, through word or will
Offence or complaint more or lesse
Neither of Hope nor Idlenesse
For certes it were wrong that I
Hated hem for her curtesie
There is not els, but suffre and thinke
And waken whan I should winke
Abide in hope, till loue through chaunce
Send me soccour or allegeaunce
Expectaunt aie till I may mete
To getten mercy of that swete.

Whilom I thinke how Loue to me
Saied he would take at gre
My seruice, if vnpacience
Caused me to doen offence
He saied, in thanke I shall it take
And high maister ere thee make
If wickednesse ne reue it thee
But sone I trow that shall nat bee
These were his words by and by
It semed he loued me truely.
Now is there not but serue him wele
If that I thinke his thanke to fele
My good mine harme, lithe hole in me
In Loue may no defaut be
For true Loue ne failed neuer man
Sothly the faut mote nedes than
As God forbide, be found in me
And how it cometh, I can not se
Now let it gone as it may go
Whether Loue woll socour me or slo
He may do hole on me his will
I am so sore bound him till
From his seruice I may not flene
For life and death withouten wene
Is in his hand, I may nat chese
He may me do both winne and lese
And sith so sore he doeth me greue
Yet if my lust he would acheue
To Bialacoil goodly to be
I yeue no force what fell on me
For though I die, as I mote nede
I pray Loue of his goodlihede
To Bialacoil doe gentilnesse
For whom I liue in soch distresse
That I mote dien for penaunce
But first, without repentaunce
I woll me confesse in good entent
And make in hast my Testament
As louers doen that felen smart
To Bialacoil leaue I mine hart
All hole, without departing
Or doublenesse of repenting

Coment Raison vient a Lamant.

THus as I made my passage
In compleint, and in crucil rage
And I not where to find a lech
That couth vnto mine helping ech
Sodainly again comen dcun
Out of her toure I saw Reasoun
Discrete and wise, and full pleasaunt
And of her port full auenaunt
The right way she toke to me
Which stode in great perplexite
That was polsed in euery side
That I nist where I might abide
Till she demurely sadde of chere
Saied to me as she came nere.
Mine owne frend, art thou greued
How is this quarell yet atcheued
Of loues side? Anone tell me
Hast thou not yet of Loue thy fill?
Art thou nat wery of thy seruice?
That thee hath in soch wise.
What ioy hast thou in thy louing?
Is it sote or bitter thing
Canst thou yet chese, let me se
What best thy succour might be.

Thou seruest a full noble Lord
That maketh thee thrall for thy reward

Which

Which aie reneweth thy tourment
With foly so he hath thee blent
Thou fell in mischief thilke day
Whan thou diddest the soth to say
Obeisaunce and eke homage
Thou wroughtest nothing as the sage
Whan thou became his liege man
Thou diddest a great foly than
Thou wistest nat what fell therto
With what Lord thou haddest to do
If thou haddest him well knowe
Thou haddest nought be brought so lowe
For if thou wist what it were
Thou noldest serue him halfe a yere
Nat a weke, nor halfe a day
Ne yet an houre without delay
Ne neuer I loued paramours
His Lordship is so full of shours
Knowest him ought?
Lamaunt. Ye dame parde
Raison. Nay nay Lamaunt, yes I
Raison. Wherefore let se
Lamaunt. Of that he saied I should be
Glad to haue such Lord as (he)
And maister of soch seignorie
Raison. Knowest him no more?
Lamaunt. Nay certes I
Say that he yafe me rules there
And went his way, I nist where
And I abode bound in balaunce
Lo, there a noble cognisaunce.

¶ Raison.

BUt I woll that thou know him now
Ginning and end, sith that thou
Art so anguilous and mate
Disfigured out of astate
There may no wretch haue more of woe
Ne caitife none enduren so
It were to euery man sitting
Of his Lord haue knowleging
For if thou knew him out of dout
Lightly thou shouldest scapen out
Of thy prison that marreth thee.

Lamaunt.

HE dame sith my Lord is he
And I his man made with mine hond
I would right faine vnderstond
To know of what kind he be
If any would enforme me.

¶ Raison.

I Would (saied Reason) thee lere
Sith thou to learne hast soch desire
And shew thee without en fable
A thing that is not demonstrable
Thou shalt without en science
And know without en experience
The thing that may not knowen be
Ne wist ne shewed in no degre
Thou maiest the soth of it not witten
Though in thee it were written
Thou shalt nat know thereof more
While thou art ruled by his lore
But vnto him that loue woll flie
The knotte may vnclosed be
Which hath to thee, as it is found
So long to knitte and not vnbound
Now let well thine entencion
To heare of Loue the discripcion.

LOue it is an hatefull pees
A free acquitaunce without relees
And thrugh the fret full of falshede
A sikernesse all set in drede
In hart is a dispeiring hope
And full of hope it is wanhope
Wise woodnesse, and void Reason
I swete perill in to drein
An heauy burthen light to beare
A wicked wawe away to weare
It is Caribdes perilous
Disagreable and gracious
It is discordaunce that can acord
And accordaunce to discord
It is conning without science
Wisedome without sapience
Witte without discrecion
Hauoire without possession
It is like heale and hole sickenesse
A trust droumed and dronkenesse
And heaith full of malady
And Charite full of enuy
And angre full of aboundaunce
And a gredy sufficiaunce
Delite right full of heuinesse
And dreried full of gladnesse
Bitter swetenesse and swete errour
Right euill sauoured good sauour
Sen that pardone hath withinne
And pardone spotted without sinne
A paine also it is ioious
And felony right pi ous
Also play that seld is stable
And stedfast right meuable
A strength wicked to stond vpright
And feblenesse full of might

wittes

Witte vnauised, sage folie
And ioy full of tourmentrie
Alaughter it is weping aie
Rest that trauaileth night and daie
Also a swete hell it is
And a sorowfull Paradis
A pleasaunt gaile and easie prisoun
And full of Frost Somer seasoun
Prime temps full of Frostes white
And Maie deuoide of all delite
With leer braunches blossoms vngrene
And new fruite filled with Winter tene
It is a flowe may nat forbeare
Ragges ribaned with gold to weare
For also well woll loue be sette
Under ragges as riche rotchette
And eke as well by amorettes
In mourning black, as bright burnettes
For none is of so mokell prise
Ne no man founden so wise
Ne none so high is of parage
Ne no man found of witte so sage
No man so hardie ne so wight
Ne no man of so mokell might
None so fulfilled of bountie
That he with Loue may daunted be
All the world holdeth this waie
Loue maketh all to gone miswaie
But it be they of euill life
Whom Genius curseth man and wife
That wrongly werke again nature
None such I loue, ne haue no cure
Of such as loues seruaunts been
And woll nat by my counsaile fleen
For I ne praise that louing
Where through men at the last ending
Shall call hem wretches full of wo
Loue greueth hem and shendeth so
But if thou wolt well loue eschewe
For to escape out of his mewe
And make all whole thy sorowe to slake
No better counsaile maiest thou take
Than thinke to fleen well ywis
May nought helpe els, for wit thou this
If thou flie it, it shall flie thee
Folowe it, and folowen shall it thee.

Lamaunt.

WHan I had heard all Reason sain
Which had spilt her speache in vain
Dame (saied I) I dare well saie
Of this aua unt me well I maie
That from your schole so deuiaunt
I am, that neuer the more auaunt
Right nought am I through your doctrine,
I dull vnder your discipline
I wot no more than wilke euer
To me so contrarie and so fer
Is euery thing that ye me lere
And yet I can it all by parteere
Mine harte forgeteth thereof right nought
It is so written in my thought
And depe grauen it is so tender
That all mine harte I can it render
And rede it ouer communely
But to my selfe lewdest am I.

BUt sithe ye Loue diseriuen so
And lacke and preise it bothe two
Defineth it into this letter
That I may thinke on it the better
For I heard neuer diffined here
And wilfully I would it lere
If loue be searched well and sought
It is a sickenesse of the thought
Annexed and knedde betwixt tweine
With male and female with o cheine
So frelie that bindeth, that they nill twinne
Whether so thereof they lese or winne
The roote springeth through hote brenning
In to disordinate desiring
For to kissen and embrace
And at her lust them to solace
Of other thing loue retcheth nought
But setteth her harte and all her thought
More for delectacioun
Than any procreacioun
Of other fruite by engendrure
Which loue to God is nat pleasure
For of her bodie fruite to get
They yeue no force, they are so set
Upon delite to plaie in fere
And some haue also this manere
To fainen hem for Loue seke
Such loue I preise not at a leke
For paramours they doe but faine
To loue truely they disdaine
They falsen ladies traitourlly
And swerne hem othes vtterly
With many a leasing, and many a fable
And all they finden disceuable.
And whan they han her lust getten
The hote ernes they all forgetten
Women the harme bien full sore
But men this thinken euermore
That lasse harme is, so mote I thee
Disceiue them, than disceiued be
And namely where they ne maie
Finde none other meane waie
For I wote well in sothfastnesse

That

That what doeth now his busmesse
With any woman for to dele
For any lust that he may fele
But if it be for engendrure
He doeth trespas I you enlure
For he should letten all his will
To getten a likely thing him till
And to sustain, if he might
And kepe forth by kindes right
His owne likenesse and semblable
For because all is corrumpable
And faile should succession
Ne were their generation
Our sectes sterne for to saue
Whan father or mother arne in graue
Her children should, whan they been dede
Ful diligent been in her stede
To vse that warke on such a wise
That one may through an other rise
Therefore set kinde therein delite
For men therein should hem delite
And of that deede be not erke
But oft sithes haunt that werke
For none would drawe therof a draught
Ne were delite, which hath him caught
This had subtill dame Nature
For none goeth right I thee enlure
Ne hath entent hoole ne parfite
For her desire is for delite
The which forfened creake, and eke
The plaie of Loue, for oft seke
And thrall hem selfe they be so nice
Unto the Prince of euery vice
For of eche sinne it is the roote
Unlefull lust, though it be soote
And of all euill the racine
As Tullius can determine
Which in his time was full sage
In a booke he made of age
Where that more he prayseth elde
Though he be croked and vnwelde
And more of commendation
Than youth in his description
For youth set both man and wife
In all parell of soule and life
And parell is, but men haue grace
The parell of youth for to pace
Without any death or distresse
It is so full of wildnesse
So oft it doeth shame and domage
To him or to his linage
It leadeth man, now vp now doun
In mokell dissolucioun
And maketh him loue euill companie
And lede his life disrulilie
And halte him paied with none estate
Within himselfe is such debate
He chaunged purpose and entent
And yalte in to some couent
To liuen after her empryse
And leseth fredome and fraunchise
That nature in him had set
The which again he may not get
If he there make his mansion
For to abide profession
Though for a time his harte absent
It may not faile, he shall repent
And eke abide thilke date
To leaue his abite, and gone his waie
And leaseth his worship and his name
And dare not come againe for shame
But all his life he doeth so mourne
Because he dare not home retourne
Fredome of kinde so lost hath he
That neuer may recured be
But that if God him graunt grace
That he may, er he hence pace
Contein vnder obedience
Through the vertue of pacience
For youth set man in all folie
In vnthrift and in ribaudrie
In lecherie, and in outrage
So oft it chaungeth of corage
Youth ginneth oft such bargain
That may not ende without pain
In great parell is set youth hede
Delite so doth his brydell lede
Delite this hangeth, drede thee nought
Both mannes bodie and his thought
Onely through youthes chambere
That to doen euill is customere
And of naught els taketh hede
But onely folkes for to lede
Into disport and wildenesse
So is froward from sadnesse
But elde draweth hem therfro
Who wote it not, he may well go
And mo of hem, that now arne old
That whilom youth had in hold
Which yet remembreth of tender age
How it him brought in many a rage
And many a folie therin wrought
But now that elde hath him through sought
They repent hem of her folie
That youth hem put in ieopardie
In parell and in much wo
And made hem oft amisse to doe
And sewen euill companie
Riot and aduoutrie.

But

BVt eld gan againe restraine
From such foly, and refraine
And set men by her ordinaunce
In good rule and gouernaunce
But euil she spendeth her seruise
For no man wol her loue, neither preise
She is hated, this wote I wele
Her acqueintaunce would no man fele
Ne han of eld company
Men hate to be of her aly
For no man wold becomen old
Ne die, whan he is yong and bold
And elde maruaileth right greatly
Whan they remembre hem inwardly
Of many a perillous empryse
Which that they wrought in sondry wise
How euer they might without blame
Escape away without shame
In youth without domage
Or repryse of her linage
Losse of membre, sheding of blood
Parel of death, or losse of good
Wost thou nat where youth abit
That men so preisen in her wit,
With Delite she halt soioure
For both they dwellen in o toure
As long as youth is in season
They dwellen in one mansion
Delite of youth woll haue seruice
To do what so he woll deuise
And youth is redy euermore
For to obey for fnert of lore
Unto Delite, and him to pene
Her seruice, while that she may line.

Where elde abitte, I wol the tell
Shortly, and no while dwell
For thider behoueth the to go
Yf death in youth the not slo
Of this iourney thou maist not faile
With her labour and trauaile
Lodged ben with sorow and wo
That neuer out of her court go
Paine and distresse, sickenesse, and ire
And melancoly that angry sire
Ben of her paleis senatours
Groning and gruchyng, her herbegeours
The day and night her to tourment
With cruell death they her present
And tellen her erlich and late
That death stondeth armed at her gate
Than bring they to her remembraunce
The foly dedes of her enfaunce
Which causen her to mourne in wo
That youth hath her begiled so
Which sodainly away is hasted
She weped the time that she hath wasted
Complaining of the preteritte
And the present, that nat abitte
And of her old vanite
That but afore her she may se
In the future some socour
To leggen her of her dolour
To graunt her time of repentaunce
For her sinnes to do penaunce
And at the last so her gouerne
To winne the ioy that is eterne
Fro which go backward youth he made
In vanite to drowne and wade
For present time abideth nought
It is more swift than any thought
So litell while it doth endure
That there nis compte ne measure
But how that euer the game go
Who list to loue ioy and murth allo
Of loue, be it he or she
Hie or lowe who it be
In trute they should hem delite
Her part they may not els quite
To saue hem selfe in honeste
And yet ful many one I se
Of women, sothly for to saine
That desire, and would faine
The play of Loue, they be so wild
And not coueite to go with child
And if with child they be perchaunce
They wol it hold a great mischaunce
But what so euer wo they fele
They wol not plaine, but counsele
But if it be any foole or nice
In whom that shame hath no iustice
For to Delite echone they draw
That haunt this worke both hie and law
Saue such that arne worthy right nought
That for money wol be bought
Such loue I preise in no wise
Whan it is giuen for couetise
I preise no woman, though so be wood
That yeueth her selfe for any good
For litell should a man telle
Of her, that wil her body selle
Be she maid, be she wife
That quicke wol selle her by her life
How faire chere that euer she make
He is a wretch I vndertake
That loued such one, for sweet or sour
Though she him called paramour
And laugheth on him, and maketh him feest
And certainly no such beest
To be loued is nat worthy

Or beare the name of Dzury
None should her please, but he wer wood
That wol dispoile him of his good
Yet natheless I wol not say
That she for solace and for play
Way a Jewel or other thing
Take of her loues free yeuing
But that she aske it in no wise
For dzede of shame, or couetise
And she of hers may him certaine
Without sclaunder yeuen againe
And ioyne her herts togider so
In loue, and take and yeue also
Trow nat that I woll hem twinne
Whan in her loue there is no sinne
I wol that they togider go
And done all that they han ado
As curtes should and debonaire
And in her loue beren hem faire
Without vice, both he and she
So that alway in honeste
Fro folily loue to kepe hem clere
That byenneth herts with his fere
And that her loue in any wise
Be deuoid of couetise
Good loue should engendzed be
Of trew hert, iust and seere
And not of such as set her thought
To haue her lust, and els nought
So are they caught in loues lace
Trewly for bodily solace
Fleshly delite is so present
With the, that set all thine entent
Without more, what should I glose
For to get and haue the Rose
Which maketh the so mate and wood
That thou desirest none other good
But thou art not an inch the nerre
But euer abidest in sorow and werre
As in thy face it is seene
It maketh the both pale and leene
Thy might, thy vertue goth away
A sory gest in good fay
Thou herborest in thine inne
The God of Loue whan thou let inne
Wherefore I rede thou shette him out
Or he shal greue the out of dout
For to thy profite it wol turne
If he no more with the sojourne
In great mischefe and sorow sonken
Ben herts, that of Loue arne dronken
As thou peraventure knowen shall
Whan thou hast lost the time all
And spent thy thought in idelnesse
In wast, and woful lustinesse

If thou maist liue the time to se
Of loue for to deliuered be
Thy time thou shalt bewepe sore
The which neuer thou maist restore
For time lost, as men may se
For nothing may recouered be
And if thou scape, yet at last
Fro loue that hath the so fast
Knitte and bounden in his lacs
Certaine I hold it but a grace
For many one as it is seene
Haue lost, and spent also in veine
In his seruice without socour
Body and soule, good, and treasour
Witte, and strength, and eke richesse
Of which they had neuer redzesse.

¶ Lamant.

Thus taught and pzeched hath Reson
But Loue spilt her sermon
That was so imped in my thought
That her doctrine I set at nought
And yet ne said she neuer a dele
That I ne vnderstode it wele
Word by word the mater all
But vnto Loue I was so thrall
Which calleth ouer all his praie
He chaseth so my thought aie
And holdeth mine hert vnder his sele
As trusty and trew as any stele
So that no deuocion
Ne had I in the Sermon
Of dame Reson, ne of her rede
I toke no solour in mine hede
For all yede out at one ere
That in that other she did lere
Fully on me she lost her loze
Her spech me greued wonder sore.

That vnto her for ire I said
For anger, as I did abzaid,
Dame, and is it your will algate
That I not Loue, but that I hate
All men, as ye me tech
For if I do after your spech
Sith that you seme Loue is not good
Than must I nedes say with mood
If I it leue, in hatred aie
Liuen, and void Loue awaie
From me a sinful wzetch
Hated of al that fetch
I may not go none other gate
For either must I loue or hate
And if I hate men of new

More

More than Loue, it woll me rew
As by your preching ſemeth me
For Loue nothing ne praiſeth the
Ye yeue good counſaile ſikerly
That prechcth me al day, that I
Should not loues lore alow
He were a foole would you not trow
In ſpech alſo ye han me taught
Another loue that knowen is naught
Which I haue herd you not repreue
To loue ech other by your leue
If ye would diffine it me
I would gladly here to ſe
At the leeſt if I may lere
Of ſondry loues the manere.

¶ Raiſon.

CErtes frend, a foole art thou
Whan that thou nothing woit alow
That I for thy profite ſay
Yet woll I ſay the more in fay
For I am redy at the leeſt
To accomplish thy requeſt
But I not where it wol auaile
In vaine parauenture I ſhal trauaile
Loue there is in ſondry wiſe
As I ſhal the here deuiſe
For ſome loue leful is and good
I meane not that which maketh the wood
And bringeth the in many a fitte
And rauiſheth fro the all thy witte
It is ſo marueilous and queint
With ſuch loue be no more aqueint.

¶ Coment Raiſon diffiniſt Amour etc.

LOue of frendſhippe alſo there is
Which maketh no man don a miſ
Of wil knitte betwixt two
That wol not breke for wele ne wo
Which long is likely to contune
Whan wil and goods ben in commune
Grounded by Goddes ordinaunce
Hoole without diſcordaunce
With hem holding communete
Of al her good in charite
That there be none exceptioun
Through chaunging of entencioun
That ech helpe other at her nede
And wiſely hele both word and dede
Trew of meaning, deuoid of flouth
For wit is nought without trouth
So that the tone dare all his thought
Saine to his frend, and ſpare nought
As to him ſelfe without dreding
To be diſcouered by wreying
For glad is that coniunctioun
Whan there is none ſuſpeccioun
Whom they would proue
That trew and perfite weren in Loue
For no man may be amiable
But if he be ſo ferme and ſtable
That fortune chaunge him not ne blind
But that his frend alway him find
Both pore and rich in o ſtate
For if his frend through any gate
Wol complaine of his pouerte
He ſhould not bide ſo long, til he
Of his helping him requre
For good dede done through praiere
Is ſold and bought to dere iwis
To hart that of great valure is
For hart fulfilled of gentilneſſe
Can euill demeane his diſtreſſe
And man that worthy is of name
To aſken often hath great ſhame
A good man brenneth in his thought
For ſhame whan he aſketh ought
He hath great thought, and dredeth aie
For his diſeaſe whan he ſhall pray
His frend, leſt that he warned be
Till that he preue his ſtabilite
But whan that he hath founden one
That truſty is and trew as ſtone
And aſſaied him at all
And found him ſtedfaſt as a wall
And of his frendſhippe be certaine
He ſhal him ſhew, both ioy and paine
And all that dare thinke or ſay
Without ſhame, as he well may
For how ſhould he aſhamed be
Of ſuch one as I told the
For whan he wot his ſecret thought
The third ſhall know therof right nought
For twey in nombre is bet than thre
In euery counſaile and ſecree
Repreue he dredeth neuer a dele
Who that beſet his words wele
For euery wiſe man out of drede
Can kepe his tong till he ſe nede
And fooles can not hold her tong
A fooles belle is ſoone rong
Yet ſhall a trew frend do more
To helpe his felow of his ſore
And ſocour him whan he hath nede
In all that he may done in dede
And gladder that he him pleaſeth
Than his felow that he eaſeth

And if he do nat his requeſt
He ſhal as much him moleſt
As his felow, for that he
May not fulfill his volunte
Fully, as he hath required
If both the herts loue hath fired
Joy and wo they ſhal depart
And take euenly ech his part
Halfe his anoy he ſhal haue aie
And comfort what that he may
And of his bliſſe part ſhal he
If Loue woll departed be.

AND whilom of this vnite
Spake Tullius in a dite
And ſhould maken his requeſt
Unto his frend, that is honeſt
And he goodly ſhould it fulfill
But if the more were out of ſkill
And otherwiſe not graunt therto
Except only in cauſes two
Yf men his frend to deth would dryue
Let him be buſy to ſaue his liue
Alſo if men wollen hem aſſaile
Of his worſhip to make him faile
And hyndren him of his renoun
Let him with ful entencioun
His deuer done in ech degre
That his frend ne ſhamed be
In this two caſe with his might
Taking no kepe to ſkill nor right
As ferre as Loue may him excuſe
This ought no man to refuſe
This Loue that I haue told to the
Is nothing contrary to me
This wol I that thou folow wele
And leue the tother euery dele
This Loue to vertue all entendeth
The tother fooles bient and ſhendeth.

An other Loue alſo there is
That is contrary vnto this
Which delire is ſo conſtrained
That is but wil fained
Away fro trouth it doth ſo vary
That to good Loue it is contrary
For it mayneth in many wiſe
Sike herts with couetiſe
All in winning and in profite
Such loue ſetteth his delite
This loue ſo hangeth in balaunce
That if it leſe his hope parchaunce
Of lucre, that he is ſet vpon
It wol faile, and quench anon
For no man may be amorous
Ne in his louing vertuous
But he loue more in mood
Men for hem ſelfe, than for her good
For loue that profite doth abide
Is falſe, and bideth not in no tide
Loue cometh of dame Fortune
That litel while woll contune
For it ſhal chaungen wonders ſoone
And take Eclips as the Moone
Whan he is from vs let
Through earth, that betwixt is ſet
The ſonne and her, as it may fall
Be it in party, or in all
The ſhadow maketh her bemes merke
And her hornes to ſhew derke
That part, where ſhe hath loſt her light
Of Phebus fully, and the ſight
Til whan the ſhadow is ouerpaſt
She is enlumined agein as faſt
Through the brightnes of the ſonne bemes
That yeueth to her againe her lemes
That Loue is right of ſuch nature
Now is faire, and now obſcure
Now bright, now Cliply of manere
And whilom dimme, and whilom clere
As ſoone as pouerte gimmeth take
With mantel and weeds blake
Hideth of Loue the light away
That into night it tourneth day
It may not ſe richeſſe ſhine
Till the blacke ſhadows fine
For whan richeſſe ſhineth bright
Loue recouereth ayen his light
And whan it faileth, he wol flit
And as ſhe greueth, ſo greueth it
Of this Loue here what I ſay
The rich men are loued aie
And namely tho that ſparand bene
That wol not waſh her herts clene
Of the filth, nor of the vice
Of gredy brenning Auarice
The rich man ful fond is iwis
That weneth that he loued is
If that his hert it vnderſtood
It is not he, it is his good
He may wel weten in his thought
His good is loued, and he right nought
For if he be a nigard eke
Men wol not ſet by him a leke
But haten him, this is the ſoth
Lo what profite his catel doth
Of euery man that may him ſe
It getteth him nought but enmite
But he amend him ſelfe of that vice
And know him ſelfe, he is not wiſe

Certes

Certes he should me frendly be
To get him loue also ben fre
Or els he is not wise ne sage
No more than is a gote ramage
That he not loueth his dede proueth
Whan he his richesse so well loueth
That he wol hide it aie and spare
His pore frends sene forfare
To kepen aie his purpose
Till for drede his eien close
And til a wicked death him take
Him had leuer a sondre shake
And let all his limmes a sondre rive
Than leaue his richesse in his liue
He thinketh to part it with no man
Certain no loue is in him than
How should loue within him be
Whan in his hert is no pite
That he trespaseth well I wate
For ech man knoweth his estate
For wel him ought to be repproued
That loueth nought, ne is not loued
But sith we arne to fortune comen
And hath our sermon of her nomen
A wonder will I tell thee now
Thou herdest neuer such one I trow
I not where thou me leuen shall
Though lothfalnesse it be all
As it is witten, and is soth
That vnto men more profite doth
The froward fortune and contraire
Than the swote and debonaire
And if the thinke it is doutable
It is through argument proumble
For the debonaire and soft
Falseth and begileth oft
For lich a mother she can cherish
And milken as doth a norice
And of her good to him deles
And geueth him part of her iowels
With great riches and dignite
And hem she hoteth stabilite
In a state that is not stable
But chaunging aie and variable
And fedeth him with glory veine
And wordely blisse none certeine
Whan she him serueth on her whele
Than wene they to be right wele
And in so stable state withall
That neuer they wene for to fall
And whan they sette so high to be
They wene to haue in certainte
Of hertly frends to great nombre
That nothing might her state encombre
They trust hem so on euery side
Wening with him they would abide
In euery peril and mischaunce
Without chaunge or variaunce
Both of catel and of good
And also for to spend her blood
And all her membres for to spill
Onely to fulfill her will
They maken it whole in many wise
And hoten hem her full seruise
How sore that it do hem smert
Into her very naked shert
Hert and al so hole they yeue
For the time that they may liue
So that with her flatery
They maken fooles glorify
Of her words speking
And han chere of a reioysing
And trow hem as the Euangile
And it is al falshede and gile
As they shal afterwardes
Whan they arne fal in pouerte
And ben of good and catel bare
Than shul they sene who frendes ware
For of an hundred certainly
Nor of a thousand ful scarcely
Ne shal they find vnnethes one
Whan pouerte is comen vpon
For thus Fortune that I of tell
With men whan her lust to dwell
Maketh hem to lese her countaunce
And norisheth hem in ignoraunce.

But froward Fortune and peruerse
Whan high estates she doth reuerse
And maketh hem to toumble doune
Of her whele with sodaine tourne
And from her richesse doth hem flie
And plongeth hem in pouerte
As a stepmother enuious
And laieth a plaister dolorous
Unto her hertes wounded egre
Which is not tempered with vinegre
But with pouerte and indigence
For to shew by experience
That she is Fortune verely
In whom no man should affy
Nor in her yefts haue flaunce
She is so ful of variaunce
Thus can she maken hie and low
Whan they from richesse arne throw
Fully to knowen without were
Frend of affect, and frend of chere
And which in loue weren trew and stable
And which also weren variable
After Fortune her goddesse

In powerte, either in richesse
For all that yeueth here out of drede
Unhappe bereaueth it in dede
For in Fortune lette not one
Of frendes, whan fortune is gone
I meane tho frendes that woll flie
Anon as entreth powerte
And yet they woll not leaue hem so
But in ech place where they go
They call hem wretch, scorne, and blame
And of her mishappe hem diffame
And namely such as in richesse
Pretendeth most of stablenesse
Whan that they saw him set on loft
And weren of hem sucoured oft
And most yholpe in all her nede
But now they take no maner hede
But seine in voice of flatery
That now appereth her foly
Ouer all wher so they fare
And sing, go farewel feld fare
All such frends I beshrew
For of trew there be to few
But sothfast frends, what so betide
In euery fortune wollen abide
They han her herts in such noblesse
That they will loue for no richesse
Nor for that fortune may hem send
They wollen hem socour and defend
And chaunge for selt ne for sore
For who his frend loueth euermore
Though men draw swerd his to slo
He may not hew her loue a two
But in case that I shall say
For pride and ire lese it he may
And for reproue by nicete
And discouering of priuite
With tong wounding, as felon
Through venemous detraccion
Frend in this case wol gon his way
For nothing greue him more ne may
And for nought els wol he flie
If that he loue in stabilite
And certain he is well begone
Among a thousand that findeth one
For there may be no richesse
Ayenst frendship of worthinesse
For it ne may so high attaine
As may the valour, soth to saine
Of him that loueth trew and well
Frendship is more than is catell
For frend in court aie better is
Than peny in purse certis
And fortune mishaping
Whan vpon men she is fabling
Through mistourning of her chaunce
And cast hem out of balaunce
She maketh through her aduersite
Men full clerely for to se
Him that is frend in existence
From him that is by apparence
For in fortune maketh anone
To know thy frends fro thy fone
By experience right as it is
The which is more to praise iwis
Than in much richesse and tresour
For more depe profite and valour
Pouerty, and such aduersite
Before, than doeth prosperite
For that one yeueth counsaunce
And the tother ignoraunce.
And thus in powerte is in drede
Trouth declared fro falshede
For faint frends it wol declare
And trew also, what way they fare
For whan he was in his richesse
These frends ful of doublenesse
Offred him in many wise
Hert and body, and seruice
What would he the haue you to haue bought
To knowen openly her thought
That he now hath so clerely sene
The falle begiled he should haue bene
And he had than perceiued it
But Richesse nold not let him wit
Wel more auauntage doeth him than
Sith that it maketh him a wise man
The great mischefe that he perceiueth
Than doeth Richesse that him deceiueth
Richesse rich ne maketh nought
Him that on treasour sette his thought
For richesse stont in sufficiaunce
And nothing in haboundaunce
For sufficiaunce all onely
Maketh menne to liue richely.

For he that hath mitches tweine
Ne value in his demeine
Liueth more at ease, and more is rich
Than doeth he that is chich
And in his barne hath soth to saine
An hundred mans of whete graine
Though he be chapman or marchaunt
And haue of Gold many besaunt
For in the getting he hath such wo
And in the keping drede also
And sette euer more his besinesse
For to encrease, and nat to lesse
For to augment and multiply
And though on heapes that lie him by

Yet neuer shall make his richesse
Alleth vnto his gredinesse
But the poore that reccheth nought
Haue of his liuelode in his thought
Which that he getteth with his trauaile
He dredeth nought that it shall faile
Though he haue little worldes good
Meate and drink, and easie food
Upon his trauaile and liuing
And also sufficiaunt clothing
Or if in sickenesse that he fall
And lothe meate and drinke withall
Though he haue not his meate to buye
He shall bethinke him hastely
To put him out of all daungere
That he of meate hath no mistere
Or that he may with little eke
Be founden, while that he is seke
Or that men shull him bernc in hatte
To liue till his sickencsse be paste
To some Maisondewe beside
He cast nought what shall him betide
He thinketh nought that euer he shall
Into any sickenesse fall.

AND though it fall, as it may be
That all be time spare shall he
As mokell as shall to him suffice
While he is sicke in any wise
He doeth for that he woll be
Content with his pouertie
Without nede of any man
So much in little haue he can
He is apaide with his fortune
And for he nill be importune
Unto no wight, ne onerous
Nor of her goodelle couetous
Therefore he spareth, it may well been
His poore estate for to susteen.

OR if him luste not for to spare
But suffreth forth, as nat ne ware
At last it happeneth, as it may
Right vnto his last day
And take the worlde as it would be
For euer in harte thinketh he
The soner that Death him slo
To Paradise the soner go
He shall, there for to liue in blisse
Where that he shall no good misse
Thider he hopeth God shall him sende
After his wretched liues ende
Pythagoras him selfe reherseth
In a booke that the gold verses
Is cleped, for the nobilitie
Of the honorable dite.
Than whan thou goest thy body fro
Free in the aire thou shalt vp go
And leauen all humanitie
And purely liue in deitie
He is a foole withouten were
That troweth haue his countrey here.
In earth is not our countre
That may these clerkes seine and se
In Boere of consolacion
Where it is maked mencion
Of our contre plaine at the eye
By teaching of Philosophie
Where leude men might lere wit
Who so that would translaten it
If he be such that can well liue
After his rent, may him yeue
And not desireth more to haue
Than may fro pouerte him saue
A wise man saied, as we may seen
Is no man wretched, but he it ween
Be he king, knight, or ribaude
And many a ribaude is merie and baude
That swinketh, and bereth both day & night
Many a burthen of great might
The which doeth him lasse offence
For he suffreth in patience
They laugh and daunce, trippe and sing
And laie nought vp for her liuing
But in the Tauerne all dispendeth
The winning that God hem sendeth
Than goeth he fardels for to beare
With as good chere as he did eare
To swinke and trauaile he not faineth
For to robben he disdaineth
But right anon, after his swinke
He goeth to Tauerne for to drinke
All these are rich in haboundaunce
That can thus haue sufficiaunce
Well more than can an vsurere
As God well knoweth, without were
For an vsurere, so God me se
Shall neuer for richesse rich be
But euer more poore and indigent
Scarce and gredy in his entent

For soth it is, whom it displease
There may no marchaunt liue at ease
His hart in such a where is set
That it quicke renneth to get
Ne neuer shall, though he hath getten
Though he haue gold in garners yeten
For to be nedy he dredeth sore
Wherfore to getten more and more
He set his hart and his desire

So hote he brenneth in the fire
Of couetise that maketh him wood
To purchace other mennes good
He vnderfongeth a great paun
That vndertaketh to drinke vp Seine
For the more he drinketh aie
The more he leaueth, the sothe to saie
Thus is thirst of false getting
That laste euer in coueting
And the anguishe and distresse
With the fire of gredinesse
She fighteth with him aie, and striueth
That his hart a sonder riueth
Soch gredinesse him assaileth
That whan he most hath, most he faileth
Philiciens, and Aduocates
Gone right by the same gates
They sel her science for winning
And haunt her craft for great getting
Her winning is of sothe swetenesse
That if a man fall in sickenesse
They are ful glad, for her encrease
For by her will, without lease
Eucrich man should be seke
And though they die, they set nat a Leke
After whan they the gold haue take
Ful little care for hem they make
They would that fowerty were sicke at ones
Ye two hundred, in flesh and bones
And yet two thousand, as I gesse
For to encreasen her richesse
They wol not worchen in no wise
But for lucre and couetise
For Physicke ginneth first by (Phi)
The Physicien also sothly
And sithen it goeth fro sie to sie
To trust on hem it is folie
For they nill in no maner gre
Do right nought for charite
Eke in the same sect are set
All tho that preachen for to get
Worshyps, honour, and richesse
Her hartes arne in great distresse
That folke line not holily
But abouen all specially
Soch as preachen veinglory
And toward God haue no memory.
But forth as Ipocrites trace
And to her soules death purchace
And outward shewing holinesse
Though they be full of cursednesse
Nat lich to the Apostles twelue
They deceiue other and hem selue
Begiled is the giler than
For preaching of a cursed man
Though to other may profite
Himself it auaileth nat a mite
For oft good predicacioun
Cometh of euill entencioun
To him nat vaileth his preaching
All helpe he other with his teaching
For where they good example take
There is he with veinglory shake
But let vs leuen these preachours
And speake of hem that in her tours
Heape vp her gold, and fast shet
And sore thereon their hart set
They neither loue God ne drede
They kepe more than it is nede
And in her bagges sore it bind
Out of the Sunne, and of the wind
They put vp more than nede ware
Whan they seen poore folke forfare
For hungre die, and for cold quake
God can well vengeaunce thereof take
The great mischiues hem assaileth
And thus in gadring aie trauaileth
With much pain they winne richesse
And drede hem holdeth in distresse
To kepe that they gather fast
With sorow they leaue it at the last
With sorow they both die and liue
That vnto richesse her harts yeue
And in defaut of loue it is
As it sheweth full well wis
For if these gredy the soth to saine
Loueden, and were loued againe
And good loue reigned ouer all
Soch wickednesse ne should fall
But he should yeue, that most good had
To hem that weren in nede bestad
And liue without false vsure
For charite ful cleane and pure
If they hem yeue to goodnesse
Defending hem from idelnesse
In all this world than poore none
We should find I trow not one
But chaunged is this world vnstable
For loue is ouer all vendable
We se that no man loueth now
But for winning and for prow
And loue is thralled in seruage
Whan it is sold for auauntage
Yet women will her bodies sell
Soch soules goeth to the deuil of hell.

Whan Loue had told hem his entent
The baronage to counsaile went
In many sentences they fill
And diuersly they saied her will

But

But after discord they accorded
And her accord to Loue recorded
Sir saiden they, we ben at one
By euen accord of euerichone
Out take richesse all onely
That swone hath ful hauteinly
That she the castel nil not assaile
Ne smite a stroke in this battaile
With dart ne mace, speare, ne knife
For man that speaketh, or bereth the life
And blameth your empryse iwis
And from our host departed is
At least way, as in this plite
So hath she this man in dispite
For she saieth he ne loued her neuer
And therefore she woll hate him euer
For he woll gather no tresore
He hath her wrath for euermore
He agilt her neuer in other caas
Lo here all holly his trespaas
She saieth well, that this other day
He asked her leaue to gone the way
That is cleped to moch yeuing
And spake full faire in his praying
But whan he praied her, poore was he
Therfore she warned him the entre
Ne yet is he not thriuen so
That he hath getten a peny or two
That quietly is his owne in hold
Thus hath Richesse vs all told
And whan Richesse vs this recorded
Withouten her we ben acorded.

And we find in our accordaunce
That false Semblant and Abstinaunce
With all the folke of her battaile
Shull at the hinder gate assaile
That Wicked tong hath in keping
With his Normans full of iangling
And with hem Curtesie and Largesse
That shull shew her hardinesse
To the old wife that kept so hard
Faire welcoming within her ward
Than shall Delite and well Heling
Fond, Shame adoune to bring
With all her host early and late
They shull assailen that ilke gate
Against Drede shall Hardinesse
Assaile, and also Sikernesse
With all the folke of her leading
That neuer wist what was fleing.

FRaunchise shall fight and eke Pite
With Daunger full of cruelte
Thus is your host ordained weale
Doune shall the Castell euery deale
If eucrich do his entent
So that Venus be present
Your mother ful of besselage
That can inough of such vsage
Withouten her may no wight spede
This werke, neither for word ne dede
Therfore is good ye for her send
For through her may this worke amend.

LOrdings, my mother the Goddes
That is my Lady, and my maistres
Nis nat all at my willing,
Ne doeth nat all my desiring
Yet can she somtime doen labour
Whan that her list in my socour
As my nede is for to atcheue
But now I thinke her nat to greue
My mother is she, and of childhede
I both worship her, and eke drede
For who that dredeth sire ne dame
Shal it aby in body or name
And natheless, yet connewe
Send after her if nede be
And were she nigh she commen would
I trow that nothing might her hold.

My mother is of great prowesse
She hath tane many a forteresse
That cost hath many a pound er this
There I nas not present iwis
And yet men saicd it was my dede
But I come neuer in that stede
Ne me ne liketh so mote I the
That soch tours ben take with me
For whye? Me thinketh that in no wise
It may be cleped but marchaundise.

GO buy a courser black or white
And pay therfore, than art thou quite
The Marchaunt oweth thee right nought
Ne thou him whan thou it bought
I woll not selling clepe yeuing
For selling asketh no guerdoning
Here lieth no thanke, ne no merite
That one goth from that other all quite
But this selling is not semblable
For whan his horse is in the stable
He may it sell again parde
And winnen on it, such happe may be.
All may the manne nat lese iwis
For at the least the skinne is his
Or els, if it so betide
That he wol kepe his horse to ride
Yet is he Lord aie of his horse

But

But thilke chaffare is well worse
There Venus entremeteth ought
For who so such chaffare hath bought
He shall not worchen so wisely
That he ne shall lese all vtterly
Both his money, and his chaffare
But the seller of the ware
The prise and profite haue shall
Certaine the buyer shall lese all
For he ne can so deare it buie
To haue Lordship, and full maistrie
Ne haue power to make letting
Neither for yefte ne for preaching
That of his chaffare maugre his
An other shall haue as much ywis
If he woll yeue as much as he
Of what countrey so that he be
Or for right nought so happe maie
If he can flatter her to her paie.
Been than such marchaunts wise
No, but fooles in euery wise
When they buy such thing wilfully
There as they lese her good follily
But natheless, this dare I saie
My mother is not wont to paie
For she is neither so foole ne nice
To entremete her of such vice
But trust well, he shall paie all
That repent of his bargaine shall
When pouerte put him in distresse
All were he scholer to Richesse
That is for me in great yerning
When she assenteth to my willing.

But my mother sainte Venus
And by her father Saturnus
That her engendred by his life
But nat vpon his wedded wife
Yet woll I more vnto you swere
To make this thing the surere.
Now by that faith, and that beautie
That I owe to all my brethren free
Of which there nis wight vnder heuin
That can her fathers names neuin
So diuers and so many there be
That with my mother haue be priue
Yet wold I sweare for sikernesse
The Pole of hell to my witnesse
Now drinke I not this yere clarre
If that I lie, or forswore be
For of the Goddes the vsage is
That who so him forsweareth amis
Shall that yere drinke no clarre.
Now haue I swore ynough parde
If I forsweare me than am I lorne
But I woll neuer be forsworne
Sith Richesse hath me failed here
She shall abie that trespas full dere
At least waie but her arme
With sweard, or sparth, or gisarme
For certes sith she loueth not me
Fro thilke time that she may see
The castell and the toure to shake
In some time she shall awake
If I may gripe a riche man
I shall so pull him, if I can
That he shall in a fewe stoundes
Lese all his markes, and his poundes.
I shall him make his pens out sling
But they in his garner spring
Our maidens shall eke plucke him so
That him shall neden fethers mo
And make him sell his londe to spende
But he the bet come him defende.

Poore men han made her Lord of me
Although they nat so mightie be
That they may fede me in delite
I woll not haue hem in dispite
No good man hateth hem, as I gesse
For chinche and feloun is Richesse
That so can chase hem and dispise
And hem defoule in sundrie wise
They louen full dette, so God me spede
Than doeth the riche chinchy grede
And been (in good faith) more stable
And truer, and more seruiable
And therefore it suffiseth me
Her good hart, and her beautie
They han on me set all her thought
And therefore I foryete hem nought.
I woll hem bring in great noblesse
If that I were God of Richesse
As I am God of Loue sothely
Such ruthe vpon her plaint haue I
Therefore I must his succour be
That paineth him to seruen me
For if he deied for loue of this
Than semeth in me no loue there is.

Sir saied they, sothe is euery dele
That ye reherce, and we wote wele
Thilke othe to holde is reasonable
For it is good and couenable
That ye on riche men han swore
For sir, this wote we well before
If riche men doen you homage
That is as fooles doen outrage
But ye shull not forswore be
Ne let therefore to drinke clarrie

Or piment maked fresh and newe
Ladies shull hem such pepir brewe
If that they fall into her laas
That they for wo mowe saine alas
Ladies shullen euer so curteis be
That they shall quite your othe all free.
Ne seketh neuer other vicaire
For they shall speake with him so faire
That ye shall hold you paied full weie
Though ye you medle neuer a deale
Let Ladies worche with her things
They shall hem tell so fele tidings
And moue hem else so many requestes
By flatterie, that not honest is
And thereto yeue hem such thankings
What with kissings, and with talkings
That certes if they trowed be
Shall neuer leaue hem londe ne fee
That it nill as the moeble fare
Of which they first delivered are
Now may you tell vs all your will
And we your hestes shall fulfill.

But false Semblant dare not for drede
Of you sir, medle him of this deede
For he saieth, that ye been his fo
He not, if ye woll worch him wo
Wherfore we praie you all beau fire
That ye forgeue him now your ire
And that he may dwell as your man
With Abstinence his deare lemman
This our accorde and our will now.
Perfey saied Loue, I graunt it you
I woll well holde him for my man
Now let him come, and he forth ran
False Semblant (qd Loue) in this wise
I take thee here to my seruice
That thou our frendes helpe alwaie
And hindereth hem neither night ne daie
But doe thy might hem to releue
And eke our enemies that thou greue
Thine be this might, I graunt it thee
Wy king of baroites shalt thou be
We woll that thou haue such honour
Certain thou art a false traitour
And eke a thiefe, sith thou were borne
A thousand times thou art forsworne
But natheless in our hearing
To put our folke out of doubting
I bidde thee teache hem, wost thou how
By some generall signe now
In what place thou shalt founden be
If that men had muster of thee
And how men shall thee best espie
For thee to knowe is great maistrie
Tell in what place is thine haunting.
Sir I haue full diuers wonning
That I kepe not rehearsed be
So that ye would respiten me
For if that I tell you the sothe
I may haue harme and shame bothe
If that my felowes wisten it
Wy tales shoulden me be quit
For certain they would hate me
If euer I knewe her cruelte
For they would ouer all holde hem still
Of trothe, that is againe her will
Such tales kepen they not here
I might eftsone buy it full dere
If I saied of hem any thing
That ought displeaseth to her hearing
For what worde that hem pricketh or biteth
In that worde none of hem deliteth
All were it Gospell the Euangile
That would reproue hem of her gile
For they are cruell and hautain
And this thing wote I well certain
If I speake ought to paire or loos
Your court shall not so well be cloos
That they ne shall write it at last
Of good men am I nought agast
For they woll taken on hem nothing
When that they know all my meaning
But he that woll it on him take
He woll himselfe suspicious make
That he his life let couertly
In gyle and in Hypocrisie
That me engendred and yaue foistring
They made a full good engendring
(qd Loue) for who so sothly tell
They engendred the diuell of hell.

But nedely, how so euer it be
(qd Loue) I will and charge thee
To tell anon thy wonning places
Hearing eche wight that in this place is
And what life thou liuest also
Hide it no lenger nowe, wherefore
Thou must discouer all thy worching
How thou seruest, and of what thing
Though that thou shouldest for thy soth saw
Been alto beaten and to drawe
And yet art thou not wont parde
But natheless, though thou beaten be
Thou shalt not be the first that so
Hath for sothsawe suffred wo.

Sir, sith that it may liken you
Though that I should be slaine right now
I shall doen your commaundement

For

For thereto haue I great talent.

Withouten wordes mo, right than
False Semblant his sermon began
And saied hem thus in audience.
Barons, take heede of my sentence
That wight that list to haue knowing
Of false Semblant, full of flattering
He must in worldly folke him seke
And certes in the Cloisters eke
I won no where, but in hem twaie
But not like euen, sothe to saie
Shortly I woll herberowe me
There I hope best to hulstred be
And certainly, sikerest hyding
Is vndernethy humblest clothing.
Religious folke been full couert
Seculer folke been more appert
But natheless, I woll not blame
Religious folke, ne hem diffame
In what habite that euer they go
Religion humble, and true also
Woll I not blame, ne dispise
But I nill loue it in no wise
I meane of false religious
That stout been, and malicious
That wollen in an habite go
And letten not her harte thereto.

REligious folke been all pitous
Thou shalt not seen one dispitous
They louen no pride, ne no strife
But humbly they woll lede her life
With which folke woll I neuer be
And if I dwell, I faine me
I may well in her habite go
But me were leuer my necke a two
Than let a purpose that I take
What couenaunt that euer I make
I dwell with hem that proude be
And full of wiles and subtelte
That worship of this worlde coueiten
And great nede commen expleiten
And gon and gaderen great pitaunces
And purchase hem the acqueintaunces
Of men that mightie like may leden
And faine hem poore, and hem selfe feden
With good morcels delicious
And drinken good wine precious
And preache vs pouertie and distresse
And fillhen hem selfe great richesse
With wily nettes, that they cast
It woll come foule out at the last.
They been fro cleane religion went
They make the worlde an argument
That hath a foule conclusion
I haue a robe of religion
Than am I all religious
This argument is all roignous
It is not worthe a croked Bere
Habite ne maketh neither Monke ne Frere
But cleane life and deuocion
Maketh good men of religion.
Natheless, there can none answere
How high that euer his hedde he shere
With rasour whetted neuer so kene
That gile in braunches cutte thurtene
There can no wight distinct it so
That he dare saie a worde thereto.
But what herberowe that euer I take
Or what semblaunt that euer I make
I meane but gyle, and folowe that
For right no more than Gibbe our cat
(That awaiteth Mice and Rattes to killen)
Ne entende I but to begylen
Ne no wight maie, by my clothing
Wete with what folke is my dwelling
Ne by my wordes yet parde
So soft and so pleasant they be.
Beholde the deedes that I doe
But thou be blinde thou oughtest so
For varie her wordes fro her deede
They thinke on gyle without drede
What maner clothing that they were
Or what estate that euer they bere
Lered or leude, Lorde or Ladie
Knight, Squire, Burgeis, or Bailie.

Right thus while false Sēblāt sermoneth
Eft sones Loue him areseneth
And brake his tale in his speaking
As though he had him tolde leasing
And saied: what deuil is that I heare?
What folke hast thou vs nempned here?
Maie men finde religioun
In worldly habitacioun?
Ye sir, it followeth nat that they
Should leade a wicked life parfey
Ne not therfore her soules lese
That hem to worldly clothes chese
For certes it were great pitie
Men may in secular clothes see
Florishen holy religioun
Full many a sainte in field and toun
With many a diegne glorious
Deuout, and full religious
Han died, that commen clothe aie beren
Yet saintes neuertheless they weren
I could recken you many a ten
Ye welnigh all these holy women

That

That men in churches herry and leke
Both maidens and these wiues eke
That baren ful many a faire child here
Weared alway clothes seculere
And in the same diden they
That saints weren, and ben alway.
The xi. thousand maidens dere
That beren in heuen her tierges clere
Of which men rede in church and sing
Were take in seculer clothing
Whan they receiued martirdome
And wonnen heuen vnto her home
Good hert maketh the good thought
The clothing yeueth ne reueth nought
The good thought and the worthyng
That maketh the religion flouring
There lieth the good religioun
After the right entencioun.

Who so toke a wethers skinne
And wrapped a gredy woulfe therinne
For he should go with lambes white
Wenest thou not he would hem bite?
Yes: Neuertheleſſe, as he were wood
He would hem worry, and drinke the blood
And well the rather hem diſceiue
For sith they coud nat perceiue
His tregette, and his crueltie
They would him folow al tho he flie.

If there be wolues of such hew
Amongs these Apostles new
Thou holy church thou maist be wailed
Sith that thy cite is assailed
Through knights of thine owne table
God wot thy lordship is doutable
If they enforce it to win
That should defend it fro within
Who might defence ayenst hem make
Without stroke it mote be take
Of trepeget or mangonell
Without displaiyng of penscell
And if God nil done it socour
But let reme in this colour
Thou must thy hests letten be
Than is there nought, but yeld the
Or yeue him tribute doubtlees
And hold it of hem to haue pees
But greater harme betide the
That they all maister of it be
Wel con they frotne the withall
By day stuffen they the wall
And all the night they mynen there,
Nay, thou planten must els where
Thine impes, if thou wolt frute haue
Abide not there thy selfe to saue.

But nowe peace, here I turne ayaine
I woll no more of this thing saine
Yf I may pallen me hereby
I might maken you wery
But I woll heten you alway
To helpe your frends what I may
So they wollen my company
For they be shent all bitterly
But if so fall, that I be
Oft with hem, and they with me
And eke my lemman more they serue
Or they shul not my loue deſerue
Forsoth I am a false traitour
God iudged me for a theſe treehour
Forsworne I am, but well nigh none
Wote of my gile, til it be done.

Through me hath many one deth receiued
That my treget neuer aperceiued
And yet receiueth, and shall receiue
That my falsnesse shal neuer aperceiue
But who so doth, if he wille be
Him is right good beware of me
But so sligh is the aperceiuing
That al to late cometh knowing
For Protheus that coud him chaunge
In euery shappe, homely and straunge
Coud neuer such gile ne treasoun
As I, for I come neuer in toun
There as I might knowen be
Though men me both might here and see
Ful wel I can my clothes chaunge
Take one, and make an other straunge
Now am I knight, now Chastelaine
Now Prelate, and now Chaplaine
Now Priest, now clerke, and now Fotere
Now am I maister, now Scholere
Now Monke, now Chanon, now Baily
What euer mister manne am I
Now am I Prince, now am I Page
And can by hart euery langage
Somtime am I hoore and old
Now am I yong, stout, and bold
Now am I Robert, now Robin
Now Frere Minor, now Jacobin
And with me folowety my lotby
To done me solace and company
That hight dame Abstinence, and raigned
In many a queint array fained
Right as it commeth to her liking
I fulfill all her desiring
Somtime a womans cloth take I
Now am I a Maid, now Lady

Somtime I am religious
Now like an anker in an hous
Somtime am I pryoresse
And now a Nonne, and now Abbesse
And go through all regiouns
Seking all religiouns
But to what ender that I am swoyne
I take the straw and beat the coyne
To holy folke I enhabite
I aske no moye but her habite
What wol ye moye in euery wise
Right as me list I me disguise
Wel can I beare me vnder wede
Unlike is my woyd to my dede
Thus make I into my trappes fall
The people, through my pryueleges all
That ben in christendome a liue
I may assoile, and I may shryue
That no Pryelate may let me
All folke, where euer they found be
I not no Pryelate may done so
But it the Pope be, and no mo
That made thilke establishing
Now is not this a proye thing?
But were my sleights apperceiued
As I was wont, and wost thou why?
For I did hem a tregetry
But therof yeue I a litel tale
I haue the siluer and the male
So haue I preched and eke shriuen
So haue I take, so haue I yeuen
Through her holy, husbond and wife
That I lede right a holy life
Through simplesse of the Pryelacy
They know not all my tregettry

But for as moch as man and wife
Shuld shew her parish Pryest her life
Ones a yere, as saith the Boke
Er any wight his housel toke
Than haue I prineleges large
That may of much thing discharge
For he may say right thus parde
Sir pryest, in shrift I tel it the
That he to whom that I am shriuen
Hath me assoiled, and me yeuen
Penaunce sothly for my sin
Which that I found me gilty in
Ne I ne haue neuer entencion
To make double confession
Ne reherce eft my shrift to the
O shrift is right inough for me
This ought the suffise wele
Ne be not rebell neuer a dele
For certes, though thou haddest it swoyne
I wote no Pryest ne Pryelate boyne
That may to shrift eft me constraine
And if they done I wol me plaine
For I wote where to plaine wele
Thou shalt not streine me a dele
Ne enforce me, ne not me trouble
To make my confession double
Ne I haue none affection
To haue double absolucion
The first is right inough to me
This latter assoiling quite I the
I am vnbound, what maist thou find
Moye of my sinnes me to vnbind
For he that might hath in his hond
Of all my sinnes me vnbond
And if thou wolt me thus constraine
That me mote nedes on the plaine
There shal no iudge imperiall
Ne bishop, ne officiall
Done iugement on me, for I
Shal gone and plaine me openly
Unto my shrift father newe
That hight Frere wolfe vntrewe
And he shal chuse him for me
For I trow he can hamper the
But lord he would be wroth withall
Yf men him would Frere wolfe call
For he would haue no pacience
But done all cruell vengience
He would his might done at the leest
Nothing spare for Goddes heest
And God so wise be my socour
But thou yeue me my sauiour
At Eester, whan it liketh me
Without preasing moye on the
I wol forth, and to him gone
And he shal housel me anone
For I am out of thy grutching
I kepe not deale with the nothing
Thus may he shriue him, that forsaketh
His parish pryest, and to me taketh
And if the pryest woll him refuse
I am full redy him to accuse
And him punish and hamper so
That he his church shal forgo

But who so hath in his feling
The consequence of such shryning
Shal sene, that pryest may neuer haue might
To know the conscience a right
Of him, that is vnder his cure
And this is ayenst holy scripture
That biddeth euery herd honest
Haue bery knowing of his beest
But poye folke that gon by strete

That

That haue no gold, ne ſummes grete
Hem would I let to her Prelates
Or let her Prieſts know her ſtates
For to me right nought yeue they
And why it is, for they ne may
They ben ſo bare, I take no kepe
But I wol haue the fat ſhepe
Let parith Prieſts haue the lene
I yeue not of her harme a bene
And if that Prelates grutch it
That oughten worthy be in her wit
To leſe her fat benefis ſo
I ſhall yeue hem a ſtroke or two
That they ſhal leſen with her force
Ye, both her Mitre and her Croce
Thus iape I hem, and haue do long
My priuileges ben ſo ſtrong.

Falſe Semblant would haue ſtinted here
But Loue ne made him no ſuch chere
That he was wery of his ſaw
But for to make him glad and faw
He ſaid, tel on more ſpecially
How that thou ſerued vntruly
Tel forth, and ſhame the neuer a dele
For as thine habit ſheweth wele
Thou ſerueſt an holy Heremite
Soth is, but I am but an ipocrite
Thou goſt and preacheſt pouerte
Ye ſir, but richeſſe hath poſte
Thou preacheſt abſtinence alſo
Sir, I wol fillen ſo mote I go
My paunch, of good meat and wine
As ſhould a maiſter of diuine
For how that I me poore faine
Yet al poore folke I diſdaine.

I Loue better the acqueintaunce
Ten times of the king of Fraunce
Than of a poore man of mild mood
Though that his ſoule be alſo good
For whan I ſe beggers quaking
Naked on mixins all ſtinking
For hungre cry, and eke for care
I entremet not of her fare
They ben ſo poore, and ful of pine
They might not ones yeue me a dine
For they haue nothing but her life
What ſhould he yeue that licketh his knife
It is but foly to entremete
To ſeke in hounds neſt fat mete
Let beare hun to the ſpittle anone
But for me, comfort get they none
But a rich lick blurere
Would I viſite and draw nere
Him would I comfort and rebete
For I hope of his gold to gete
And if that wicked death him haue
I woll go with him to his graue
And if there any repreue me
Why that I let the poore be
Woſt thou how I nat aſcape
I ſay and ſweare him full rape
That rich men han more retches
Of ſinne, than han poore wretches
And han of counſaile more miſter
And therfore I would draw hem ner
But as great hurt, it may ſo be
Hath a ſoule in right great pouerte
As ſoule in great richeſſe forſoth
Al be it that they hurten both
For richeſſe and mendicitees
Bene cleped two extremitees
The meane is cleped Suffiſaunce
There lieth of vertue the aboundaunce
For Salomon full wel I wote
In his Parables vs wrote
As it is knowen of many a wight
In his thirtene chapiter right
God thou me kepe for thy poſte
Fro richeſſe and mendicite
For if a rich man him diſſe
To thinke to moch on richeſſe
His hert on that ſo ferre is ſette
That he his creator doth forgette
And him that beggeth wol ate greue
How ſhould I by his word him leue
Vmeth that he nis a miſcher
Forſworne, or elſ gods lier
Thus ſaith Salomon ſawes
Ne we find written in no lawes
And namely in our chriſten lay
Who ſaith ye, I dare ſay nay
That Chriſt, ne his Apoſtles dere
While that they walked in earth here
Were neuer ſeen her bred begging
For they nolden beggen for nothing
And right thus were men wont to tech
And in this wiſe would it prech
The maiſters of diuinite
Somtime in Paris the cite.

And if men would there gaine appete
The naked text and let the gloſe
It might ſoone amended be
For men may wel the ſothe ſe
That pardy they might aſke a thing
Plainly forth without begging
For they weren goddes heerds dere
And cure of ſoules hadden here

They nold nothing begge her food
For after Christ was done on rood
With their proper honds they wrought
And with trauelle, and els nought
They wonnen al her sustenaunce
And liueden forth in her penaunce
And the remenaunt pas away
To other poore folkes alway
They neither bilden toure ne hall
But they in houses smal with all
A mighty man that can and may
Should with his hond and body alway
Winne him his food in labouring
Yf he ne haue rent or such a thing
Although he be religious
And God to seruen curious
Thus mote he done, or do trespas
But if it be in certaine cas
That I can reherce, if mister be
Right wel, whan the time I se.

Seke the boke of saint Augustine
Be it in paper or perchemene
There as he writte of these worchings
Thou shalt sene that none excusings
A perfite man ne should seke
By words, ne by dedes eke
Although he be religious
And God to seruen curious
That he ne shal, so mote I go
With proper honds, and body also
Get his food in labouring
Yf he ne haue proprete of thing
Yet should he sell all his substaunce
And with his swinke haue sustenaunce
If he be parfite in bounte
Thus han the bokes told me
For he that wol gone idelly
And vseth it aie besily
To haunten other mennes table
He is a trechour ful of fable
Ne he ne may by good reason
Excuse him by his oraison
For men behoueth in some gise
Ben somtime in Goddes seruice
To gone and purchasen her nede
Men mote eaten, that is no drede
And slepe, and eke do other thing
So long may they leaue praying
So may they eke her praier bidde
While that they werke her meat to winne
Seint Austin wol therto acord
In thilke boke that I record
Justinian eke, that made lawes
Hath thus forboden by old sawes.

No man, by paine to be deed
Mighty of body, to begge his breed
Yf he may swinke it for to gete
Men should him rather maime or bete
Or done of him aperr iustice
Than suffren him in such malice
They done not wel so mote I go
That taken such almesse so
But if they haue some priuilege
That of the pame hem woll alege
But how that is, can I not se
But if the prince disceiued be
Ne I ne wene not sikerly
That they may haue it rightfully
But I wol not determine
Of princes power, ne define
Ne by my word comprehend wis
Yf it so ferre may stretch in this
I wol not entremets a dele
But I trow that the boke saith wele
Who that taketh almesses, that be
Dew to folke that men may se
Lame, feble, wery, and bare
Poore, or in such maner care
That con winne hem neuer mo
For they haue no power therto
He eateth his owne dampning
But if he lie, that made all thing
And if ye such a truaunt find
Chastise him wel, if ye be kind
But they would hate you parcaas
If ye fillen in her laas
They would ellelones do you scath
If that they might, late or rath
For they be not ful patient
That han the word thus foule blent
And weteth wel, that God bad
The good man sell all that he had
And folow him, and to poore it yeue
He would not therfore that he liue
To seruen him in mendiente
For it was neuer his sentence
But he bad werken, when that nede is
And folow him in good dedes
Saint Poule that loued al holy church
He bade the Apostles for to wurch
And winnen her liuelode in that wise
And hem defended truandise
And said, werketh with your honden
Thus should the thing be vnderstonden
He nold twis haue bid hem begging
Ne sellen godspell, ne preching
Lest they beraft, with her asking
Folke of her catel or of her thing
For in this world is many a man

That

That yeueth his good for he ne can
Werne it for shame, or els he
Would of the alder delyuered be
And for he him encombreth so
He yeueth him good to let him go
But it can him nothing profite
They lese the yelt and the merite
The good folke that Poule to preched
Profred him ofr, whan he hem reched
Some of her good in charite
But therof right nothing toke he
But of his hond worke would he gete
Clothes to wrine him and his mete.

TEl me than how a man may liuen
That all his good to pore hath yeuen
And wol but only bidde his bedes
And neuer with hondes labour his nedes
May he do so? Sir: And how?
Sir: I wol gladly tel you
Saint Austen saith, a man may be
In houses that han properte
As templers, and hospiteliers
And as these Chanons regulers
Or white Monkes, or thrie blacke
I wol no mo ensamples make
And take thereof his sufferning
For therin lythe no begging
But otherwaies not twis
Yet Austen gabbeth not of this
And yet full many a Monke labboureth
That God in holy Church honoureth
For whan her swinking is agon
They rede and sing in Church anon

And for there hath ben great discord
As many a wight may beare record
Upon the estate of mendicience
I wol shortly in your presence
Tel how a man may begge at nede
That hath not wherwith him to fede
Maugre his felows tanglings
For sothfastnes wol none hidings
And yet percase I may obey
That I to you sothly thus sey.

IN here the case especiall
If a man be so bestiall
That he of no craft hath science
And nought deserueth ignorence
Than may he go a begging yerne
Till he some other craft can lerne
Through which without truanding
He may in trouth haue his liuing
Or if he may done no labour
For elde, or sickenesse, or langour
Or for his tender age also
Than may he yet a begging go
Or if he haue peraventure
Though vlage of his norriture
Liued ouer deliciously
Than oughten good folke comenly
Han of his mischiefe some pete
And suffren him also, that he
May gone about and begge his bred
That he be not for hunger ded
Or if he haue of craft conning
And strength also, and desiring
To worchen, as he had what
But he finde neither this ne that
Than may he begge till that he
Haue getten his necessitie.
Or if his winning be so lite
That his labour wol not aquite
Sufficiauntly all his liuing
Yet may he go his bread begging
Fro doze to doze, he may go trace
Till he the remnaunt may purchase.
Or if a man would vndertake
Any empzise for to make
In the seruice of our lay
And it defenden as he may
Be it with armes, or lettrure
Or other conuenable cure
If it be so he pooze be
Than may he begge, till that he
May finde in trouth for to swinke
And get him clothe, meate, and drinke
Swinke he with his hondes corporel
And not with hondes espirituel.

IN all this tale, and in semblables
If that there ben no reasonables
He may begge, as I tell you here
And els not, in no manere
As William saint Amour would preche
And oft would dispute and teche
Of this mater all openly
At Paris full solemply
And also God my soule bielle
As he had in this stedfastnesse
The acorde of the vniuersitie
And of the people, as seemeth me.

No good man ought it to refuse
Ne ought him thereof to excuse
Be wrothe or blithe, who so be
For I woll speke, and tell it thee
All should I die, and be put doun
As was saint Poule in derke prisoun

Or be exiled in this caas
With wrong, as maister William was
That my mother Hipocrisie
Banished for her great envy.

My mother semed him saint Amour
This noble did such labour
To susteine euer the loiaire
That he to much agilt me
He made a boke, and let it write
Wherin his life he did all dite
And would ech remed begging
And liue by my trauciling
If I ne had rent ne other good
What weneth he that I were wood
For labour might me neuer pleasc
I haue more will to ben at ease
And haue well leuer, soth to say
Before the people patter and pray
And wry me in my lorery
Under a cope of papelardy.
(Mo. Loue) what diuel is that I here
What words tellest thou me here
What sir Faitsencsse that apert is
Than dredest thou not God? No certis
For seld in great thing shal he spede
In this world, that God wol drede
For folke that hem to vertue yeuen
And truly on her owne liuen
And hem in goodnesse ate content
On hem is litel thrift ylent
Such folke drinken great misese
That life may me neuer plese
But se what gold han vsurers
And siluer eke in garners
Tailagiers, and these moniours
Bailiffes, Bedels, Prouost, Countours
These liuen well nigh by rauine
The smale people hem mote encline
And they as wolues wol hem eten
Upon the poze folke they geten
Ful much of that they spend or kepe
Nis none of hem that he nil strepe
And wrine hem selfe well at full
Without scalding, they hem pull
The strong the feble ouergoth
But I that weare my simple cloth
Robbe both robbing and robbours
And gile giling, and gilours
By my treget, I gather and threst
The great treasour into my chest
That lieth with me so fast bound
Myn high paleis do I found
And my delites I fulfill
With wine at feests, at my will
And tables ful of entremees
I wol no life, but ease and pees
And winne gold to spend also
For whan the great bagge is go
It cometh right with my iapes
Make I not wel tombie mine apes
To winnen is alway mine entent
My purchace is better than my rent
For though I should beten be
Ouer all I entremet me
Without me may no wight dure
I walke soules for to cure
Of all the world cure haue I
In brede and length boldly
I wol both prech, and eke counsailen
With bonds wol I not trauailen
For of the Pope I haue the bull
I ne hold not my wittes dull
I wol not slumren in my lue
These Emperours for to shrine
Of kings, Dukes, and Lords grete
But poore folke all quite I lete
I loue no such shriuing parde
But it for other cause be
I recke not of poore men
Her estate is not worth an hen
Wher findest thou a swinker of labour
Haue me to his confessour
But Empresses, and Duchesses
These Quenes, and eke Countesses
These Ladies, and eke Bigins
These great Ladies palasins
These holy knights, and Baslines
These Nonnes, and these Burgeis wines
That rich ben, and eke plesing
And these Maidens welfaring
Where so they clad or naked be
Uncounsailed goeth there none fro me
And for her soules sauete
At Lord and Lady, and her meine
I aske, whan they hem to me shrine
The proporty of all her liue
And make hem trow, both most and leest
Her parish Priest is but a beest
Ayens me and my company
That shrewes ben as great (as I)
For which I wol not hide in hold
No priuete that me is told
That I by word or signe wis
Ne wol make hem know what it is
And they wollen also tellen me
They hele fro me no priuite
And for to make you hem perceiuen
That vien folke thus to deceiuen
I wol you saine with houten drede

What

What men may in the Gospell rede
Of saint Mathewe the Gospellere
That saieth, as I shall you saie here.

VPon the chaire of Moses
Thus it is glosed doubtles
(That is the olde Testament
For thereby is the chaurement)
Sitte Scribes and Pharisen
That is to saine, the cursed men
Which that we Ipocrites call
Doeth that they preache I rede you all
But doeth not as they done a deale
That been not wearie to saie weale
But to doe well, no will haue they
And they would binde no folke alwaie
That been to beggyed able
Burdens that been importable
On folkes shoulders things they couchen
That they nill with their fingers touchen
And why woll they not touche it why?
For hem ne liste nat sikerly
For sadde burdons that men taken
Make folkes shoulders aken.
And if they doe ought that good be
That is for folke it should see
Yet burdons larger maken they
And maken her hemmes wide alwaie
And louen seates at the table
The first, and moste honourable
And for to han the first chaires
In Synagogges, to hem full dere is
And willen that folke hem loute and grete
Whan that they passen through the strete
And wollen be cleped maister also
But they ne should not willen so
The Gospell is thereagenst I gesse
That sheweth well her wickednesse.

ANother custome vse we
Of hem that woll agenst vs be
We hate him deadly euerychone
And we woll werrey him, as one
Him that one heteth, hate we all
And conteck, how to doen him fall
And if we seen him winne honour
Richesse or preise, through his valour
Prouende, rent, or dignitie
Full fast ywis compassen we
By what ladder he is clomben so
And for to maken him doune to go
With traison we woll him defame
And doen him lese his good name.
Thus from his ladder we him take
And thus his frendes foes we make
But worde ne wete shall he none
Till all his frendes been his fone
For if we did it openly
We might haue blame redily
For had he wiste of our malice
He had him kept, but he were nice.

In other is this, that if so fall
That there be one among vs all
That doeth a good tourne, out of drede
We saine it is our alder deede
Yea sikerly, though he it fained
Or that him liste, or that him dained
A man through him auaunced be
Thereof all parteners be we
And tellen folke, where so we go
That man through vs is sprongen so
And for to haue of men praising
We purchace through our flattering
Of riche men of great possessitie
Letters, to witnesse our bountie
So that man weneth that may vs see
That all vertue in vs be.
And alwaie poore we vs faine
But how so that we begge or plain
We been the folke without leasing
That all thing haue without hauing
Thus be drawe of the people ywis
And gladly my purpose is this.
I deale with no wight, but he
Haue golde and treasure great plentie
Her acquaintaunce well loue I
This much my desire shortly
I entremete me of brocages
I make peace, and mariages
I am gladly executour
And many times a procuratour
I am sometime messagere
That falleth not to my mistere
And many times I make enquest
For me that office is nat honest
To deale with other mennes thing
That is to me a great liking
And if that ye haue ought to doe
In place that I repaire to
I shall it speden through my witte
As sone as ye haue told me it
So that ye serue me to paie
My seruice shall be yours alwaie
But who so woll chastice me
Anone my loue loste hath he
For I loue no man in no gyse
That woll me reproue or chastise
But I woll all folke vndertake
And of no wight no teaching take

For I that other folke chastie
Woll not be taught fro my folie

I Loue none Hermitage moze
All deserres, and holtes hooze
And great woods euerichone
I let hem to the Baptist John
I queth him quite and him relesse
Of Egypt all the wildernesse
To ferre were all my mansions
Fro all cities and good toums.
My paleis and mine house make I
There men may renne in openly
And saie that I the wozlde forsake
But all amidde I builde, and make
My house, and swimme and plaie therein
Bette than a fishe doeth with his finne.

Of Antechzistes men am I
Of which that Chzist saieth openly
They haue habite of holinesse
And liuen in such wickednesse
To the copie, if him talent tooke
Of the Euangelistes booke
There might he se by great traison
Full many a false comparison.
As much as through his great might
Be it of heate oz of light
The Sunne surmounteth the Mone
That troubler is, and chaungeth sone
And the nutte kirnell the shell
I shozne nat that I you tell.
Right so withouten any gile
Surmounteth this noble Euangile
The wozde of any Euangelist
And to her title they token Chzist
And many such comparison
Of which I make no mention
Might men in that booke finde
Who so could of hem haue minde.

The vniuersitie that tho was a slepe
Gan foz to braied, and taken kepe
And at the noise, the hedde vp cast
Ne neuer sithen slept it fast
But vp it stert, and armes tooke
Ayenst this false hozrible booke
All redie battaile foz to make
And to the Iudge the booke they take
But they that broughten the booke there
Hent it anone awaie foz feare
They nolde shewe it no moze a deale
But than it kept, and kepen weale
Till such a time that they may se
That they so strong wozken be
That no wight maie hem well withstonde
Foz by that booke they durst not stonde
Awaie they gonne it foz to bere
Foz they ne durst not answere
By exposition noz glose
To that that clerkes woll appose
Ayenst the curstednesse ywis
That in that booke wzitten is
Now wotte I nat, ne I can nat see
What maner ende that there shall be
Of all this that they hide
But yet algate they shall abide
Till that they may it bette defende
This trowe I best woll be her ende.

Thus Antechzist abiden we
Foz we been all of his meine
And what man that woll not be so
Right sone he shall his life forgo.
Outward Lamben semen we
Full of goodnesse and of pitie
And inward we withouten fable
Been gredie Wolues rauisable
We enuiroun both londe and see
With all the wozlde werren we
We woll ozdain of all thing
Of folkes good, and her liuing.

If there be castell oz citie
Wherein that any bougerons be
Although that they of Milaine were
Foz thereof been they blamed there
Oz of a wight out of measure
Would leane her gold, and take blure
Foz that he is so coueitous
Oz if he be to Lecherous
Oz these that haunten Simonie
Oz Pzouost full of trecherie
Oz Pzelate liuing iolilie
Oz Pziest that halt his quein him by
Oz olde hoozes hostilers
Oz other baudes oz bozdellers
Oz els blamed of any vice
Of which men shoulden doen iustice.
By all the saintes that we pzeie
But they defende them with lampzeie
With luce, with elis, with samons
With tender gees, and with capons
With tartes, and with chesses fat
With deitie flaunes, bzode and flat
With caleweis, oz with pullaile
With conings, oz with fine vitaile
That we vnder our clothes wide
Waken through our golet glide
Oz but he woll doe come in haste

For

Roe venison bake in paste
Whether so that loure or groine
He shall haue of a corde a loigne
With which men shall him binde and lede
To brenne him for his sinfull dede
That men shull here hym crie and roze
A mile waie about and moze
Or els he shall in prison die
But if he woll his frendship buie
Or smerten that, that he hath doe
Moze than his gilt amounteth to.
But and he couthe, through his sleight
Doe maken vp a toure of height
Nought rought I, whether of stone or tree
Or earth, or turues though it be
Though it were of no bounde stone
Wrought with squire and scantilone
So that the toure were stuffed well
With all riches temporell
And than that he would vp dresse
Engins, bothe moze and lesse
To caste at vs by euery side
To beare his good name wide
Such sleightes I shall you yeuen
Barelles of wine, by sixe or seuen
Or golde in sackes great plentie
He should sone deliuered be
And if he haue no such pitences
Let him studie in equipolences
And let lies and fallaces
If that he would deserue our graces
Or we shall beare him such witnesse
Of sinne, and of his wretchednesse
And doen his lose so wide renne
That all quicke we should him brenne
Or els yeue him such penaunce
That is well worse than the pitaunce.

For thou shalt neuer for nothing
Con knowen a right by her clothing
The traitours full of trecherie
But thou her werkes can espie
And ne had the good keping be
Whilom of the vniuersitie
That kepeth the keie of christendome
We had been tourmented all and some
Such been the stinking Prophetis
Nis none of hem, that good Prophete is
For they through wicked entencion
The yere of the incarnacion
A thousand and two hundred yere
Fiue and fiftie ferther ne nere
Broughten a booke with sorie grace
To yeuen ensample in common place
That saied thus, though it were fable
This is the Gospell pardurable
That fro the holie ghost is sent
Well were it worth to be brent
Entitled was in such maniere
This booke, of which I tell here
There nas no wight in all Paris
Before our Ladie at paruis
That they ne might the booke by
The sentence pleased hem well truely
But I woll stint of this matere
For it is wonder long to here
But had that ilke booke endured
Of better estate I were ensured
And frends haue I yet parde
That had me set in great degre.

Of all this worlde is Emperour
Gile my father, the trechour
And Empresse my mother is
Maugre the holie ghost ywis
Our mightie linage, and our rout
Reigneth in euery reigne about
And well is worthie we ministers be
For all this worlde gouerne we
And can the folke so well deceiue
That none our gile can perceiue
And though they doen, they dare not saie
The sothe dare no wight bewraie
But he in Christes wrath him le deth
That more than Christ my brethren dredeth
He nis no full good champion
That dredeth such simulation
Nor that for paine woll refusen
Vs to correct and accusen.
He woll not entremete by right
Ne haue God in his eye sight
And therefore God shall him punice
But me ne recketh of no vice
Sithen men vs louen communlie
And holden vs for so worthie
That we may folke repreue echone
And we nill haue repreef of none
Whom shoulden folke worshipen so
But vs that stinten neuer mo
To patren, while that folke maie vs ses
Though it not so behinde hem be.

And where is more woode folie
Than to enhaunce chiualrie
And loue noble men and gaie
That iolie clothys weren alwaie
If they be such folke as they semen
So cleane, as men her clothes demen
And that her wordes folowe her deede
It is great pitie out of drede

For

For they woll be none Hypocrites
Of hem me thinketh great spite is
I can not loue hem in no side.
But beggers with these hoodes wide
With sleigh and pale faces leane
And grate clothes nat full cleane
But fretted full of tatarwagges
And high shoes knopped with dagges
That frouncen like a quale pipe
Or bootes rincling as a gipe
To such folke, as I you deuise
Should princes and these lordes wise
Take all her landes and her things
Both warre and peace in gouernings
To such folke should a prince him peue
That would his life in honour liue.

And if they be nat as they seme
That seruen thus the world to queme
There would I dwell to deceiue
The folke, for they shall nat perceiue.
But I ne speake in no such wise
That men should humble habite dispise
So that no pride there vnder be
No man should hate, as thinketh me
The poore man in such clothing
But God ne preiseth him nothing
That saieth he hath the world forsake
And hath to worldly glory him take
And woll of such delices vse
Who may that begger well excuse
That payelarde, that him yeldeth so
And woll to worldly ease go
And saieth that he the world hath left
And gredily it gripeth eft
He is the hounde, shame is to sain
That to his casting goeth again.

But vntd you dare I not lie
But might I feien or espie
That ye perceiued it nothing
Ye should haue a starke leasing
Right in your honde thus to begi me
I nolde it let for no sinne
The God lough at the wonder tho
And euery wight gan laugh also
And saied: lo here a man right
For to be trustie to euery wight.

False Semblant (qd Loue) saie to me
Sith I thus haue auaunced thee
That in my court is thy dwelling
And of ribaudes shalt be my king
Wolt thou well holden my forwardes
Yea sir, from hence forwardes
We woll a people vpon him areise
And through our gyle, doen him deise
And hun on sharpe speares riue
Or other waies bring him fro liue
But if that he woll folowe ywis
That in our booke written is.

Thus much woll our booke signifie
That whyle Peter had maistrie
May neuer John shew wel his might
Now haue I you declared right
The meaning of the barke and rinde
That maketh the entencions blinde
But now at erst I woll begin
To expoune you the pithe within
And the seculers comprehende
That Christes lawe woll defende
And should it kepen and maintenen
Ayenst hem that all sustenen
And falsly to the people teachen
That John betokeneth hem to preachen
That there nis lawe conenable
But thilke Gospell pardurable
That fro the holy ghost was sent
To tourne folke that been miswent.

The strength of John they vnderstonde
The grace in which they saie they stonde
That doeth the sinfull folke conuert
And hem to Jesu Christ reuert
Full many an other horrible te
May men in that booke se
That been commaunded doubtlesse
Ayenst the lawe of Rome expresse
And all with Antichrist they holden
As men may in the booke beholden.
And than commaunden they to sleen
All tho that with Peter been
But they shall neuer haue that might
And God to forne, for strife to fight
That they ne shall ynough finde
That Peters lawe shall haue in minde
And euer holde, and so mainteen
That at the last it shall be seen
That they shall all come thereto
For ought that they can speake or do
And thilke lawe shall not stonde
That they by John haue vnderstonde
But maugre hem, it shall adoun
And been brought to confusioun
Had neuer your father here before
Seruaunt so true, sith he was borne
That is ayenst all nature.
Sir, put you in that auenture
For though ye borowes take of me

The sikerer shall ye neuer be
For hostages, ne sikernesse
Or chartres, for to beare witnesse
I take your selfe to recorde here
That men ne maie, in no manere
Tearen the wolfe out of his hide
Till he be slaine, backe and side
Though men him beate and all defile
What weene ye that I woll beguile
For I am clothed meekely
There vnder is all my trechery
Mine harte chaungeth neuer the mo
For none habite, in which I go
Though I haue here of simplenesse
I am not wearie of shrewdnesse
My lemman, strained Abstinaunce
Hath maister of my purueyaunce
She had full long ago be dedde
Nere my counsaile and my reddе
Let her alone, and you and me,
And Loue answerde, I trust thee
Without borowe, for I woll none
And false Semblant the theef anone
Right in that like same place
That had of treason all his face
Right blacke within, and white without
Thanking him, gan on his knees lout.

Than was there nought, but euery man
Now to assaute, that saillen can
(Od Loue) and that full hardily
Then armed they hem comenly
Of such armour, as to hem fell
Whan they were armed, siers and fell
They went hem forth all in a rout
And set the castell all about.
They will not awaie for no drede
Till it so be that they been dedde
Or till they haue the castell take
And foure battels they gan make
And parted hem in foure anone
And toke her waie, and forthe they gone
The foure gates for to assaile
Of which the keepers woll not faile
For they been neither sicke ne dede
But hardie folke, and strong in dede.

Now woll I faine the countenaunce
Of false Semblant, and Abstinaunce
That been to wicken Tong went
But first they helde her parliament
Whether it to doen were
To maken hem be knowen there
Or els walken forth disguised
But at the laste they deuised
That they would gone in tapinage
As it were in a pilgrimage
Like good and holie folke vnfeined
And dame Abstinence streined
Toke on a robe of Cameline
And gan her gratche as a bigine
A large couerchief of threde
She wrapped all about her hede
But she forgate not her Psaltere
A paire of bedes eke she bere
Upon a lace, all of white threde
On which that she her bedes bede
But she ne bought hem neuer a deale
For they were guien her. I woot weale
God woote of a full holie Freere
That faied he was her father dere
To whom she had ofter wrent
Than any Freere of his couent
And he visited her also
And many a sermon faied her to
He nolde let for man on liue
That he ne would her oft shriue.
And with so great deuocion
They made her confession
That they had oft for the nones
Two heddes in one hode at ones.
Of faire shape, I deuised her the
But pale of face sometime was she
That false traitoures lustrewe
Was like that salowe horse of hewe
That in the Apocalipsis shewed
That signifieth to folke beshrewed
That been all full of trecherie
And pale, through hypocrisie
For on that horse no colour is
But onely dedde and pale ywis
Of such a colour enlangoured
Was Abstinence ywis coloured
Of her estate she her repented
As her visage representeth.
She had a burdoune all of theft
That Gile had peuc her of his pelf
And a scrippe of faint disdaine
That full was of elengenesse
And forthe she walked soberly
And false Semblant faint ne bougdie
And as it were for such mystere
Doen on the cope of a Freere
With chere simple, and full pitous
His loking was not disdeinous
Ne proude, but meke and full pesible
About his necke he bare a Bible
And Squierly, forthe gan he gon
And for to rest his limmes vpon
He had of treason a potent

As he were fedle, his waie he went.
But in his sleue he gan to thring
A rasone sharpe, and well biting
That was forged in a forge
Which that men clepen Coupe gorge.
So long forth her waie they nomen
Till they to Wicked Tong comen
That at his gate was sitting
And sawe folke in the waie palling.
The pilgrimes sawe he fast by
That bearen hem full meekly
And humbly they with him mette
Dame Abstinence first him grette
And sith him False Semblant salued
And he hem, but he not remeued
For he ne dredde him not a deale
For whan he sawe her faces weale
Alwaie in harte, him thought so
He should knowe hem bothe two
For well he knewe dame Abstinaunce
But he ne knewe not Constreinaunce
He knewe not that she was constrained
Ne of her thewes like fained
But wende she come of will all free
But she come in an other degree
And if of good will she began
That will was failed her than.

And False Semblant had he faine alle
But he knewe not that he was falle
Yet falle was he, but his fallnesse
Ne coud he nat espie, nor gesse
For Semblant was so slie wrought
That Fallenesse he ne espied nought
But haddest thou knowen him before
Thou wouldest on a booke haue swore
Whan thou him sawe in thilke araie
That he, that whilom was so gaie
And of the daunce Jolie Robin
Was tho become a Jacobin
But sothly what so men him call
Frere Preachours been good men all
Her order wickedly they bearen
Such minstrelles, if they wearen.
So been Augustines, and Cordilers
And Carmes, and eke sacked Freres
And all Freres shode and bare
Though some of hem been great and square
Full holy men, as I hem deme
Eueriche of hem would good man seme
But shalt thou neuer of apparence
Seen conclude good consequence
In none argument ywis
If existens all failed is
For men may finde alwaie sopheme
The consequence to enuenime
Who so that hath had the subtelties
The double sentence for to see.

Whan the pilgrimes commen were
To wicked Tong that dwelled there
Her harneis nigh hem was algate
By wicked Tong adoune they sate
That bad hem nere him for to come
And of tydings tell him some
And saied hem: what cas maketh you
To come into this place now.

Sir saied Strained Abstinaunce
We for to drie our penaunce
With hartes pitous and deuout
Are commen, as pilgrimes gon about
Well nigh on foote alway we go
Full doughtie been our heeles two
And thus bothe we been sent
Throughout the worlde that is mis went
To yeue ensample, and preache also
To stidden sinfull men we go
For other stidding, ne still we
And sir, for that charitie
As we be wont, herbrowe we craue
Your life to amende Christ it saue
And so it should you not displease
We woulden, if it were your ease
A short sermon vnto you sain
And wicked Tong answered again
The house (qd he) such (as ye see)
Shall not be warned you for me
Saie what you list, and I woll here
Graunt mercie swete sir dere.

(Qd alderfirst) dame Abstinence
And thus began she her sentence.
Sir, the first vertue certaine
The greatest, and moste soueraine
That may be founde in any man
For hauing, or for wit he can
That is his tong to refrain
There to ought euery wight him pain
For it is better still be
Than for to speken harme parde
And he that harkeneth it gladly
He is no good man sikerly.
And sir, abouen all other sinne
In that art thou most guiltie in
Thou spake a iape, not long agoe
And sir, that was right euill doe
Of a yong man, that here repaired
And neuer yet this place apaired
Thou saidest he awaited nothing

But

But to disceiue Faire Welcoming
He said nothing soth of that
But sir, ye lie, I tel you plat
He ne cometh no moze, ne goeth parde
I trow ye shal him neuer se
Faire Welcoming in pzison is
That oft hath plaied with you er this
The fairest games that he could
Without filth ful oz loud
Now dare she not her selfe solace
Ye han also the man do thace
That he dare neither come ne go
What meueth you to hate him so?
But pzoperly your wicked thought
That many a false leasing hath thought
That meueth your foule eloquence
That iangleth euer in audience
And on the folke areiseth blame
And doeth hem dishonour and shame
Foz thing that may haue no pzeuing
But like clincsse, and contriuing.

Foz I dare saine, that Reason demeth
It is not al soth thing that semeth
And it is sinne to controue
Thing that is to repzoue
This wote ye wele, and sir: therfoze
Ye arne to blame the moze
And natheicsse, he reweth lite
He pzeueth not now therof a mite
Foz if he thought harme parfay
He would come and gone all day
He coud him selfe not absteine
Now cometh he not, and that is sene
Foz he ne taketh of it no cure
But if it be through auenture
And lasse than other folke algate
And thou her watchest at the gate
With speare in thine arest alway
Chere muse musard all the day
Thou wakest night and day foz thought
Iwis thy trauele is foz nought
And Ielousie withouten faile
Shal neuer quite thee thy trauele
And sikerly is, that Faire Welcoming
Without any trespalling
Shal wzongfully in pzison be
There wepeth and languisheth he
And though thou neuer yet twis
Agilteste man no moze but this
Take not a geese it were wozthy
To put the out of this Baily
And afterward in pzison lie
And fettred the till that thou die
Foz thou shalt foz this sinne dwelle
Right in the Deuils taile of Helle
But if that thou repent the
Watsaie, thou liest falsly (quod he)
What, welcome with misehaunce now
Haue I therefoze herbered you
To say me shame, and eke repzoue
With sozy happe to your behoue
Am I to day your herbegere
Go herber you elswhere, than here
That han a lier called me
Two tregetours art thou and he
That in mine house, do me this shame
And foz my sothe sawe ye me blame
Is this the sermon that ye make
To all the diuels I me take
Oz els God thou me confounde
But er men didden this castell founde
It palleth not ten daies oz twelue
But it was tolde right to my selue
And as they saide, right so tolde I
He kisse the Rose pziuily
Thus saide I now, and haue said yore
I not where he did any moze
Why should men saie me such a thing
If it had ben gabbing
Right so saide I, and woll saie yet
I trowe I lied not of it
And with my bemes I woll blowe
To all neighbours arowe
How he hath both comen and gone.
Tho spake false Semblant right anone
All is nat golpell out of doute
That men saine in the towne aboute
Lay no deefe eare to my speaking
I swere you sir, it is gabbing
I trow ye wote well certainly
That no man loueth him tenderly
That saith him harme, if he wote it
All be he neuer so pooze of wit
And sothe is also sikerly
This know ye sir, as well as I
That louers gladly woll visiten
The places there her loues habiten
This man you loueth, and eke honoureth
This man to serue you laboureth
And clepeth you his frend so dere
And this man maketh you good chere
And euery where that you meteth
He you saleweth, and he you greeteth
He pzeseth nat so ofte, that ye
Ought of his coming encombred be
There presen other folke on you
Ful ofter than he doth now
And if his hert him strained so
Unto the Rose foz to go

ye should him serue to ese rede
That ye should take him with the dede
He could his comming not forbeare
Though he him thrilled with a speare
It were not than, as it is now
But trusteth wel, I dreare it you
That it is clene out of his thought
Sir, certes he ne thinketh it nought
No more ne doth Faire Welcoming
That sore abieth all this thing
And if they were of one assent
Full soone were the Rose hent
The maugre yours would be
And sir, of o thing herkeneth me
Sith ye this man, that loueth you
Han said such harme, and shame now
Writeth well, if he gessed it
Ye may well demen in your wit
He nold nothing loue you so
Ne callen you his frend also
But night and day he wol wake
The castel to distroy and take
Yf it were soth, as ye deuise
Or some man in some maner wise
Might it warne him euerydele
Or by himselfe parceiue wele
For sith he might not come and gone
As he was wont to done
He might it soone wite and se
But now so all otherwise wote he
Than haue we fit all bitterly
Deserued Hell, and lolily
The death of Hell douteles
That thrallen folke so gracieles.

False Semblant so proueth this thing
That he can none answering
And seeth alway, such apparaunce
That nigh he fel in repentaunce
And said him, sir, it may well be
Semblant, a good man semen ye
And Abstinence, ful wise ye seme
Of o talent you both I deme
What counsaile wol ye to me yeuen
Right here anon thou shalt be shriuen
And say thy sinne, without more
Of this shalt thou repent sore
For I am Preest, and haue polle
To shrine folke of most dignite
That ben as wide as world may dure
Of all this world I haue the cure
And that had neuer yet parfourn
Ne vicary of no maner tourn
And God wot I haue of the
A thousand times more pite
Than hath the Preest parochiall
Though he thy frend be speciall
I haue auantage in o wise
That your Prelates ben not so wise
Ne half so lettred (as am I)
I am licensed boldely
In diuinite for to rede
And to confessen out of dede
Yf ye wol you now confesse
And leaue your sinnes more and lesse
Without abode, kneele doun anon
And you shal haue absolucion.

¶ Here endeth the Romaunt of the Rose.

¶ Here after foloweth the Booke of Troilus and Creseide.

The double sorow of Troilus to tellen
That was king Priamus sonne of Troy
In louing, how his auentures fellen
From wo to wele, and after out of joy
My purpose is, er that I part froy
Thou Thesiphone, thou helpe me for to endite
These woful verses, that weepen as I write

To the I clepe, thou goddesse of torment
Thou cruel fury, sorowing euer in paine
Helpe me that am the sorowful instrument
That helpeth louers, as I can complaine
For wel sit it, the soth for to saine
A woful wight to haue a drery fere
And to a sorowful tale a sory chere

For I that God of Loues seruaunts serue
Ne dare to loue, for mine vnlikelinesse
Prayen for spede, al should I therfore sterue
So farre am I fro his helpe in derkenesse
But nathelesse, if this may done gladnesse
To any louer, and his cause auaile
Haue he my thanke, and mine be the trauaile

But ye louers that bathen in gladnesse
Yf any drope of pite in you be
Remembreth you of passed heuinesse
That ye haue felt, and on the aduersite
Of other folke, and thinketh how that ye
Han felt, that loue durst you displease
Or ye han won him wish to great an ease

And

And praieth for hem that ben in the cace
Of Troilus, as ye may after here
That hem bring in heuen to solace
And eke for me praieth to God so dere
That I haue might to shew in some manere
Such paine and wo, as loues folke endure
In Troilus vnsely auenture

And biddeth eke for hem that ben dispeired
In loue, that neuer wil recouered be
And eke for hem that fainly ben apeired
Through wicked tonges, be it he or she
Thus biddeth God for his benignite
So grant hem soon out of this world to pace
That ben dispaired out of loues grace

And biddeth eke for hem that ben at ease
That god hem graunt aie good perseuerance
And send hem grace her loues for to please
That it to loue be worship and pleasance
For so hope I my selfe best to auaunce
To pray for hem, that loues seruaunts be
And write her wo, and hue in charite

And for to haue of hem compassioun
As though I were her owne brother dere
Now herkeneth with a good entencioun
For now wol I go streight to my matere
In which ye may the double sorowes here
Of Troilus, in louing of Cresseid
And how she forsoke hun er that she deid.

IT is wel wist, how that the Grekes strong
In armes with a thousand shippes went
To Troy wards, and the cite long
Besiegeden nigh ten yeres ere they stent
And in diuers wise, and-one entent
The rauishing to wreke of queue Heleine.
By Paris don, they wroughten all her peine

Now fell it so, that in the toune there was
Dwelling a Lord of great authorite
A great diuine, that cleped was Calcas
That in that science so expert was, that he
knew wel, that Troy should distroied be
By answere of his God, that hight thus
Dan Phebus, or Apollo Delphicus

So whan this Calcas knew by calculing
And eke by the answere of this God Apollo
That Grekes should such a people bring
Through-out which that Troy must be forgo
He cast anone out of the toune to go
For wel he wist by sort, that Troy should
Distroied be, ye would who so nold

Wherfore to departen softely
Took purpose ful this forknowing wise
And to the Grekes host ful priuely
He stale anone, and they in curteis wise
Did him both worship and seruice
In trust that he hath cunning hem to rede
In euery peril, which that was to drede

Great rumour rose, whan it was first espied
In all the toune, and openly was spoken
That Calcas traitour fled was and allied
To hem of Grece, and cast was to be wroken
On him, that falsly hath his faith broken
And said: he and al his kinne atones
Were worthy to be brent both fell and bones

Now had Calcas left in this mischaunce
Un wist of this false and wicked dede
A doughter, which was in great penaunce
And of her life she was ful sore in drede
And wist neuer what best was to rede
And as a widow was she, and all alone
And nist to whom she might make her mone

Creseid was this ladies name aright
As to my dome, in al Troies cite
Most fairest lady, fer passing euery wight
So angelike shone her natiue beaute
That no mortall thing semed she
And therwith was she so parfite a creature
As she had be made in heuning of nature

This lady, that al day herd at eare
Her fathers shame, fulhed, and trasoun
(Ful nigh out of her wit for sorow and feare
In widowes habite large of samite broun)
Before Hector on knees she fel adoun
His mercy bad, her selfe excusing
With pitous voice, and tenderly weping

Now was this Hector pitous of nature
And saw that she was sorowful begone
And that she was so faire a creature
Of his goodnesse he gladed her anone
And said: let your fathers treason gone
Forthy with mischance, a ye your selfe in ioy
Dwelleth with vs, while you list in Troy

And all the honour, þ men may do you haue
As ferforth as though your father dwelt here
Ye shul haue, and your body shul men saue
As fer as I may ought enquire and here
And she him thanked with full humble chere
And after would, and it had ben his will,
Tooke her leaue, went home and held her still

And in her house she abode with such meine
As til her honour nede was to hold
And while she was dwelling in that cite
She kept her estate, and of yong and old
Ful wel beloued, and wel men of her told
But whether that she children had or none
I rede it nat, therfore I let it gone

The things fellen as they don of werre
Betwixen hem of Troy and Grekes oft
For some day boughten they of Troy it derre
And eke the Grekes founden nothing soft
The folke of Troy: and thus fortune aloft
And vnder eft gan hem to whelmen both
After her course, aie while ỹ they were wroth

But how this toune came to destruccion
Ne falleth not to purpose me to tel
For it were a long digression
Fro my matter, and you to long to dwel
But the Troyan gestes, as they fel
In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dite
Who so ỹ can, may reden hem as they write

But though the grekes hem of Troy shetten
And her cite beleged al about
Her old vsages nold they not letten
As to honouren her gods ful deuout
But aldermost in honour out of dout
They had a relike hight Palladion
That was her trust abouen euerichon

And so befel whan comen was the time
Of April, whan clothed is the mede
With new grene, of lusty veer the prime
And swete smelling flowres white and rede
In sondry wise she wed as I rede
The folke of Troy, their obseruaunces old
Palladions feest went for to hold

Vnto the temple in all their best wise
Generally there went many a wight
To herken of Palladions seruice
And namely many a lusty knight
And many a lady fresh, and maiden bright
Ful wel arayd both most and leest
Both for the season and the hie feest

Among these other folke was Creseida
In widdowes habite blacke: but natheles
Right as our first letter is now an a
In beaute first, so stode she makeles
Her goodly loking gladded all the prees
Nas neuer seene thing to be praised derre
Nor vnder cloud blake so bright a sterre

As was Creseide, they saiden euerichone
That her beheld in her blake wede
And yet she stode ful low and stil alone
Behind other folke in litel stede
And nie the dore vnder shames drede
Simple of atire, and debonaire of chere
With full assured loking and manere

This Troilus as he was wont to gide
His yong knightes ladde hem vp and doune
In thilke large temple on euery side
Beholding aie the ladies of the toune
Now here now there, for no deuocioune
Had he to none, to reuen him his rest
But gan to praise and lacke whom he lest

And in his walke ful fast he gan to waiten
If knight or squier of his companie
Gan for to syke, or let his eyen baiten
On any woman, that he could espy
He would smile, and hold it a foly
And say hem thus: O lord she slepeth soft
For loue of the, whan thou turnest ful oft

I haue herd tel pardieux of your liuing
Ye louers, and eke your lewd obseruaunces
And which a labour folke haue in winning
Of loue, and in keping such doutaunces
And whan your pray is lost, wo and penaunces
O, very fooles, blind and nice be ye
There is not one can ware by an other be

And with ỹ word he gan cast vp the brow
Ascaunces lo, is this not wel ispoken
At which the God of Loue gan loken row
Right for dispite, and shope him to be wroken
He bidde anon his bow was not broken
For sodainly he hitte him at the full
And yet as proud a pecocke gan he pul

O blind world, O blind entencion
How often falleth all theffect contraire
Of surquedry and foule presumpcioun
For caught is proud, and caught is debonaire
This Troilus is clomben on the staire
And litel weneth that he mote descenden
But all day falleth that fooles wenden

As proud bayard begynneth for to skippe
Out of the way, so pricketh him his corne
Till he a lash haue of the long whippe
Than thinketh he, though I prance al beforne
First in the traise, full fatte and new ishorne
Yet am I but an horse, and horses law
I must endure, and with my feres draw

So

So fared it by this fiers and proud knight
Though he a worthy kings sonne were
And wend nothing had had such might
Ayenst his wil, that should his hert stere
Yet with a loke his hert wox on fire
That he that now was most in pride aboue
Wox sodainly most subiect vnto loue

And sodainly for wonder wext astoned
And gan her bet behold in thrifty wise (ned
O very God thought he, where hast thou won-
That art so faire, and goodly to deuise
Therwith his hart gan to sprede and rise
And soft sighed, lest men might him here
And caught ayen his first playing chere

For thy ensample taketh of this man
Ye wise, proud, and worthy folkes all
To knowen loue, which that so sone can
The fredome of your herts to him thrall
For euer it was, and euer it be shall
That loue is he that al thing may bind
For no man may fordo the law of kind

She nas nat with the most of her stature
But all her limmes so well answering
Weren to womanhode, that creature
Was neuer lasse mannish in seming
And eke the pure wise of her meaning
Shewed wel, that men might in her gesse
Honour, estate, and womanly noblesse

That this be soth, hath preued and doth yet
For this (trow I) ye know al and some
Men reden nat that folke han greater wit
Than they, ỹ han ben most with loue inome
And strengest folke ben therwith ouercome
The worthiest and greatest of degre
This was and is, and yet men shal it se

Tho Troilus, right wonder wel withal
Gan for to like her meaning and her chere
Which somdele deignous was, for she let fal
Her loke a lite a side, in such manere
Alcauncs, what may I nat standen here
And after that her loking gan he light
That neuer thought him seme so good a sight

And truelich that sitte well to be so
For alderwisest han therwith ben pleased
And they that han ben aldermost in wo
With loue, han ben comforted most and eased
And oft it hath the cruell hert apeased
And worthy folke made worthier of name
And causeth most to dreden vice and shame

And of her loke in him there gan to quicken
So great desire, and such affection
That in his harts bottom gan to sticken
Of her his fixe, and depe impression
And though he erst had pored vp and doun
Than was he glad his homes in to shrinke
Unnethes wist he how to loke or winke

Now sith it may nat goodly be withstond
And is a thing so vertuous in kind
Refuseth nought to loue, for to ben bond
Sith as him seluen list he may you bind
The yerd is bette that bowen wol a wind
Than that that brest, and therfore I you rede
Now followeth him, that so well can you lede.

Lo, he that lete him seluen so conning
And scorned hem that loues paines dreen
Was ful vnware that loue had his dwelling
Within the subtel stremes of her eyen
That sodainly him thought he felt dien
Right with her loke, the spirit in his hert
Blessed be loue, that thus can folke conuert

But for to tellen forth in speciall
As of this kings sonne, of which I told
And leuen other thing collaterall
Of him thinke I my tale forth to hold
Both of his ioy, and of his cares cold
And his werke, as touching this matere
For I it gan. I wol therto refere

She this in black, liking to Troilus
Ouer al thing he stode for to behold
But his desire, ne wherfore he stode thus
He neither chere made, ne word told
But from a ferre, his maner for to hold
On other thing somtime his loke he cast
And eft on her, while that the seruice last

Within the tẽple he went him forth playing
This Troilus, of euery wight about
On this lady, and now on that loking
Where so she were of toune, or of without
And vpon cas befel, that through a rout
His eye perced, and so depe it went
Til on Creseid it smote, and there it stent

And after this, nat fullish al a whaped
Out of the temple all esily he went
Repenting him that he euer had yaped
Of loues folke, lest fully the dissent
Of scorne fel on him selfe, but what he ment
Lest it were wist on any maner side
His wo he gan dissimulen and hide

Whan he was fro this temple thus departed
He streight anon vnto his palais turneth
Right with her loke, through shotten & darted
All taineth he in lust that he sojourneth
And al his chere and spech also he burneth
And aie of loues seruaunts euery while
Him self to wry, at hem he gan to smile

And said lord, so they liue al in lust
Ye louers for the commingest of you
That seruest most ententifelich and best
Him tire as often harme therof as prow
Your hire is quite ayen, ye God wote how
Not wel for wel, but skorne for good seruise
In faith your order is reuled in good wise

In no certaine ben your obseruaunces
But it a self few points be
Ne nothing asketh so great attendaunces
As doeth your lay, and that know all ye
But that is not the worst, as mote I the
But told I you the worst point, I leue
Al said I soth, ye wolden at me greue

But take this, that ye louers oft eschew
Or els done of good entencion
Ful oft thy lady wol it misseconstrew
And deme it harme in her opinion
And yet if she for other enchelon
Be wroth, then shalt thou haue a groin anone
Lord, wel is him that may bene of you one

But for al this, whan that he seeth his time
He held his pees, non other bote him gained
For loue began his fethers so to lime
That wel vneth vnto his folke he fained
That other besy nedes him distramed
So wo was him, that what to done he nist
But bad his folke to gone where as hem list

And whan that he in chambre was alone
He doune on his beddes fete him sette
And first he gan to sike, and eft to grone
And thought aie on her so withouten lette
That as he satte and woke, his spirit mette
That he her saugh, and temple, & all the wise
Right of her loke, and gan it new auise

Thus gan he make a mirrour of his mind
In which he saugh all holly her figure
And that he wel coud in his hert find
It was to him a right good auenture
To loue such one, and if he did his cure
To seruen her, yet might he fal in grace
Or els, for one of her seruaunts pace

Imagining, that trauaile for grame
Ne might, for so goodly one be lorne
As she, ne him for his desire no shame
All were it wist, but in prise and vp borne
Of all louers, wel more than before
This argumented he, in his ginning
Ful vnauised of his wo comming

Thus toke he purpose loues craft to sew
And thought he would worken priuely
First to hide his desire in mew
From euery wight ybore, all ouerly
But he might ought recouered ben therby
Remembring him, that loue to wide yblow
Yelt bitter frute, though swete sede be sow

And ouer all this, full mokel more he thought
What for to speke, and what to holden inne
And what to arten, her to loue he sought
And on a song anone right to beginne
And gan loud on his sorow for to winne
For with good hope, he gan fully assent
Creseide for to loue, and nought repent

And of his song not only his sentence
As write mine auctour called Lolius
But plainly saue our tonges difference
I dare wel say, in all that Troilus
Saied in his song, lo euery word right thus
As I shal saine, and who so list it here
Lo next this verse, he may it find here

¶ The song of Troilus.

¶ If no loue is, O God what fele I so
And if loue is, what thing and which is he
If loue be good, from whence cometh my wo
If it be wicke, a wonder thinketh me
Whan euery turment and aduersite
That cometh of him, may to me sauery thinke
For aie thrust I the more that ich it drinke

And if that at mine owne lust I brenne
From whēce cometh my wailing & my pleint
If harme agree me, wherto plaine I thenne
I not, ne why, vnwery that I feint
O quicke death, o swete harme so queint
How may of the in me, be such quantite
But if that I consent that it so be

And if that I consent, I wrongfully
Complaine wois, thus polled to and fro
Al sterelesse within a bote am I
A midde the see, a twixen winds two
That in contrary stonden euer mo
Alas, what is this wonder maladie?
For heat of cold, for cold of heat I die

And

And to the God of loue thus saide he
With pitous voice, O lord now yours is
My spirite, which that ought yours be
You thonke I lord, ỹ han me brought to this
But whether goddesse or woman ywis
She be, I not which, that ye do me serue
But as her man I wol aie liue and sterue.

Ye stonden in her eyen mightely
As in a place to your vertue digne
Wherfore lorde, if my seruice or I
May liken you, so bethe to me benigne
For mine estate royal here I resigne
Into her honde, and with ful humble chere
Become her man, as to my lady dere.

In him ne deigned sparen blode royall
The fire of loue, wherefro God me bielle
Ne him forbare in no degre for all
His vertue, or his excellent prowesse
But helde hun as his thrall lowe in distresse
And brende him so in sundrie wise aie newe
That sixtie times a day he lost his hewe.

So muchel daie fro daie his own thought
For lust to her, gan quicken and encrease
That euerich other charge he sette at nought
For thy full ofte, his hotte fire to cease
To seen her goodly loke he gan to preasse
For therby to ben eased wel he wende
And aie the nere he was, the more he brende.

For aie the nere the fire the hotter is
This (trow I) knoweth all this company
But were he ferre or nere, I dare say this
By night or daie, for wisedome or folie
His harte, which that is his brestes eye
Was aie on her, that fairer was to seen
Than euer was Helein, or Polixene.

Eke of the day there passed nat an houre
That to hunselfe a thousand time he saide
God goodlie, to whom I serue and laboure
As I best can, now would God I preieide
Ye woulden on me rue, er that I deide
My dere harte alas, mine heele and hewe
And life is loste, but ỹe woll on me rewe.

All other dredes weren from him fledde
Both of thassiege, and his saluation
Ne in desire none other fownes bredde
But arguments to his conclusion
That she on him would han compassion
And he to been her man, while he maie dure
Lo here his life, and from his death his cure.

The sharpe shoures fell, of armes preue
That Hector or his other brethren didden
Ne made him onely therefore ones meue
And yet was he, where so men went or ridden
Found one the best, and lengest time abiden
There perill was, and eke did such trauaile
In armes, that to thinke it was meruaile.

But for none hate he to the Grekes had
Ne also for the rescous of the toun
Ne made him thus in armes for to mad
But onely lo, for this conclusioun
To liken her the bet for his renoun
Fro daie to daie in armes so he spedde
That the Grekes as the death him dredde.

And fro this forth tho reft him loue his slepe
And made his meate his foe, and eke his sorow
Gan multiplie, that who so toke kepe
It shewed in his hew both euen and morow
Therfore a title he gan him for to borowe
Of other sickenesse, lest men of him wende
That the hotte fire of loue him brende.

And saied he had a feuer, and fared amis
But were it certain I can nat saie
If that his Ladie vnderstode nat this
Or fained her she nist, one of the twoie
But well rede I, that by no maner woie
Ne semed it that she on him rought
Or of his paine, what so euer he thought.

But than felt this Troilus such wo
That he was welnigh wood, for aie his drede
Was this, that she some wight loued so
That neuer of him she would han taken hede
For which him thought he felte herte blede
Ne of his wo ne durst he nought begin
To tellen her, for all this world to win.

But whan he had a space from his care
Thus to himselfe full oft he gan to plaine
He saied, O foole now art thou in the snare
That whilom iapedest at loues paine
now art thou hēt, now gnaw thin own chain
Thou were aie woned eche louer reprehende
Of thing fro which thou canst not thee defend.

What woll now euery louer saine of thee
If this be wist? But euer in thine absence
Laughen in scorne, and sain lo there goth he
That is the man of great sapience
That helde vs louers leste in reuerence
Now thāked be god, he may gon on ỹ daunce
Of hem that loue lithe febly amaunce.

But O thou wofull Troilus, God would
Sith thou must louen, through thy destine
That thou beset wer of such one, that should
Know all thy wo, all lacked her pite
But also could in loue towards thee
Thy lady is, as frost in Winter Mone
And thou hot, as Snowe in fire is sone.

God would I were ariued in the port
Of death, to which my sorow woll me lede
Ah Lord, to me it were a great comfort
Than were I qute of languishing in drede
For by my hidde sorowe yblowe in brede
I shall be iaped been a thousand time
More than that foole, of whose foly mē rime.

But nowe help God, & ye swete, for whom
I plaine, ytaught ye neuer wight so fast
O mercie dere harte, and helpe me from
The death, for I, while that my life may last
More than my selfe woll loue you to my last
And with som frendly loke gladeth me swete
Though neuer more thing ye me behete.

These words, and full many an other mo
He spake, and called ever in his complent
Her name, for to tellen her his wo
Till nigh that he in salt teres dreint
All was for nought, she heard nat his pleint
And whan that he bethought on that folie
A thousand folde his wo gan multiplie.

Bewailing in his chamber thus alone
A frende of his, that called was Pandare
Came ones in vnware, and heard him grone
And sawe his frend in such distresse and care
Alas (qd he) who causeth all this fare?
O mercie God, what vnhap may this mene?
Han now thus sone Grekes made you lene?

Or hast thou some remorce of conscience?
And art now fall in some deuocion
And wailest for thy sinne and thine offence
And hast for ferde caught contricioun
God saue hem, that besieged han our toun
That so can laie our iolitie on presse
And bring our lustie folke to holinesse.

These wordes saied he for the nones all
ꝑ with such thing he mizt him angry maken
And with his angre doen his sorowe fall
As for a time, and his corage awaken
But well wist he, as ferre as tongs spaken
There nas a man of greater hardinesse
Than he ne more desired worthinesse.

What case (qd. Troilus) or what aventure
Hath guided thee to seen me languishing
That am refuse of euery creature?
But for the loue of God, at my praying
Go hence away, for certes my dying
Woll thee disease, and I mote nedes dey
Therfore go waie, there nis no more to sey.

But if thou wene I be thus sicke for drede
It is nat so, and therefore scorne nought
There is another thing I take of hede
Wel more thā ought ꝑ Grekes hā yet wrought
Which cause is of my deth for sorow & thought
But though that I now tell it thee ne lesse
Be thou nat wroth, I hide it for the besse.

This Pādare ꝑ nigh malt for wo & routh
Full often saied alas, what may this be
Now frend (qd he) if euer loue or trouth
Hath been er this betwixen thee and me
Ne do thou neuer such a cruelte
To hiden fro thy frende so great a care
Wost thou not well that I am Pandare?

I woll parten with thee all thy paine
If it so be I do thee no comfort
As it is frendes right, sothe for to saine
To enterparten wo, as glad disport
I haue and shall, for true or false report
In wrong and right yloued thee all my line
Hide not thy wo fro me, but tell it blive.

Than gan this sorowfull Troilus to like
And saied him thus, God leue it be my best
To tellen thee, for sith it may thee like
Yet woll I tell it, though my harte brest
And well wote I, thou maiest doe me no rest
But lest thou deme I trust nat to thee
Now herke frend, for thus it stant with me.

Loue, ayenst the which who so defendeth
Him selfen most, him alderlest anaileth
With dispeire so sorowfully me offendeth
That streight vnto ꝑ death mine hart saileth
Therto desire, so brenningly me assaileth
That to been slain it were a greater ioie
To me, than king of Grece be and of Troie.

Suffiseth this, my full frend Pandare
ꝑ I haue saied, for now wotest thou my wo
And for the loue of God my colde care
So hide it well, I tolde it neuer to mo
For harmes mighten folowen mo than two
If it were wist, but be thou in gladnesse
And let me sterue vnknow of my distresse.

How hast thou thus vnkindly and long
Hid this fro me, thou foole (qd Pandarus)
Parauenture thou maist after such one long
That mine auise anone may helpen vs
This were a wonder thing (qd Troilus)
Thou couldest neuer in loue thy selfen wisse
How deuill maiest thou bringen me to blisse.

Yea Troylus, now herken (qd Pandare)
Though I be nice, it happeth often so
That one that axes doeth full euill fare
By good counsaile can kepe his frend therfro
I haue my selfe seine a blinde man go
There as he fell, that could loken wide
A foole may eke a wise man oft gide.

A whetstone is no keruing instrument
But yet it maketh sharpe keruing tolis
And after thou wost ỏ I haue aught miswent
Eschue thou that, for such thing to schole is
Thus often wise men been ware by foolis
If thou so doe, thy wit is well bewared
By his contrarie is euery thing declared.

For how might euer swetnesse haue be know
To him, that neuer tasted bitternesse
Ne no man wot what gladnesse is I trowe
That neuer was in sorowe, or some distresse
Eke white by black, by shame eke worthines
Eche set by other, more for other semeth
As men may seen, and so the wise it demeth.

Sith thus of two contraries is o lore
I that haue in loue so oft assaied
Grenaunces, ought connen well the more
Counsailen thee, of that thou art dismaied
And eke thee ne aught not been euill apaied
Though I desire with thee for to bere
Thine heauie charge: it shall thee lasse dere.

I wote well that it fared thus by me
As to thy brother Paris, an hierdelle
Which that cleped was Oenone
Wrote in a complaint of her heuinesse
Ye saine the letter that she wrote, I gesse
Nay neuer yet parfay (qd Troilus)
Now (qd Pandare) herkeneth it was thus.

Phebus that first found art of medicine
(Qd she) and could in euery wightes care
Remedy and rede, by herbes he knewe fine
Yet to himselfe his conning was full bare
For loue had him so bounden in a snare
All for the doughter of king Admete
That all his craft ne could his sorowe bete.

Right so fare I, vnhappie for me
I loue one best, and that me smerteth sore
And yet parauenture can I reden thee
And nat my selfe, repreue me no more
I haue no cause I wote well for to sore
As doeth an hauke, that listeth for to plaie
But to thine helpe, yet somwhat can I saie.

And of o thing, right siker maiest thou be
That certain, for to dien in the pain
That I shall neuer mo discouer thee
Ne by my trouth, I kepe nat restrain
Thee fro thy loue, although it were Helein
That is thy brothers wife, if iche it wist
Be what she be, and loue her as thee list.

Therefore, as frendfullich in me assure
And tell me platte, what is thine encheson
And finall cause of wo, that ye endure
For doubteth nothing, mine entencion
Nas nat to you of reprehension
To speake as nowe, for no wought may bireue
A man to loue, till that him list to leue.

And weteth wel, that both two been vices
Mistrusten all, or elis all leue
But well I wote, the meane of it no vice is
As for to trusten some wight is a preue
Of trouth, and for thy would I fain remeue
Thy wrong conceipt, and do the somwhat trust
Thy wo to tell, and tell me if thee lust.

The wise eke saieth, wo him that is alone
For and he fall, he hath none help to rise
And sith thou hast a felow, tell thy mone
For this nis nought certain the next wise
To winnen loue, as teachen vs the wise
To wallowe and wepe, as Niobe the quene
Whose teares yet in marble been yseen.

Let be thy weping, and thy drerinesse
And let vs lissen wo, with other speche
So may thy wofull time seme lesse
Delite nought in wo, thy wo to seche
As doen these fooles, that her sorowes eche
With sorowe, whan they han misauenture
And lissen nought to seechen other cure.

Men saine to wretche is consolation
To haue an other felowe in his paine
That ought well been our opinion
For bothe thou and I of loue plaine
So full of sorowe am I, sothe to saine
That certainly, no more hard grace
May sit on me, for why there is no space.

If God wol, thou art nought agast of me
Lest I would of thy lady thee begile
Thou wost thy selfe, whom that I loue parde
As I best can, gon sithen long while
And sithen thou wost, I do it for no wile
And sith I am he, that thou trusteth most
Tel me somwhat, sens all my wo tho wostе

Yet Troilus for all this no worde saide
But long he lait still, as he dead were
And after this, with siking he abraide
And to Pandarus voice he lent his care
And vp his eyen cast he, and than in feare
Was Pandarus, lest that in frenesye
He should fall or els sone deye

And said awake full wonderliche & sharpe
What sloumbrest thou, as in a litargie
Or art thou like an Asse to the harpe
That hereth soun, whan men ỳ strings plye
But in his minde, of that no melodie
Way sinke han to gladen, for that he
So dull is, in his bestialitie

And with this, Pandare of his wordes stint
But Troilus to him no thing answerd
For why, to tel was nought his entent
Neuer to no man, for whom that he so ferde
For it is said, men maken oft a yerde
With which the maker is him selfe ybeten
In sundrie maner, as thele wise treten.

And namelich in his counsaile telling
That toucheth loue, that ought ben serre
For of himselfe it wol inough out spring
But if that it the bet gouerned be
Eke sometime it is craft to seme fle
From thing, which in effect men hunten fast
All this gan Troilus in his hart cast

But nathelelle, whan he had herd him crie
Awake he gan, and sike wonder sore
And said frend, though that I still lie
I nam not deefe, now pcace and cry no more
For I haue herd thy wordes, and thy lore
But suffer me my fortune to bewailen
For thy prouerbes may nought me auailen

Nor other cure canst thou none for me
Eke I nill not ben cured, I woll die
What know I of the queue Niobe
Let be thine old ensamples, I the prey
Na frend (qd. Pandarus) therfore I sey
Such is delite of fooles to bewepe
Her wo, but seken boot they ne kepe

Now know I that reson in the fasteth
But tell me, if I wist what she were
For whom that the al misaucenture asteth
Durst thou that I told it in her eere
Thy wo sith thou darst not thy selfe for feere
And hee besought, on the to han some routh
Why nay (qd. he) by God and by my trouth

What, not as bestly (qd. Pandarus)
As though mine owne life lay in this nede
Why no parde sir (qd. this Troilus)
And why for that thou shouldest neuer spede
Wost thou that wel: pe that is out of drede
(Qd. Troilus) for al that euer ye comme
She wol to no such wretch as I be wonne

(Qd. Pandarus) alas what may this be
That thou dispairest art, thus causeleslle
What, liueth nat thy lady, benedicite
How wost thou so that thou art graceleslle
Such euil is not alway bot cleslle
Why put not impossible thus thy cure
Sith thing to come is oft in auenture

I graunt wel that thou endurest wo
As sharpe as doth he Tesiphus in hell
Whose stomake foules tiren euer mo
That highten vultures, as bokes tell
But I may not endure that thou dwell
In so vnskilful an opinion
That of thy wo nis no curacion

But ones nil thou, for thy toward herte
And for thine ire, and folish wilfulnesse
For wantrust tellen of thy sorowes smerte
Ne to thine owne helpe, do besinesse
As moch as speke a word ye more or lesse
But liest as he that of life nothing retch
What woman could loue such a wretch

What may she demen other of thy deth
Yf thou thus die, and she not why it is
But that for fear as yolden vp thy breth
For Grekes han besieged vs twis (this
Lord which a thanke shalt thou haue than of
Thus wol she saine, and al the toune atones
The wretch is deed, the diuel haue his bones

Thou maist alone here wepe, crie, & knele
But loue a woman that she wote it nought
And she wol quite it that thou shalt not fele
Vnknow vnkist, and lost that is vnsought
What many a man hath loue ful dere abought
Twenty winter that his lady ne wist
That neuer yet his ladies mouth he kist

What

What, should he therfore falle in dispaire,
Or be recreant for his owne tene,
Or slain himself, all by his ladie faire
Nate nate: but euer in one be fresh and grene
To serue and loue, his dere hartes quene
And thinke it is a guerdone her to serue
A thousand part more, than he can deserue

Loke vp I saie, and tell me what she is
Anone, that I may gone about thy nede
Know ich her aught, for my loue tell me this
Than would I hope rather for to spede
Tho gan the bene of Troilus to blede
For he was hit, and wore all redde for shame
A ha (qd Pandare) here begynneth game,

And of that worde tooke hede Troilus
And thought anone, what folie he was in
And how that for he him saied Pandarus
That for to slain himself, might he not win
But bothe done vnmanhode and a sinne
And of his death his ladie nought to wite
For of his wo, God wot she knewe full lite.

And with that worde, he gan him for to shake
And saied theke, thou shalt her name tell
But tho gan sely Troilus for to quake
As though men should han had him into hell
And saied alas, of all my wo the well
Than is my swete foe called Creseide
And wel nigh with ye worde for feare he deide.

And with ye thought, he gan full sore sike
And saied, alas: what is me best to doe
To whom Pandare saied, if thee like
The best is, that thou tell me thy wo
And haue my trouth, but if thou finde it so
I be thy bote, or it been full long
To peces do me draw, and sithen hong.

And whan ye Pandare heard her name neuen
Lord he was glad, and saied, frend so dere
Now fare aright, for Ioues name in heuen
Loue hath belet thee well, be of good chere
For of good name, and wisedome, and maners
She hath inough, and eke of gentilnesse
If she be faire, thou wost thy self I gesse

Yea, so saiest thou (qd Troilus) alas
But God wot it is naught the rather so
Full harde it were to helpen in this cas
For well finde I, that fortune is my fo
Ne all the men that ride con or go
Nay of her cruel whele the harme withstode
For as her list, she plaieth with free bond.

Ne neuer sy a more bounteous
Of her estate, ne a gladder ne of speach
A frendlier, ne more gracious
For to doe well, ne lasse had nede to seach
What for to doen, and all this bet to ech
In honour, to as ferre as she may stretch
A kings hart seemeth by hers a wretch

(Qd Pandarus) than blamest thou fortune
For thou art worthy, ye now at erst I see
Wost thou not wel that fortune is commune
To euery maner wight, in some degree
And yet thou hast this comfort, lo parde
That as her ioyes moten ouergone
So mote her sorowes passen euerichone.

And for to comfort thee the more
That lith thy lady vertuous is all
So followeth it, that there is some pite
Amongs all these other in generall
And for they se that thou in special
Require nought, that is ayen her name
For vertue stretcheth not him self to shame

For if her whele stint, any thing to tourne
Than cesseth she fortune anone to be
Now lith her whele by no way may soiourne
What wost thou of her mutabilitie
Right as thy selues lust will doen by thee
Or that she be nought ferre fro thine helping
Par auenture thou hast cause for to sing.

But wel is me, that euer I was borne
That thou belet art in so good a place
For by my trouth in loue I durst haue sworne
The should neuer haue stode so fare a grace
Ne wost thou why, for thou were wont to chace
At loue in scorne, and for dispite him call
Saint Idiote, lord of these fooles all

And therfore wost thou what, I thee beseech
Let be thy wo, and tourning to the ground
For who so list haue healing of his leche
To him behoueth first inwarde his wounde
To Cerberus in hell ne be I bound
Were it for my suster all thy sorowe
By my will she should be thine to morowe,

Holw

To rime wel this boke til I haue do
We nedeth here none other art to vse
For why, to euery louer I me excuse
That of no sentement I this endite
But out of latin, in my tong it wryte

Wherfore I nil haue neither thanke ne blame
Of al this worke, but pray you mekely
Disblame ethyme if any word be lame
For as mine auctour said, so say I
Eke though I speake of loue vntelingly
No wonder is, for it nothing of new is
A blind man can not iudgen wel in hewis

I know that in forme of speech is chaunge
Within a thousand yere, and wordes tho
That hadde pryse, now wonder nice & strange
Thinketh hem, and yet they spake hem so
And spedde as wel in loue, as men now do
Eke for to winnen loue, in sondry ages
In sondry londs, sondry ben vsages

And for thy, if it happe in any wise
That here be any louer in this place
That herkeneth, as the story wol deuise
How Troilus came to his ladies grace
And thinketh, so wold I not loue purchace
Or wondreth on his speech or his doyng
I not, but it is to me no wondring

For euery wight, which that to Rome went
Halt nat o path, ne alway o manere
Eke in some lond were al the gamen shent
Yf that men fard in loue, as men don here
As thus, in open doyng or in there
In writing, in forme, or said our sawes
For thy men saine, ech country hath his lawes

Eke scarcely ben there in this place thre
That haue in loue said like, and done in al
For to this purpose this may liken the
And the right nought, yet al is done or shal
Eke some men graue in tre, some in stone wal
As it betide, but sith I haue begonne
Myne authour shal I folow, as I konne.

Explicit Prohemium.

N May that mother is of monethes glade
That fresh flours, blew, white, and rede
Ben quicke ayen, that winter dede made
And ful of baume is fleting euery mede
When Phebus doth his bright beams sprede
Right in the white Bole, it so betidde
As I shal sing, on Maies day the thridde

That Pandarus for all his wise spech
Felt eke his part of loue shottes kene
That coud he neuer so wel of louing prech
It made his hew a day ful oft grene
So hope it, that him fil that day a tene
In loue, for which in wo to bedde he went
And made er it were day ful many a went

The swalow Progne, with a sorowful lay
Whan morow cone, gan make her waimenting
Why she forshapen was, and euery lay
Pandare a bed, halfe in a slombering
Til she so nigh him made her waimenting
How Thereus gan forth her suster take
That with the noise of her he gan awake

And to cal, and dresse him vp to rise
Remembring him, his arand was to done
From Troilus, and eke his great empryse
And cast, & knew in good plite was the mone
To done voiage, and toke his way ful soone
Vnto his neces paleis, there beside
Now Janus God of entre, thou him gide

Whan he was come vnto his neces place
Where is my lady, to her folke (qd. he)
And they him told, and in forth he gan pace
And found two other ladies sit and she
Within a paued parlour, and they thre
Herden a maiden hem reden the gest
Of the siege of Thebes, while hem lest

(Qd. Pandarus) madame God you se
With your boke, and al the company
Eigh vncle mine, welcome iwis (qd. she)
And vp she rose, and by the hond in hie
She toke him fast, and said, this night thrie
To good mote it turne, of you I met
And with ỹ word, she doun on bench him set

Ye nece, ye shul faren wel the bet
Yf God wol al this yere (qd. Pandarus)
But I am sory that I haue you let
To herken of your boke ye praisen thus
For Goddes loue what saith it, tel it vs
Is it of loue, or some good ye me lere
Uncle (qd. she) your maistresse is nat here

With that they gonnen laugh, and tho she seid
This romaunce is of Thebes, that we rede
And we haue herd how ỹ king Laius deid

Through

Through Edippus his sonne, and al the dede
And here we stinten, at these letters rede
How the bishop, as the boke can tell
Amphiorax, fill through the ground to hell

(Qd. Pandarus) al this know I my selue
And al thassiege of Thebes, and the care
For herof ben there maked bokes twelue
But let be this, and tell me how ye fare
Do way your barbe, and shew your face bare
Do way your boke, rise vp and let vs daunce
And let vs done to May some obseruaunce

Eigh, God forbid (qd. she) be ye mad
Is that a widowes life, so God you saue
By God ye maken me right sore adrad
Ye ben so wild, it semeth as ye raue
It sat me wel bet aie in a caue
To bide, and rede on holy saints liues
Let maidens gon to daunce, and yong wiues.

As euer thriue I (qd. this Pandarus)
Yet could I tel a thing, to don you play
Now vncle dere (qd. she) tell it vs
For Goddes loue, is than thassiege awey
I am of Grekes ferd, so that I dey
Nay nay (qd. he) as euer mote I thriue
It is a thing wel bet than such fiue

Ye holy God (qd. she) what thing is that
What bet than such fiue? eigh nay twis
For all this world, ne can I reden what
It should ben, some iape I trow it is
And but your seluen tel vs what it is
Why wit is for to arede it al to leene
As helpe me God, I not what that ye meene

And I your borow, ne neuer shal (qd. he)
This thing be told to you, as mote I thriue
And why vncle mine, why so (qd. she)
By God (qd. he) that wol I tel as bliue
For prouder woman is there none on liue
And ye it wist, in al the toune of Troy
I iape nat, so euer haue I ioy

Tho gan she wondren more than before
A thousand fold, and doune her eien cast
For neuer sith the time that she was bore
To knowen thing, desired she so fast
And with a sike, she said him at the last
Now vncle mine, I nil you not displese
Nor asken more, that may do you disese

So after this, with many words glade
And frendly tales, and with mery chere
Of this & that they speke, and gonnen wade
In many an vnkouth glad and depe matere
As frends done, whan they beth yfere
Till she gan asken him how Hector ferd
That was the tounes wall, and Grekes yerd

Ful wel I thanke it God, said Pandarus
Saue in his arme he hath a litle wound
And eke his fresh brother Troilus
The wise worthy Hector the secound
In whom that euery vertue list habound
As al trouth, and al gentillesse
Wisedome, honour, fredome, and worthinesse

In good faith eme (qd. she) that liketh me
They faren wel, God saue hem both two
For trewlich, I hold it great deute
A kings sonne in armes wel to do
And be of good condicions therto
For great power, and moral vertue here
Is seld ysene in one person ifere

In good faith that is soth (qd. Pandarus)
But by my trouth, the king hath sonnes twey
That is to meane, Hector and Troilus
That certainly though that I should dey
They ben as void of vices, dare I sey
As any men that liuen vnder sonne
Her might is wide yknow, & what they conne

Of Hector nedeth it no more for to tel
In all this world, there nis a better knight
Than he that is of worthinesse the wel
And he wel more vertue hath than might
This knoweth many a wise & worthy knight
The same prise of Troilus I sey
God helpe me so, I know not such twey

By God (qd. she) of Hector that is soth
Of Troilus the same thing trow I
For dredelesse, men telleth that he doth
In armes day by day, so worthely
And beateth him here at home so gently
To euery wight, that al prise hath he
Of hem that me were leuest praised be

Ye say right soth iwis (qd. Pandarus)
For yesterday, who so had with him ben
Might haue wondred vpon Troilus
For neuer yet so thicke a swarme of been
Ne flew, as Grekes from him ganne fleen
And through the feld in euery wights eere
There was no cry, but Troilus is there

Now here, now there, he hunted hem so fast

How often hast thou made thy nice iapes
And saied, that loues seruaunts euerichone
Of niccte, ben very Goddes Apes
And some would mouch her meat alone
Ligging a bedde, and make hem for to grone
And some thou saidest haue a blaunch feuere
And praidest God, they should neuer keuere

But he that departed is in euery place
Is no where hole, as writen clerkes wise
What wonder is, if such one haue no grace
She wost thou how it fareth of some seruice
As plant a tree, or herbe, in soudry wise
And on the morow pul it up as blue
No wonder is, though it may neuer thriue

And some of hem, take on hem for the cold
More than inough, so saidest thou ful oft
And some han fained oft time and told
How that they waken, whan they slepe soft
And thus they would haue set hemself a loft
And natheleſſe were vnder at the last
Thus saidest thou, and iapedest ful fast

And sith þ God of loue hath thee bestowed
In place digne vnto thy worthinesse
Stond fast, for to good port hast thou rowed
And of thy self, for any heuinesse
Hope alway wel, for but if drerinesse
Or ouer hast our both labour shend
I hope of this to maken a good end

Yet saidest thou, that for the more part
These louers would spoke in generall
And thoughten it was a siker art
For failing for to allaien ouer all
Now may I iape of thee, if that I shall
But natheleſſe, though that I should dey
Thou art none of tho, I dare wel sey.

And wost thou why, I am the lasse afered
Of this matter, with my nece trete
For this haue I heard say of wise lered
Was neuer man, or woman yet beyete
That was inapt to suffer loues hete
Celestiall, or eis loue of kind
For thy some grace I hope in her to find

Now bete thy brest, and say to God of loue
Thy grace Lord, for now I me repent
If I misspake, for now my self I loue
Thus say with all thine hert, in good entent
(Qd. Troilus) ah Lord, I me consent
And pray to thee, my iapes thou forgeue
And I shall neuer more while I liue.

And for to speke of her in speciall
Her beaute to bethinken, and her youth
It sit her nought, to ben Celestiall
As yet, though that her list both and kouth
And truly it sit her wel right nouth
A worthy knight to louen and cherice
And but she doe, I hold it for a vice

Thou saiest wel (qd. Pandare) & now I hope
That thou the Goddes wrath hast al apeased
And sith thou hast wepten many a drope
& said soch thing, wherwith thy God is pleased
Now would neuer God, but thou were eased
And thinke well the, of whom rest all thy wo
Hereafter may thy comfort ben also.

Wherfore I am, and wol be aie redy
To pain me to doe you this seruice
For both you to please, this hope I
Here after, for ye ben both wise
And can it counsaile kepe in soch a wise
That no man shal the wiser of it be
And so we may ben gladded all thre.

For thilke ground, þ beareth þ wedes wicke
Beareth eke these holsome herbes, as ful oft
Next the foule nettle, rough and thicke
The Rose wexeth, soot, smoth, and soft
And next the valey is the hill a loft
And next the derke night the glad morow
And also ioy is next the fine of sorow.

And by my trouth I haue right now of the
A good conceit, in my wit as I gesse
And what it is, I will now that thou se
I thinke that sith Loue of his goodnesse
Hath thee conuerted out of wickednesse
That thou shalt ben the best post I leue
Of all his lay, and most his foes greue.

Now looke that attempre be thy bridel
And for the best aie suffer to the tide
Or elis all our labour is on idell
He hasteth wel, that wisely can abide
Be diligent and true, and aie wel hide
Be lusty, free, persteuer in thy seruise
And all is well, if thou werke in this wise

Ensample why, se now these great clerkes
That erren aldermost ayen a law
And ben conuerted from her wicked werkes
Through grace of God þ lest hē to withdraw
Thā arne they folk that han most god in awe
And strengest faithed ben I vnderstond
And con an errour alder best withstond

Than

Whan Troilus had herd Pandare assented
To ben his helpe, in louing of Creseide
Wiext of his wo, as who saith vntormented
But hotter wext his loue, and than he said
Vnto Pandare, as though his hart plaid
Now blisful Venus helpe, er that I sterue
Of thee Pandare, I mow some thank deserue

But dere frend, how shal my wo be lesse
Till this be done, and good eke tel me this
How wilt thou saine of me and my distresse
Lest she be wroth, this drede I most iwis
Or wol not heren al, how it is
Al this drede I, and eke for the manere
Of thee her Eme, she nil no such thing here

(Qd. Pandarus) thou hast a full great care
Lest the chorle may fal out of the moone
Why lorde I hate of the the nice fare
Why, entremete of that thou hast to doone
For Goddes loue, I bid the a boone
So let me alone, and it shal be thy best
Why frend (qd. he) than done right as the lest

But herke Pandare o word, for I nold
That thou in me wendest so great folp
That to my lady I desiren should
That toucheth harme, or any vilany
For dredelesse me were leuer die
Than she of me aught els vnderstood
But that, that might sownen in to good

Tho lough this Pandarus, and anon answerd
And I thy borow, sle no wight doth but so
I raught not though she stood and herd
How that thou saiest, but farwel I wol go
Adieu, be glad, God spede vs both two
Yeue me this labour, and this beginnelle
And of my spede, be thine al the swetnesse

Tho Troilus gan doune on knees to fall
And Pandare in his armes hent fast
And said, now sle on the Grekes all
Yet parde, God shal helpen at last
And dredelesse, if that my life may last
And God to forne, lo some of hem shall smert
And yet me athinketh ỹ this auaunt maskert

Now Pandare, I can no more say
Thou wise, thou wost, thou maist, thou art all
My life, my death, hole in thine hond I lay
Help me now (qd. he) Yes by my trouth I shal
God yeld the frend, and this in special
(Qd. Troilus) that thou me recommaund
To her that may me to the death commaund

This Pandarus tho, desirous to serue
His ful frend, he said in this manere
Farwel, and thinke I wol the thanke deserue
Haue here my trouth, and that thou shalt here
And went his way, thinking on this matere
And how he best might beseechen her of grace
And find a time therto, and a place

For euery wight that hath a house to selle
He renneth nat the werke for to beginne
With rakel hond, but he wol bide a stounde
And send his herte fine out fro within
Alderfirst his purpose for to winne
Al this Pandare in his hart thought
And cast his werke, full wisely er he wrought

But Troilus lay tho no lenger doun
But anon vpon his stede bay
And in the feld he plaied the loun
Who was that Greeke, ỹ with him met ỹ daie
And in the toun, his maner tho forth ate
So goodly was, and gat him so in grace
That ech him loued, that loked in his face

For he became the frendlicst wight
The gentilest, and eke the most fre
The thriftiest, and one the best knight
That in his time was, or might be
Deed were his iapes and his cruelte
His high port, and his maner straunge
And ech of hem, gan for a vertue chaunge

Now let vs stint of Troilus a stounde
That fareth like a man, that hurt is sore
And is somdele of aking of his wounde
Plesled wel, but heled no dele more
And as an ealy pacient the lore
Abite, of him that goth about his cure
And thus he dryueth forth his auenture.

Explicit liber primus.

Vt of these blacke wawes for to
saile
O wind, the weder gynneth
clere
For in the see, the bote hath such
trauaile
Of my conning, that vneth I it stere
This see clepe I the tempestous matere
Of dispaire, that Troilus was in
But now of hope the kalendes begin

O lady mine that called art Cleo
Thou be my spede fro this forth, and my muse

To rime wel this boke til I haue do
We nedeth here none other art to vse
For why, to euery louer I me excuse
That of no sentement I this endite
But out of latin, in my tong it write

Wherfore I nil haue neither thanke ne blame
Of al this worke, but pray you mekely
Disblame ethme if any word be lame
For as mine auctour said, so say I
Eke though I speake of loue wtelingly
No wonder is, for it nothing of new is
A blind man can not iudgen wel in hewis

I know that in forme of speech is chaunge
Within a thousand yere, and words tho
That hadde pryse, now wonder nice & strange
Thinketh hem, and yet they spake hem so
And spedde as wel in loue, as men now do
Eke for to winnen loue, in sondry ages
In sondry londs, sondry ben vsages

And for thy, if it happe in any wise
That here be any louer in this place
That herkeneth, as the story wol deuise
How Troilus came to his ladies grace
And thinketh, so wold I not loue purchace
Or wondreth on his speech or his doyng
I not, but it is to me no wondring

For euery wight, which that to Rome went
Haltnat o path, ne alway o manere
Eke in some lond were al the gamen shent
Yf that men fard in loue, as men don here
As thus, in open doyng or in chere
In visitung, in forme, or speech vsuel
For thy men saine, ech country hath his lawe

Eke scarsely ben there in this place thre
That haue in loue said like, and done in al
For to this purpose this may liken the
And the right nought, yet al is done or shal
Eke some men graue in tre, some in stone wal
As it betide, but sith I haue begonne
Myne authour shal I folow, as I konne.

Explicit Prohemium.

NOw May that mother is of monethes glade
That fresh flours, blew, white, and rede
Ben quicke ayen, that winter dede made
And ful of baume is fletting euery mede
When Phebus doth her bright beams spredе
Right in the white Bole, it so betidde
As I shal sing, on Maies day the thridde

That Pandarus for all his wise speche
Felte eke his part of loue shottes kene
That coud he neuer so wel of louing preche
It made his hew a day ful oft grene
So hope it, that him fil that day a tene
In loue, for which in wo to bedde he went
And made er it were day ful many a went

The swalow Progne, with a sorowful lay
Whan morow come, gan make her waimenting
Why she forshapen was, and euery day
Pandare a bed, halfe in a slombering
Til she so nigh him made her waimenting
How Tereus gan forth her suster take
That with the noise of her he gan awake

And to cal, and dresse him vp to rise
Remembring him, his arand was to done
From Troilus, and eke his great empryse
And cast, & knew in good plite was the mone
To done voiage, and take his way ful soone
Unto his neces paleis, there beside
Now Janus God of entre, thou him gide

When he was come vnto his neces place
Where is my lady, to her folke (qd. he)
And they him told, and in forth he gan pace
And found two other ladies sit and she
Within a paued parlour, and they thre
Herden a maiden hem reden the gest
Of the siege of Thebes, while hem lest

(Qd. Pandarus) madame God you se
With your boke, and al the company
Eigh uncle mine, welcome iwis (qd. she)
And vp she rose, and vp the hond in hie
She toke him fast, and said, this night thrie
To good mote it turne, of you I met
And with ỹ word, she doun on bench him set

Ye nece, ye shul faren wel the bet
If God wol al this yere (qd. Pandarus)
But I am sory that I haue you let
To herken of your boke ye praisen thus
For Goddes loue what saith it, tel it vs
Is it of loue, or some good ye me lere
Uncle (qd. she) your maistresse is nat here

With that they gonnen laugh, and tho she seid
This romaunce is of Thebes, that we rede
And we haue herd how ỹ king Laius deid

Through

Through Edippus his ſonne, and al the dede
And here we ſtinten, at theſe letters rede
How the biſhop, as the boke can tell
Amphiorax, fill through the ground to hell

(Qd. Pandarus) al this know I my ſelue
And al thaſſiege of Thebes, and the care
For herof ben there maked bokes twelue
But let be this, and tell me how ye fare
Do way your barbe, and ſhew your face bare
Do way your boke, riſe vp and let vs daunce
And let vs done to May ſome obſeruaunce

Eigh, God forbid (qd. ſhe) be ye mad
Is that a maidowes life, ſo God you ſaue
By God ye maken me right ſore adrad
Ye ben ſo wild, it ſemeth as ye raue
It ſat me wel bet aie in a caue
To bide, and rede on holy ſaints liues
Let maidens gon to daunce, and yong wiues.

As euer thriue I (qd. this Pandarus)
Yet could I tel a thing, to don you play
Now vncle dere (qd. ſhe) tell it vs
For Goddes loue, is than thaſſiege awey
I am of Grekes ferd, ſo that I dey
Nay nay (qd. he) as euer mote I thriue
It is a thing wel bet than ſuch fiue

Ye holy God (qd. ſhe) what thing is that
What bet than ſuch fiue? eigh nay twis
For all this world, ne can I reden what
It ſhould ben, ſome iape I trow it is
And but your ſeluen tel vs what it is
Why wit is for to arede it al to leene
As helpe me God, I not what that ye meene

And I your borow, ne neuer ſhal (qd. he)
This thing be told to you, as mote I thriue
And why vncle mine, why ſo (qd. ſhe)
By God (qd. he) that wol I tel as bliue
For prouder woman is there none on liue
And ye it wiſt, in al the toune of Troy
I iape nat, ſo euer haue I ioy

Tho gan ſhe wondren more than before
A thouſand fold, and doune her eien caſt
For neuer ſith the time that ſhe was bore
To knowen thing, deſired ſhe ſo faſt
And with a ſike, ſhe ſaid him at the laſt
Now vncle mine, I nil you not diſpleſe
Nor aſken more, that may do you diſeſe

So after this, with many words glade
And frendily tales, and with mery chere
Of this & that they ſpeke, and gonnen wade
In many an vnkouth glad and depe matere
As frends done, whan they beth yfere
Till ſhe gan aſken him how Hector ferd
That was the tounes wall, and Grekes yerd

Ful wel I thanke it God, ſaid Pandarus
Saue in his arme he hath a litle wound
And eke his freſh brother Troilus
The wiſe worthy Hector the ſecound
In whom that euery vertue lift habound
As al trouth, and al gentilleſſe
Wiſedome, honour, fredome, and worthineſſe

In good faith eme (qd. ſhe) that liketh me
They faren wel, God ſaue hem both two
For trewlich, I hold it great deute
A kings ſonne in armes wel to do
And be of good condicions therto
For great power, and moral vertue here
Is ſeld yſene in one perſon ifere

In good faith that is ſoth (qd. Pandarus)
But by my trouth, the king hath ſonnes twey
That is to meane, Hector and Troilus
That certainly though that I ſhould dey
They ben as void of vices, dare I ſey
As any men that liuen vnder ſonne
Her might is wide yknow, & what they conne

Of Hector nedeth it no more for to tel
In all this world, there nis a better knight
Than he that is of worthineſſe the wel
And he wel more vertue hath than might
This knoweth many a wiſe & worthy knight
The ſame priſe of Troilus I ſey
God helpe me ſo, I know not ſuch twey

By God (qd. ſhe) of Hector that is ſoth
Of Troilus the ſame thing trow I
For dredeleſſe, men telleth that he doth
In armes day by day, ſo worthely
And beareth him here at home ſo gently
To euery wight, that al priſe hath he
Of hem that me were leueſt praiſed be

Ye ſay right ſoth iwis (qd. Pandarus)
For yeſterday, who ſo had with him ben
Might haue wondred vpon Troilus
For neuer yet ſo thicke a ſwarme of been
Ne flew, as Grekes from him ganne fleen
And through the feld in euery wights eere
There was no cry, but Troilus is there

Now here, now there, he hunted hem ſo faſt

There nas but Grekes blood, and Troilus
Now him he hurt, and him al doun he cast
Ate where he went it was araied thus
He was her death, and sheild and life for vs
That as ỹ day there durst him non withstond
While that he held his blody swerd in hond

Therto he is the frendelist man
Of great estate, that euer I saw my line
And where him list, best felowship can
To such as him thinketh able for to thriue
And with that word, tho Pandarus as blyue
He toke his leaue, and said I wol gon hen
Nay, blame haue I uncle (qd. she then)

What eileth you to be thus wery soone
And namelich of women, wol ye so?
Nay sitteth doun, by God I haue to done
With you, to speke of wisdome er ye go
And euery wight that was about hem tho
That herd that, gan ferre away to stond
While they two had al that him list in hond

When ỹ her tale all brought was to an end
Of her estate, and of her gouernaunce
(Qd. Pandarus) now time is that I wend
But yet I say, arlseth let vs daunce
And cast your widowes habite to mischaunce
What list you thus your selfe to disfigure
Sith you is tidde so glad an auenture

But wel bethought, for loue of God (qd. she)
Shal I nat weten what ye meane of this
No, this thing asketh leaser tho (qd. he)
And eke me would much greue twis
If I it told, and ye it toke amis
Yet were it bette my tong to hold stil
Than say a soth, that were ayenst your wil

For nece by the goddesse Minerue
And Jupiter, that maketh the thonder ring
And the blisful Uenus, that I serue
Ye ben the woman in this world liuing
Withouten paramours, to my weting
That I best loue, and lothest am to greue
And that ye weten wel your selfe I leue

I wis mine uncle (qd. she) graunt mercy
Your frendship haue I founden euer yet
I am to no man holden trewly
So much as you, and haue so litel quit
And with the grace of God, emforth my wit
As in my gilte, I shal you neuer offend
And if I haue er this I wol amend

But for the loue of God, I you beseech
As ye be he, that I loue most and trist
Let be to me you fremed maner speech
And say to me your nece, what you list
And with that word, her uncle anon her kist
And said, gladly my leue nece dere
Take it for good, that I shal say you here

With that, she gan her eien doune to cast
And Pandarus to cough gan alite
And said: Nece alway lo, to the last
How so it be, that some men hem delite
With subtel art her tales for tendite
Yet for al that in her entencion
Her tale is all for some conclusion

And sith thend is euery tales strength
And this mater is so behouely
What should I paint or drawen it on length
To you that ben my frend so faithfully
And with that word he gan right inwardly
Beholden her, and loken in her face
And said, on such a mirrour good grace

Than thought he thus, if I my tale endite
Aught hard, or make a proeesse any while
She shal no sauour haue ther in but lite
And trow I would her in my wil begile
For tender wittes wenen al be while
Wher as they can nat plainlich understond
For thy her wit to seruen wol I fond

And loked on her in a besy wise
And she was ware that he beheld her so
Ah lord (qd. she) so fast ye me auise
Saw ye me neuer er now, what say ye no
Yes yes (qd. he) and bet wol er I go
But by my trouth I thought now, if ye
Be fortunate, for now men shal it se

For euery wight, some goodly auenture
Somtime is shape, if he it can receiuen
But if he nil take of it no cure
When that it cometh, but wilfully it weiuen
Lo, neither case, nor fortune him deceiuen
But right his owen slouth and wretchednesse
And such a wight is for to blame I gesse

Good auenture, O belle nece haue ye
Ful lightly founden, and ye conne it take
And for the loue of God, and eke of me
Catch it anone, lest auenture slake
What should I lenger proeesse of it make
Yeue me your hond for in this world is non
If that you list a wight so wel begon

And

And sith I speke of good entencioun
As I to you haue told wel here before
And loue as wel your honour and renoun
As any creature in all the world yborne
By al the othes that I haue you sworne
And ye be worthy therfore or worne I lie
Ne shal I neuer sene you eft with eie

Wo worth the faire Gemme vertuelesse
Wo worth that herbe also that doth no bote
Wo worth the beaute that is routhelesse
Wo worth that wight ẏ trede eth vnder fote
And ye that ben of beaute croppe and rote
If therwithal in you ne be no routh
Than is harme ye leuen by my trouth

Beth nat agast, ne quaketh nat, whereto
Ne changeth nat for fere so your hew
For hardely the worst of this is do
And though my tale as now be to you new
Yet trust alway, ye shal me find trew
And were it thing that me thought vnsitting
To you would I no such tales bring

And also thinke wel, that this is no gaud
For me were leuer, thou, I and he
Were honged, than I should ben his baud
As high as men might on vs all yse
I am thine Eme, the shame were to me
As wel as the, if that I should assent
Chrough mine abet, ẏ he thine honour shent

Now my good eme, for goddes loue I pray
(Qd. she) come of and tel me what it is
For both I am agast what ye wol say
And eke me longeth it to wit iwis
For whether it be wel, or be amis
Say on, let me not in this feare dwel
So wol I done, now herkeneth I shal tel.

Now vnderstond, for I you nought requere
To bind you to him, through no beheste
Saue only that ye make him better chere
Than ye haue don er this, and more feste
So that his life be saued at the leste
This al and some, and plainly our entent
God helpe me so, I neuer other ment

Now nece mine, the kings dere sonne
The good wise worthy, fresh and free
Which alway for to done wel is his wonne
The noble Troilus so loueth the
That but ye helpe it wol his bane be
Lo here is al, what should I more sey
Doth what you list, to make him liue or dey

Lo, this request is nought but skil iwis
Ne dout of reason parde is there none
I set the worst, that ye dreden this
Men would wonder to sene him come ẏ gone
Ther ayenst answere I thus anone
That euery wight, but he be foole of kind
Wol deme it loue of frendshep in his mind

But if ye let him dye, I wol steruen
Haue here my trouth, nece I nil not lien
Al should I with this knife my throte kerue
With that the teres burst out of his eyen
And said, if that ye done vs both dien
Thus giltelesse, than haue ye filthed faire
What mend ye, though ẏ we both apaire

What, who woll demen though he se a man
To temple gon, that he the images ceteth
Thinke eke, how wel and wisely that he can
Gouerne himselfe, that he nothing forfeteth
ẏ wher he cometh, he pris ẏ thonk him geteth
And eke therto he shal come here to seld
What force were it, though al the toun beheld

Alas, he which that is my lord so dere
That trew man, that noble gentle knight
That naught desireth, but your frendly chere
I se him dien, there he goth vpright
And hasteth him, with al his ful might
For to ben slaine, if his fortune assent
Alas that God you such a beaute sent.

Such loue of frendes reigneth al this toun
And wry you in that mantel euermo
And God so wis be my sauacioun
As I haue said, your best is to do so
But good nece, alway to stint his wo
So let your daunger, sugred ben alite
That of his death, ye be not al to wite

If it be so that ye so cruel be
That of his deth you listeth nought to retch
That is so trew and worthy, as we se
No more than of a iaper or a wretch
If ye be such, your beaute may not stretch
To make amends of so cruell a dede
Auisement is good before the nede

Creseide, which that herd him in this wise
Thought, I shal feien what he meaneth iwis
Now Eme (qd. she) what would ye deuise?
What is your rede, I should done of this?
That is wel said (qd. he) certaine best is
That ye him loue ayen for his loning
As loue for loue, is skilful guerdoning

Thinke eke how eld waſteth euery hour
In eth of you, a part of beaute
And therfore, er that age the deuour
Go loue, for old there wol no wight of the
Let this prouerbe, a loze vnto you be
To late ywarre, qd. beaute, whan it paſt
And eld daunteth daunger, at the laſt

The kings foole is wont to cry loud
Whã ỹ he thinketh a woman bereth her hie
So long mote ye liue, and all proud
Til Crowes fete grow vnder your eie
And send you than a mirrour in to prie
In which that ye may ſe your face a mozow
Nece, I bid wish you no moze ſozow

With this he ſtint, and caſt done the heed
And ſhe began to breſt and wepe anone
And ſaid, alas for wo, why nere I deed
For of this world, the faith is al agone
Alas, what ſhoulden ſtraunge vnto me done
When he that for my beſt frend I wend
Rate me to loue, and ſhould it me defend

Alas, I would haue truſted doubtles
That if that I, through my diſauenture
Had loued either him, or Achiles
Hector, or any other creature
He nold haue had mercy ne meſure
On me, but alway had me in repreue
This falſe world alas, who may it leue

What, is this al the ioy and al the feeſte
Is this your rede, is this my bliſful caas
Is this the very mede of your beheeſte
Is al this painted proeeſſe ſaid (alas)
Right for this ſinne, O lady mine Pallas
Thou in this dredeful caſe for me puruey
For ſo aſtoned am I, that I dey

With that ſhe gan ful ſozowfully to ſike
Ne may it be no bet (qd. Pandarus)
By God I ſhall no moze come here this wicke
And God to ſorne, that am miſtruſted thus
I ſe wel now, ye ſetten light of vs
Or of our death alas, I woful wretch
Might he yet liue, of me were nought to rech

O cruel God, o diſpitous Mart
O furies thre of hel, on you I cry
So let me neuer out of this houſe depart
If that I ment harme or vilany
But ſith I ſe my Lord mote nedes dye
And I with him, here I me ſhriue and ſey
That wickedly ye done vs both dey

But ſith it liketh you, that I be deed
By Neptunus that god is of the ſee
Fro this forth ſhal I neuer eeten breed
Til I mine owne hert blood may ſee
For certaine I wol die, as ſoone as he
And vp he ſtert, and on his way he raught
Til ſhe againe him by the lappe caught

Creſeide, which that wel nigh ſtarke for feare
So as ſhe was the ferfulleſt wight
That might be, and herd eke with her eere
And ſaw the ſorowful ernеſt of the knight
And in his praier ſaw eke none vnright
And for the harme eke that might fall more
She gan to rew, & dredde her wonder ſore

And thought thus, vnhappes fallen thicke
Alday for Loue, and in ſuch maner caas
As men ben cruel in hemſelfe and wicke
And if this man ſlee here himſelfe, alas
In my preſence, it nil be no ſolas
What men would of it deme, I can nat ſay
It nedeth me ful ſlighly for to play

And with a ſorowful ſigh, ſhe ſaid thry
Ah lord, what me is tidde a ſory chaunce
For mine eſtate lieth in a ieopardy
And eke mine Emes life lieth in balaunce
But natheleſſe, with goddes gouernaunce
I ſhal ſo done, mine honour ſhal I kepe
And eke his life, and ſtint for to wepe

Of harmes two, the leſſe is for to cheſe
Yet had I leuer maken him good chere
In honour, than mine Emes life to leſe
Ye ſaine ye nothing els me requere?
No wis (qd. he) mine owne nece dere:
Now wel (qd. ſhe) and I wol don my paine
I ſhal mine hert ayen my luſt conſtraine

But that I nil nat holden him in hond
Ne loue a man, that can I naught ne may
Ayenſt my wil, but els wol I fond
Mine honour ſaue, pleſen him fro day to day
Therto nold I not ones haue ſaid nay
But that I dredde, as in my fantaſie
But ceſſe cauſe, aie ceſſeth maladie

But here I make a proteſtation
That in this proceſſe if ye deper go
That certainly, for no ſaluacion
Of you, though that ye ſterue both two
Though al the world on o day be my fo
Ne ſhal I neuer on him haue other routh
I graunt wel (qd. Pandare) by my trouth

But

But may I truſt well to you (qd he)
That of this thing that ye han hight me here
Ye woll it holde truely vnto me
Yea doubteleſſe (qd ſhe mine vncle dere
Ne that I ſhal haue cauſe in this matere
(Qd he) to plain, or after you to preache
Why no parde, what nedeth moze ſpeache.

Tho fill they in other tales glade
Till at the laſt, O good eme (qd ſhe tho)
For loue of God which that vs both made
Tell me how firſt ye wiſten of his wo
Wot none of it but ye, he ſaied no
Can he wel ſpeake of loue (qd ſhe) I pzeie
Tell me, for I the bet ſhall me pouruie.

Tho Pandarus alite gan to ſmile
And ſaied: By my trouth I ſhall now tell
This other day, nat gon full long while
Within the paleis gardin by a well
Gan he and I, well halfe a daie to dwell
Right for to ſpeaken of an ordinaunce
How we the Grekes might en diſauaunce.

Sone after that we gone for to lepe
And caſten with our dartes to and fro
Till at the laſt, he ſaied, he would ſlepe
And on the graſſe adoune, he laied him tho
And I after gan to romen, to and fro
Till that I heard, as I walked alone
How he began, full wofully to grone.

Tho gan I ſtalke him ſoftly behinde
And ſikerly the ſothe for to ſaine
As I can clepe ayen now to my minde
Right thus to loue, he gan him for to plain
He ſaied: lorde, haue routh vpon my pain
All haue I been rebell in mine entent
Now (Mea culpa) Lorde I me repent.

O God, that at thy diſpoſicion
Ledeſt the fine, by iuſt purueiaunce
Of euery wight, my lowe confeſſion
Accept in gree, and ſende me ſuch penaunce
As liketh thee, but from me diſeſperaunce
That may my ghoſt depart alwaie fro the
Thou be my ſhilde, for thy benignitie.

For certes lord, ſo ſore hath ſhe me wounded
That ſtode in blacke, with loking of her eyen
That to mine hartes botome it is yfounded
Through which I wot, ỳ I muſt nedes dien
This is the worſt, I dare me not bewrien
And well the hoter been the gledes rede
Than men hem wren with aſhen pale & dede.

With that he ſmote his hed adoune anone
And gan to muttre, I nat what truely
And with that gan ſtill awaie to gone
And lete therof as nothing wiſt had I
And come again anon and ſtode him by
And ſaied awake, ye ſlepen all to long
It ſemeth nought that loue doth you wrong

That ſlepen ſo, that no man may you wake
Who ſeie euer er this ſo dull a man
Yea frend (qd he) doe ye your heddes ake
For loue, and let me liuen as I can
But lord that he for wo was pale and wan
Yet made he tho as freſh a countenaunce
As though he ſhould haue led ỳ newe daunce.

This paſſed forth, till now this other daie
It fell that I come coming all alone
Into his chambre, & found how that he laie
Upon his bedde: but man ſo ſore grone
Ne heard I neuer, and what was his mone
Ne wiſt I nought, for as I was comming
All ſodainly, he left his complaining.

Of which I toke ſomwhat ſuſpection
And nere I come, and found him wepe ſore
And God ſo wiſe be my ſaluacion
As neuer of thing had I no routh more
For neither with engine, ne with no lore
Unnethes might I fro the death him kepe
That yet fele I mine harte for him wepe.

And God wot neuer ſith that I was borne
Was I ſo buſie no man for to preache
Ne neuer was to wight, ſo depe ſworne
Er he me told, who might been his leache
But not to you rehearſen all his ſpeache
Or all his wofull worde for to ſowne
Ne bid me nought, but ye woll ſe me ſwone.

But for to ſaue his life, and els nought
And to non harme of you, thus am I driuen
And for the loue of God that vs hath wrought
Such chere him doth, that he & I may liuen
Now haue I plat to you mine harte ſhriuen
And ſith ye wote that mine entent is cleane
Take hede therof, for none euill I meane.

And right good thrift, I pray to God haue ye
That han ſuch one praught without en net
And be ye wiſe, as ye be faire to ſee
Well in the ring, than is the Rubie ſet
There were neuer two ſo well ymet
Whan ye been his all hale, as he is your
The mightie God yet graunt vs to ſee ỳ hour

Naie thereof ſpake I nat: A ha (qd ſhe)
As help me God, ye ſhenden euery dele
A mercie dere nece, anon (qd he)
What ſo I ſpake, I ment nought but wele
By Mars the God, that helmed is with ſtele
Now beth not wroth, my blood, my nece dere
Now well (qd ſhe) forgeuen be it here.

With this he toke his leaue, & home he wēt
Yea Lord how he was glad, & wel bigon
Creſeide aroſe, no lenger ſhe ne ſtent
But ſtreight into her cloſet went anon
And ſet her down, as ſtill as any ſtone
And euery worde gan vp and down to winde
That he had ſaied, as it came her to minde.

And worſe ſondele aſtoned in her thought
Right for the new caſe, but whan that ſhe
Was ful auiſed, tho found ſhe right nought
Of peril, why that ſhe ought aferde be
For man may loue of poſſibilitie
A woman ſo, his harte may to breſt
And ſhe nat loue ayen, but if her leſt.

But as ſhe ſat alone, and thought thus
Thalarme aroſe at ſis armoch all without
And men cried in the ſtrete, ſe Troilus
Hath right now put to flight ỹ Grekes rout
With that gonne all her meine for to ſhout
A, go we ſee, caſt vp the yates wide
For thrugh this ſtrete he mote to paleis ride.

For other waie is fro the yates none
Of Dardanus there open is the cheine
With that come he, and all his folke anone
An eaſie pace riding in routes tweine
Right as his happie daie was ſothe to ſeine
For which men ſaith may not diſtourbed be
That ſhall betide of neceſſitie.

This Troilus ſat on his baie ſtede
All armed ſaue his hedde, full richely
And wounded was his horſe, & gan to bleede
On which he rode a pace full ſoftely
But ſuch a knightly ſight truely
As was on him, was nat withouten faile
To loke on Mars, that God is of battaile.

So like a man of armes, and a knight
He was to ſeen, fulfilled of high proweſſe
For both he had a bodie, and might
To doen that thing, as well as hardineſſe
And eke to ſeen him in his geare dreſſe
So freſh, ſo yong, ſo weldy ſemed he
It was an heauen vpon him for to ſee.

His helme to hewen was in twentie places
That by a tiſſue hong, his backe behinde
His ſheld to daſhed with ſwerds & with maces
In which men might many an arowe finde
That thirled had horne, nerfe, and rinde
And aie the people cried, here cometh our ioie
And next his brother, holder vp of Troie.

For which he wext a little redde for ſhame
When he ſo heard the people vpon him crien
That to behold, it was noble a game
How ſoberliche he caſt adoune his eyen
Creſeide anone gan all his chere eſpien
And let it ſo ſoft in her harte ſinke
That to her ſelf ſhe ſaid, who yaue me drinke

For all her own thought, ſhe wexe al redde
Remembring her right thus lo this is he
Which ỹ min vncle ſwereth he mote be dedde
But I on him haue mercie and pitie
And with that thought, for pure aſhamed ſhe
Gan in her hedde to pull, and that as faſt
While he and all the people forth by paſt.

And gan to caſt, and rollen vp and down
Within her thought his excellent proweſſe
And his eſtate, and alſo his renoun
His witte, his ſhape, and eke his gentilneſſe
But moſte her fauour was, for his diſtreſſe
Was all for her, and thought it were a routh
To ſlaen ſuch one, if that he ment trouth.

Now might ſome enuious iangle thus
This was a ſodain loue, how might it be
That ſhe ſo lightly loued Troilus
Right for the firſt ſight: yea parde
Now who ſo ſaied ſo, mote he neuer thee
For euery thing, a ginning hath it nede
Er all be wrought, withouten any drede.

For I ſaie nat that ſhe ſo ſodainly
Yaf him her loue, but that ſhe gan encline
To liken him tho, and I haue tolde you why
And after that, his manhode and his pine
Made that loue within her gan to mine
For which by proceſſe, and by good ſeruice
He wanne her loue, and in no ſodain wiſe.

And all ſo blikfull Venus wele arayed
Satte in her ſeuenth houſe of heuen tho
Diſpoſed wele, and with aſpects payed
To help ſely Troylus of his wo
And ſothe to ſayne, ſhe nas nat all a foe
To Troylus, in his natiuitie
God wote, that wele the ſooner ſped he.

Now

Now let vs stint of Troilus a throw
That rideth forth, and let vs tourne fast
Vnto Creseide, that heng her hedde ful low
There as she satte alone, and gan to cast
Whereon she would apoinct her at the last
If it so were, her Eme ne would cesse
For Troilus, vpon her for to presse

And lord so she gan in her thought argue
In this matter, of which I haue you told
And what to doen best where, & what eschue
That plited she ful oft in many fold
Now was her hart warme, now was it cold
And what she thought, somwhat shal I write
As mine auctour listeth for tendite.

She thought first, that Troilus person
She knew by sight, and eke his genteinesse
And thus she said, all were it nought to doen
To graunt him loue, yet for his worthinesse
It were honor with play, and with gladnesse
In honest, with soch a Lord to deale
For mine estate, and also for his heale

Eke well woote I, my kings sonne is he
And sith he hath to se me soch delite
If I would vterlich his sight flie
Paraventure he might haue me in dispite
Through which I might stond in wors plite
Now were I wise, me hate to purchase
Without nede, there I may stand in grace.

In euery thing, I wot there lieth measure
For though a man forbid dronkenesse
He nought forbiddeth that euery creature
Be drinkelesse for alway as I gesse
Eke sith I wot for me is his distresse
I ne ought not for that thing him dispise
Sith it is so, he meaneth in good wise

And eke I know, of long time agone
His thewes good, and that he nis not nice
No bauntour same men, certain he is none
To wise is he, to doen so great a vice
Ne als I nil him neuer so cherice
That he shal make auaunt by iust cause
He shal me neuer bind in soch a clause.

Now set I case, the hardest is iwis
Men might demen that he loueth me
What dishonour were it vnto me this?
May ich him let of that, why nat parde?
I know also, and alway here and se
Men louen women all this toune about
Be they the wers? Why nay without doubt?

I thinke eke how, he worthy is to haue
Of all this noble toune the thriftiest
That women is, if she her honour saue
For out and out he is the worthiest
Saue only Hector, which that is the best
And yet his life lieth all now in my cure
But soch is loue, and eke mine auenture.

Ne me to loue, a wonder is it nought
For wel wote I my self, so God me spede
All wol I that none wist of this thought
I am one the fairest out of drede
And goodliest, who so that taketh hede
And so men saine in al the toune of Troy
What wonder is: though he of me haue joy

I am mine owne woman wel at ease
I thanke it God, as after mine estate
Right yong, and stond vntied in lustie lease
Without en icloulie, and such debate
Shall no husband saine to me checke mate
For either they been full of icloulie
Or maisterfull, or louen nouelrie.

What shal I doen? to what fine liue I thus?
Shall I not loue, in case if that me lest?
What pardieux I am not religious
And though that I mine hart e set at rest
Upon this knight, that is the worthiest
And kepe alway mine honor and my name
By all right it may doe me no shame.

But right as when the sunne shineth bright
In March, that changeth oft time his face
And that a cloud is put with wonde to flight
Which ouerspreate the Sunne, as for a space
A cloudy thought gan through her soule pace
That ouerspredde her bright thoughts all
So that for feare almost she gan to fall.

That thought was this: alas sith I am free
Should I now loue, and put in ieopardie
My libertie, and thrallen libertie
Alas, how durst I thinken that folie?
May I not well in other folke aspie
Her dredfull ioy, her constreint, and her pain
Ther loueth non, ꝑ she ne hath waie to plain

For loue is yet the most stormie life
Right of himselfe, that euer was begonne
For euer some mistrust, or nice strife
There is in loue, some cloud ouer the Sunne
Therto we wretched women nothing conne
Whan vs is wo, but wepe and sit and thinke
Our wretche is this, our owne wo to drinke.

Also

Alſo wicked tongues been ſo preſt
To ſpeake vs harme, eke men ben ſo vntrue
That right anon as ceſſed is her leſt
So ceſſeth loue, and forth to loue a newe
But harme ydoe is doen, who ſo is rue
For thouz theſe mē for loue hem firſt to rende
Full ſharpe beginning breaketh oft at ende.

How oft time may men rede and ſeen
The treaſon, that to women hath be doe
To what fine is ſuch loue, I can not ſeen
Or where becometh it, whan it is go
There is no wight that wote, I trowe ſo
Wher it becometh, lo no wight on it ſpurneth
That erſt was nothing, into naught turneth

How buſie (if I loue) eke muſt I be
To pleaſen hem, that iangle of loue, & demen
And coyen hem, that they ſay no harme of me
For though there be no cauſe, yet hem ſemen
Al be for harme, that folk her frends quemen
And who may ſtoppen euery wicked tong
Or ſoune of belles, while that they ben rong

And after that her thought gan for to clere
And ſaied, he which ỹ nothing vndertaketh
Nothing acheueth, be him lothe or dere
And with an other thought her hart quaketh
Than ſlepeth hope, and after drede awaketh
Now hote now cold, but thus betwixen twey
She riſt her vp, and went her for to pley.

Adoune the ſtaire, anon right tho ſhe went
Into her gardin, with her neces three
And vp and doun, they maden many a went
Flerippe and ſhe, Tarbe, and Antigone
To plaien, that it ioie was to ſee
And other of her women a great rout
Her folowed in the gardine all about

This yerde was large, & railed all the alies
& ſhadowed wel, with blomy bowes grene
And benched new, and ſonded all the waies
In which ſhe walketh arme in arme betwen
Till at the laſt Antigone the ſhene
Gan on a Troyan ſong to ſingen clere
That it an heauen was, her voice to here.

She ſaied: O loue, to whom I haue, & ſhal
Been humble ſubiect, true in mine entent
As I beſt can, to you Lord yeue iche all
For euermore mine hartes luſt to rent
For neuer yet thy grace no wight ſent
So bliſſull cauſe as me, my life to lede
In all ioy and ſuretie, out of drede.

The bliſſull God, hath me ſo wel beſet
In loue ywis, that all that beareth life
Imagynen ne could how to be bet
For Lord withouten telouſie or ſtrife
I loue one, which that moſt is ententife
To ſeruen well, vnwerily or vnfained
That euer was, & leſt with harme diſtained.

As he that is the well of worthineſſe
Of trouth groſid, mirrour of goodlihedde
Of wit Apollo, ſtone of ſiberneſſe
Of vertue roote, of luſte finder and hedde
Through which is all ſorowe fro my dedde
Iwis I loue him beſt, ſo doeth he me
Now good thrift haue he, wher ſo euer he be.

Whom ſhould I thanken but you god of loue
Of all this bliſſe, in which to bath I ginne
And thanked be ye Lord, for that I loue
This is the right life that I am in
To flemen all maner vice and ſinne
This doeth me ſo to vertue for to entende
That daie by daie I in my will amende.

And who that ſaieth that for to loue is vice
Or thraldome, though he fele in it diſtreſſe
He either is envious, or right nice
Or is vnmightie for his threwdneſſe
To louen, for ſuch maner folke I geſſe
Diffamen loue, as nothing of him knowe
They ſpeaken, but they bent neuer his bowe.

What is the Sunne worſe of kind right
Though that a man, for frbieneſſe of his eien
May not endure on it to ſee for bright
Or loue the worſe, that wretches on it crien
No wele is worth, that may no ſorowe dzien
And for thy, who that hath an hedde of verre
Fro caſt of ſtones ware him in the werre.

But I with all mine harte, & al my might
As I haue ſaied, will loue vnto my laſt
My dere harte, and all mine owne knight
In which mine harte growen is ſo faſt
And is in me, that it ſhall euer laſt
All dredde I firſt loue him to begin
Now wote I well there is no peril in.

And of her ſong right with ỹ worde ſhe ſtent
And therewithall, now nece (qd Creſeide)
Who made this ſōg, now with ſo good entēt
Antigone anſwerde anon, and ſaide
Madame ywis the goodlieſt maide
Of great eſtate in all the toune of Troie
And led her life in moſt honour and ioie.

For ſothe

Forloth so semeth it by her song
And tho Creseid, and gan therwith to sike
And saied: Lorde, is there such blisse emong
These louers, as they can faire endite
Yea wisse qd fresh Antigone the white
For all the folke that haue or been on liue
Ne con well the blisse of loue discriue.

But wene ye that euery wretch wote
The parfite blisse of loue, why nay ywis
They wenen all be loue, if one be hote
Do waie do waie, they wote nothing of this
Men mote aske of saintes, if it is
Ought faire in heuen, & why, for they can tell
And aske fendes, if it be foule in hell.

Creseide vnto ỹ purpose naught answerde
But saied, ywis it woll be night as fast
But euery worde, which that she of her herde
She gan to printen in her harte fast
And aie gan loue her lasse for to agaste
Than it did erst, and sinken in her herte
That she ware somwhat able to conuerte.

The daies honour, and the heauens eye
The nights foe, all this clepe I thee Sunne
Gan westren fast, and dounward for to wrie
As he that had his daies course ronne
And white things worden dimme and donne
For lacke of light, and sterres for to apere
That she and all her folke in went yfere

So whan it liked her to gon to reste
And voided weren they that voiden ought
She saied, that to slepen well her leste
Her women sone till her bedde her brought
Whan al was husht, than lay she stil & thought
Of all this thing the maner and the wise
Rehearce it nedeth not, for ye been wise

A nightingale vpon a cedre grene
Under the chamber wall, there as she laie
Full loude song ayen the Mone shene
Paraventure in his birdes wise a laie
Of loue, that made her harte fresh and gaie
That herkened she so long in good entent
Till at the last the dedde slepe her hent.

And as she slept, anon right tho her met
How that an Egle fethered white as bone
Under her brest his long clawes set
And out her harte he rent, and that anon
And did his harte into her brest to gon
Of which she nought agrose, ne nothing smart
And forth he flieth, with hart left for hart

Now let her slepe, and we our tales holde
Of Troilus, that is to Paleis ridden
Fro the scarmishe of which I tolde
And in his chamber sate, and hath abidden
Till two or three of his messengers yeden
For Pandarus, and soughten him full fast
Til they him found, & brought him at the last.

This Pandarus came leaping in at ones
And saied thus, who hath been wel ybete
To daie with swerdes, and slong stones
But Troilus, that hath caught him an hete
And gan to iape, and saied, Lorde ye swete
But rise and let vs soupe, and go to reste
And he answered him, do we as thee leste.

With all the hast goodly as they might
They sped hem fro the souper, and to bedde
And euery wight out at the doore him dight
And whider him list, vpon his waie him sped
But Troilus thought that his harte bledde
For wo, till that he heard some tiding
And saied frend, shall I now wepe or sing.

(Qd Pandarus) be still and let me slepe
And doe on thy hoode, thine nedes spedde be
And chese if thou wolt sing, daunce, or lepe
At short wordes thou shalt trowe me
Sir, my nece woll doen well by thee
And loue thee best, by God and by my trothe
But lacke of pursute make it in thy slothe.

For thus forthy I haue thy werk begon
Fro daie to daie, till this daie by the morowe
Her loue of frendship haue I to thee won
And therefore hath she laid her faith to borowe
Algate a foote is hameled of thy sorowe
What should I lenger sermon of it holde
As ye haue heard before, all he him tolde.

But right as floures thrugh the cold of night
Iclosed, stoupen in her stalkes lowe
Redressen hem ayen the Sunne bright
And spreden in her kinde course by rowe
Right so gan tho his eyen vp to throwe
This Troilus, and saied: O Venus dere
Thy might, thy grace, yheried be it here.

And to Pandarus he held vp both his hondes
And saied, Lord all thine be that I haue
For I am whole, & broken been my bondes
A thousand Troyes, who so that me yaue
Eche after other, God so wis me saue
Ne might me so gladen, lo mine harte
It spredeth so for ioye it woll to starte.

But

But lord how shal I doen, how shal I liue
Whan shal I next my dere harte see
How shal this long time away be dryuen
Till that thou be ayen at her fro me
Thou maist answere, abide abide: but he
That hangeth by the neck, soth to saine
In great disease abideth for the paine.

All easely now, for the loue of Marte
(Od Pandarus) for euery thing hath time
So long abide, till that the night departe
For also siker as thou liest here by me
And God to forme, I woll be there at prime
And for thy werke somwhat, as I shall saie
Or on some other wight this charge laie.

For parde God wot, I haue euer yet
Been redy thee to serue, and this night
Haue I not fained, but emforthe my wit
Doen all thy lust, & shall with all my might
Doe now as I shall saine, and fare aright
And if thou nilte, wite all thy selfe the care
On me is nought along thine euill fare.

I wote well that thou wiser art than I
A thousand folde: but if I were as thou
God help me so, as I would vtterly
Right of mine owne honde write her now
A letter, in which I would her tellen how
I fare amisse, and her beseche of routh
Now helpe thy selfe, and leaue it for no slouth

And I my selfe shall therwith to her gon
And whan thou wost ꝑ I am with her there
Worthe thou vp on a courser right anon
Yea hardely, right in thy best gere
And ride forth by ꝑ place, as naught ne were
And thou shalt find vs (if I may) sitting
At some windowe, into the strete loking.

And if thee list, than maiest thou vs salue
And vpon me make thou thy countenaunce
But by thy life beware, and fast eschue
To tarien ought, god shild vs fro mischaunce
Ride forth thy waie, & hold thy gouernaunce
And we shal speake of thee somwhat I trow
Whan thou art gon, to doe thine eares glow.

Touching thy letter thou art wise ynough
I woot thou nilt it deigneliche endite
As make it with these arguments tough
Ne scrueinisshe or craftely thou it write
Beblotte it with thy teares ese alite
And if thou write a goodly worde all soft
Though it be good, rehearce it not to oft.

For though the best Harpour vpon liue
Would on the best sowned iollie Harpe
That euer was, with all his fingers fiue
Touche aye o string, or aye o warble Harpe
Were his nayles pointed neuer so sharpe
It should make euery wight to dull
To heare his glee, and of his strokes full.

Ne iombre eke no discordant thing yfere
As thus, to vsen termes of Phisike
In loues termes holde of thy matere
The forme alwaie, and doe that it be like
For if a painter would painte a pike
With Asses feete, and hedded as an Ape
It cordeth not, so were it but a iape.

This counsaile liked well vnto Troilus
But as a dredfull louer, he saied this
Alas my dere brother Pandarus
I am ashamed for to write ywis
Lest of mine innocence I saied amis
Or that she nolde it for dispite receiue
Thã wer I ded, there nist it nothing weiue.

To that Pandare answerde, if thee lest
Doe that I saie, and let me therewith gon
For by that Lorde that formed East & west
I hope of it to bring answere anon
Right of her hond, and if that thou nilte non
Let be, and sorie mote he been his liue
Ayenst thy lust, that helpeth thee to thriue.

(Od Troylus) depardieux iche assent
Sithe that thee list, I woll arise and write
And blissfull God prate iche with good entent
The viage and the letter I shall endite
So spede it, and thou Mincrua the white
Yeue thou me witte, my letter to deuise
And set him doun, & wrote right in this wise

First he gan her his right Ladie call
His hartes life, his lust, his sorowes leche
His blisse, and eke these other termes all
That in such case ye louers all seche
And in full humble wise, as in his speche
He gan him recommaunde vnto her grace
To tell all how, it asketh mokell space.

And after this full lowly he her praied
To be nought wrothe, though he of his folie
So hardie was to her to write, and saied
That loue it made, or els must he die
And pitously gan mercie for to crie
And after that he saied, and lyed full loude
Himself was little worthe, and lasse he coud.

And

And that she would haue his cõning excused
That litel was, and eke he dradde her so
And his vnworthinesse aie he acused
And after that than gan he tel his wo
But that was endelesse withouten ho
And said, he wold in trouth alway him hold
And redde it ouer, and gan the lettre fold

Ful dredefully tho gan she stond still
And toke it not, but all her humble chere
Gan for to change, and said script nor bill
For loue of God, that toucheth such matere
Ne bring me none, and also vncle dere
To mine estate haue more regard I praie
Than to his lust, what should I more say.

And with his salt teres gan he bath
The ruby in his signet, and it sette
Upon the wexe deluerlich and rath
Therwith a thousand times, er he lette
He kist tho the lettre that he shette
And said, lettre a blisful destine
The shapen is, my lady shal the se

And loketh now if this be reasonable
And letteth not for fauour ne for slouthe
To saine a sothe, now is it couenable
To mine estate, by God and by my trouthe
To take it, or to haue of him routhe
In harming of my selfe, or in repreue
Beare it aien, for him that ye on leue.

This Pandare toke the lettre, & that betime
A morow, and to his neces paleis stert
And fast he swore, that it was passed prime
And gan to iape, and said twas mine hert
So fresh it is, although it sore smert
I may nat slepe neuer a Maies morow
I haue a toly wo, a lusty sorow

This Pandarus gan on her for to stare
And said, now is this the greatest wonder
That euer I sawe, let be this nice fare
To deth mote I smitten be with thonder
If for the citie, which that stondeth yonder
Would I a letter vnto you bring or take
To harme of you: what list you thus it make

Creseide, whan that she her vncle herd
With dredeful hart, and desirous to here
The cause of his comming, thus answerd
Now by your faith mine vncle (qd. she) dere
What maner winds gideth you now here
Tel vs your toly wo, and your penaunce
How ferforth be ye put in loues daunce

But thus ye faren wel nigh all and some
That he that most desireth you to serue
Of him ye retche lest, where he become
And whether that he liue, or els sterue
But for all that, that euer I may deserue
Refuse it not (qd he) and hente her fast
And in her bosome the letter doune he thrast

By God (qd. he) I hope alway behind
And to laugh, it thought her hart brest
(Qd. Pandarus) loke alway that ye find
Game in mine hood, but herkeneth if you lest
Ther is right now come into the toune a gest
A Greke espy, and telleth new things
For which I come to tel you new tidings

And said her, now cast it awaie anon.
That folke may sene, and gauren on vs twey
(Qd she) I can abide till they be gon
And gan to smile, and said him, eme I pray
Such answere as you list your selfe, purvey
For truely I woll no letter write
No, than wol I (qd he) so ye endite

Into the gardin go we, and ye shal here
Al priuely of this a long sermoun
With that they wenten arme in arme yfere
Into the gardin fro the chambre doun
And whan he was so farre, that the soun
Of that he spake, no man heren might
He said her thus, and out the letter plight

* Therwith she lough, and said go we dine
And he gan at him selfe iape fast
And said nece, I haue so great a pine
For loue, that eueriche other day I fast
And gan his best iapes forth to cast
And made her so to laugh at his folie
That she for laughter went for to die

Lo, he that is al holly yours free
Him recommaundeth lowly to your grace
And sent you this letter here by me
Auiseth you on it, whan ye han space
And of some goodly answere you purchace
Or helpe me God so, plainely for to saine
He may not long liuen for his paine

And when that she was comen into the hall
Now eme (qd she) we wol go dine anon
And gan some of her women to her call
And streight into her chambee gan she gone
But of her besinesse this was one
Amongs other things out of drede.
Full priuily this letter for to rede

Auised word by word in euery line
And found no lacke, she thought he coud his
And vp it put and went her in to dine (good
And Pandarus, that in a study stood
Er he was ware she toke him by the hood
And said, ye were caught er that ye wilt
I vouchsafe (qd. he) do what you lift

Tho wilhen they, and set hem doun and ete
And after noone ful slighly Pandarus
Gan draw him to the window nie the strete
And said nece, who hath araied thus
The yonder house, that stant aforyene vs
Which house (qd. she) and gan for to beholde
And knew it wel, & whose it was him tolde

And fellen forth in speche of things smale
And saten in the window both twey
Whan Pandarus saw time vnto his tale
And saw well that her folke were al awey
Now nece mine tel on (qd. he) I prey
How liketh you the lettre that ye wot
Can he theron, for by my trouth I not

Therwith al rosy hewed tho wrote she
And gan to him, and said, so I trow
Acquite him wel for Goddes loue (qd. he)
My selfe to medes wol the letter sow
And held his hondes vp, and sat on know
Now good nece, be it neuer so lite
Peue me the labour, it to sow and plite

Ye, for I can so write en (qd. she) tho
And eke I not what I should to him say
Nay nece (qd. Pandare) say not so
Yet at the lest, thonketh him I pray
Of his good will: O, doth him nat to dey
Now for the loue of me my nece dere
Refuseth nat at this time my praiere

Depardieux (qd. she) God leue al be wele
God helpe me so, this is the first letter
That euer I wrote, ye al or any dele
And into a closet for to auise her better
She went alone, and gan her hart vnfetter
Out of disdaines prison, but a lite
And set her doun, and gan a letter write

Of which to tell in short is mine entent
The effect, as ferre as I can vnderstond
She thonked him, of al that he wel ment
Towards her, but holden him in hond
She nold not ne make her selue en bond
In loue, but as his suster him to plese
She would aie faine, to done his hart an ese

She shette it, and to Pandare in to gon
There as he sat, and loked into strete
And doune she set her by him on a stone
Of ialpre, vpon a quilben of gold ybete
And said, as wisely helpe me God the grete
I neuer did a thing with more paine
Than write this, to which ye me constraine

And toke it him: He thonked her, and said
God wot of thing ful often loth begonne
Cometh end good: and nece mine Creseide
That ye to him of hard now ben ywonne
Ought he be glad, by God and yonder sonne
For why, men saith impressions light
Ful lightly ben aie redy to the light

But ye han plaied the tiraunt al to long
And hard was it your hart for to graue
Now stint, that ye no lenger on it hong
Ill wolden ye the forme of daunger saue
But hasteth you to done him ioy haue
For trusteth wel, to long ydone hardnesse
Causeth dispite ful often for distresse

And right as they declared this matere
Lo Troilus, right at the stretes end
Came riding with his tenth somme yfere
Al softely, and thiderward gan bend
There as they sate, as was his way to wend
To paleis ward, and Pandare him aspide
And said, nece ysee who cometh here ride

O flie nat in, he seeth vs I suppose
Lest he may thinken that ye him eschue
Nay nay (qd. she) and wox as redde as rose
With that he gan her humbly salue
With dredful chere, and oft his hewes mue
And vp his loke debonairly he cast
And becked on Pandare, and forth by past

God wot if he sat on his horse aright
Or goodly was beseene that like day
God wot where he were like a manly knight
What should I dwell, or tel of his aray
Creseide, which that al these things sey
To tel in short, her liked al yfere
His person, his aray, his loke, his chere

His goodly maner, and his gentillesse
So wel, that neuer sith that she was borne
Ne had she such routh of his distresse
And how so, she hath hard ben here before
To God hope I, she hath now caught a thorne
She shal nat pul it out this next wike
God send mo such thornes on to pike

Pandare

Pandare, which that ſtode her faſt by
Felt iron hotte, and he began to ſmite
And ſaid, nece I pray you hertely
Tel me that I ſhal aſken you alite
A woman that were of his death to wite
Withouten his gilt, but for her lacke of routh
Were it wel done (qd. ſhe) nay by trouth

God helpe me ſo (qd. he) ye ſay me ſoth
Ye ſelen wel your ſelfe that I nought lie
Lo, pound he rideth (qd. ſhe) ye ſo he doth
Wel qd. Pandare, as I haue told you thrie
Let be your nice ſhame, and your folie
And ſpeke with him, in eaſing of his hert
Let neete nat do you both ſmert

But theron was to heauen and to done
Conſidering al thing, it may nat be
And why for ſhame, and it were eke to ſone
To graunten him ſo great a liberte
For plainly her entent, as (ſaid ſhe)
Was for to loue him vnwiſt, if ſhe might
And guerdon him with nothing but with light

But Pandare thought, it ſhal nat be ſo
If that I may, this nice opinion
Shal nat ben holden fully yeres two
What ſhould I make of this a long ſermon
He muſt aſſent on that concluſion
As for the time, and whan that it was eue
And al was wel, he roſe and toke his leue

And on his way faſt homeward he ſpedde
And right for ioy he felt his hert daunce
And Troilus he found alone abedde
That lay, as done theſe louers in a traunce
Betwixen hope and derke diſeſperaunce
But Pandare, right at his in comming
He ſong, as who ſaith, lo, ſomwhat I bring

And ſaid, who is in his bedde ſo ſone
Yburied thus? it am I frend (qd. he)
Who Troilus? nay, helpe me ſo the moone
(Qd. Pandarus) thou ſhalt vp riſe and ſe
A charme that was ſent right now to the
The which can healen the of thine axeſſe
If thou do forth with al thy beſineſſe

Ye through the might of God (qd. Troilus)
And Pandarus gan him the letter take
And ſaid, parde God hath holpen vs
Haue here a light, and loke on all theſe blake
But oft gan the hart glad and quake
Of Troilus, whyle he it gan to rede
So as the words yaue him hope or drede

But finally he toke al for the beſt
That ſhe him wrote, for somwhat he beheld
On which he thought he might his hert reſt
Al couered ſhe the words vnder ſheld
Thus to the more worthy part he held
That what for hope, and Pandarus behеſt
His great wo ſorwede he at the leſt

But as we may al day our ſeluen ſe
Through wood or cole the more fire
Right ſo encreaſe of hoope, of what it be
Therwith ful oft encreaſeth eke deſire
Or as an oke cometh of a litel ſpire
So through this letter, which ỳ ſhe him ſent
Encreaſen gan deſire of which he brent

Wherfore I ſay alway, that day and night
This Troilus gan deſiren, more
Thē he did erſt through hope, & did his might
To preſen on, as by Pandarus lore
And writen to her of his ſorowes ſore
Fro day to day, he let it nought retreid
That by Pandare he ſomwhat wrot or ſeid

And did alſo his other obſeruaunces
That till a louer longeth in this caas
And after that his dice turned on chaunces
So was he either glad, or ſaid alas
And held after his geſtes aie his paas
And after ſuch anſwers, as he hadde
So were his daies forth either gladde

But to Pandare alway was his recours
And pitouſly gan aie on him to plaine
And him beſought of rede, and ſome ſocours
And Pandarus, that ſaw his wode paine
Wext wel nigh deed for routh ſoth to ſaine
And beſely with al his hert caſt
Some of his wo to fleen, and that as faſt

And ſaid, Lord and frend, and brother dere
God wot that thy diſeaſe doth me wo
But wolt thou ſtinten al this woful chere
And by my trouth, er it be daies two
And God to forne, yet ſhal I ſhape it ſo
That thou ſhalt come into a certaine place
there as thou maiſt thy ſelf praien her of grace

And certainly I not if thou it woſt
But they that ben expert in loue, it ſay
It is one of theſe things forthereth moſt
A man to haue a leiſer for to pray
And liker place, his wo for to bewray
For in good hart it mote ſome routh impreſſe
To here and ſe the giltleſſe in diſtreſſe

Paraunture thinkest thou, though it be so
That kind would her done for to beginne
To haue a maner routh vpon my wo
Saith daunger nay, thou shalt me neuer win
So ruleth her harts golle within
That though she bend, yet she stont on rote
What in effect is this vnto my bote

Thinke here ayen, whan that the sturdy oke
On which men hacketh oft for the nones
Receiued hath the happy falling stroke
The great sweight doth it come al at ones
As done these rockes, or these milne stones
For swifter course cometh thing ỳ is of wight
When it discendeth, than done things light

But rede that boweth doune for euery blast
Ful lightly cesse wind, it wol arise
But so nil not an oke, whan it is cast
It nedeth me nought long the forbise
Men shal reioysen of a great empryse
Atcheued wel, and stant withouten dout
Al haue men ben the lenger there about

But Troilus, now tel me if the lest
A thing, which that I shal aske the
Which is thy brother, that thou louest best
As in thy very harts priuite
I wis my brother Deiphebus tho (qd. he)
Now (qd. Pandare) er houres twise twelue
He shal the case, vnwist of it him selue

Now let me alone, and worken as I may
(Qd. he) and to Deiphebus went he tho
Which had his lord, and great frend ben aie
Saue Troilus no man he loued so
To tel in short without words mo
(Qd. Pandarus) I pray you that ye be
Frend to a cause, which that toucheth me

Yes parde (qd. Deiphebus) wel thou wotest
All that euer I may, and God to fore
Al nere it but for the man I loue most
My brother Troilus, but say wherfore
It is, for sith the day that I was bore
I nas, ne neuer mo to ben I thinke
Ayenst a thing that might the forthinke

Pandare gan him thanke, and to him seide
Lo sir, I haue a lady in this toune
That is my nece, and called is Creseide
Which some men would done oppression
And wrongfully haue her possession
Wherfore I of your lordship you besech
To ben our frend, withouten more spech

Deiphebus him answerd: O, is nat this
That thou spekest of to me thus straungely
Creseide my frende? He said him yes
Than nedeth (qd. Deiphebus) hardely
No more of this to speke, for trusteth wel ỳ I
Wol be her Champion with spore and yerd
I ne rought nat, though all her foes it herd

But tel me how, for thou wost this matere
I might best auailen, now lette se
(Qd. Pandarus) if ye my lord so dere
Wolden as now do this honour to me
To praien her to morow, lo that she
Came vnto you, her plaints to deuise
Her aduersaries would of it agrise

And if I more durst pray as now
And chargen you to haue so great trauaile
To haue some of your brethē here with you
That mighten to her cause bet auaile
Than wote I wel she might neuer faile
For to ben holpen, what at your instaunce
What with her other frends gouernaunce

Deiphebus, which that comen was of kind
To al honour and bounte to consent
Answerd, it shal be done: and I can find
Yet greater helpe to this in mine entent
What woldest thou saine, if for Helen I sent
To speke of this, I trow it be the best
For she may leden Paris as her lest

Of Hector, which ỳ is my Lord my brother
It nedeth nat to praien him frend to be
For I haue herd him, o time and eke other
Speken of Creseide such honour, that he
May saine no bet, such hap to him hath she
It nedeth nat his helpes more craue
He shal be such, right as we wol him haue

Speke thou thy selfe also to Troilus
On my behalfe, and pray him with vs dine
Sir, al this shalbe done (qd. Pandarus)
And toke his leaue, and neuer gan to fine
But to his neces house as streight as line
He came, and found her fro the meat arise
And set him doun, a spake right in this wise

He said, O very God, so haue I ronne
Lo nece mine, se ye nat how I swete
I not where ye the more thanke me conne
Be ye not ware how false Poliphete
Is now about eftsones for to plete
And bring on you aduocaries newe
I, no (qd. she) and chaunged all her hewe

what

What is he more about me to dretch
And done me wrong, what shal I don, alas
Yet of hymselfe nothing would I retch
Were it for Antenor and Eneas
That ben his frends in such maner caas
But for the loue of God, mine vncle dere
No force of that, let him haue al yfere

Withouten that, I haue inough for vs
Nay (qd. Pandare) it shal nothing be so
For I haue ben right now at Deiphebus
At Hector, and mine other lords mo
And shortly maked eth of hem his so
That by my thrift, he shal it neuer winne
For aught he can, whan so that he beginne

And as they casten what was best to done
Deiphebus, of his owne curtelie
Came her to pray, in his proper persone
To hold him on the morow company
At diner, which she nold not deny
But goodly gan to his preier obey
He thonked her, and went vpon his wey

Whan this was don, this Pandare anone
To tel in short, and forth he gan to wend
To Troilus, as stil as any stone
And al this thing he told him word and end
And how that Deiphebus gan to blend
And said him, now is time if that ye conne
To bere the well to morow, and all is wonne

Now speke, now pray, now pitously complain
Let nat for nice shame, drede or slouth
Somtune a man mote tel his own pain
Beleue it, and she wol haue on the routh
Thou shalt ben saued by thy faith in trouth
But wel wot I, thou now art in a drede
And what it is, I say that I can arede

Thou thinkest now, how should I don al this
For by my cheres mosten folke espy
That for her loue is, that I fare amis
Yet had I leuer dwelle for sorow die
Now thinke nat so, for thou dost great folie
For I right now haue founden a manere
Of sleight, for to koueren al thy chere

Thou shalt gon ouernight, and that blyue
Vnto Deiphebus house, as the to play
Thy malady away the bet to dryue
For which thou sonest sicke soth to say
Sone after that, in thy bedde the lay
And say thou maist no lenger vp endure
And lie right there, and bide thyne auenture

Say that thy fetter is wont the for to take
The same time, and last til a morow
And let se now how wel thou canst it make
For parde sicke is he that is in sorow
Go now farwel, and Venus here to borow
I hope and thou this purpose hold ferme
Thy grace she shal fully there conferme

(Qd. Troilus) iwis thou medelest
Counsailest me, that sickelich I me faine
For I am sicke in ernest doutelesse
So that wel nigh I sterue for the paine
(Qd. Pandarus) thou shalt the better plaine
And hast the lesse nede to counterfete
For him demeth men hote, ỹ seeth him swete

Lo, hold the at thy trist close, and I
Shal wel the deere vnto the bow dryne
Therwith he toke his leaue all softly
And Troilus to paleis went blyne
So glad ne was he neuer in al his lyue
And to Pandarus rede gan al assent
And to Deiphebus house at night he went

What nedeth it you to tellen al the chere?
That Deiphebus vnto his brother made
Or his arys, or his sickelich manere
How men gon him with clothes for to lade
Whē he was laid, & how men wold him glade
But all for nought, he held forth aie the wise
That ye han herd Pandare er this deuise

But certaine is, er Troilus him leid
Deiphebus had prayed him ouernight
To ben a frend, and helping to Creseide
God wot that he graunted anon right
To ben her ful frend with all his might
But such a nede was it to prayen him thenne
As for to bidde a wood man to renne

The morow came, and nighen gan the time
Of mealtide, that the faire quene Heleine
Shope her to ben an houte after the prime
With Deiphebus, to whom she nold faine
But as his suster, homely soth to saine
She came to diner, in her plaine entent
But God & Pandare wist al what this ment

Came eke Creseide all innocent of this
Antigone her nece, and Tarbe allo
But tho we now procede it best is
For loue of God, and let vs fast go
Right to the effect, without tales mo
Why al this folke assembled in this place
And let vs of her salutings pace

Great honour did hem Deiphebus certaine
And fedde hem wel, with al that might like
But euermo alas, was his refraine
Wy good brother Troilus the like.
Lieth yet, and therwithal he gan to ſike
And after that he pained him to glade
Hem as he might, and chere good he made

Complained eke Heleine of his ſickenelle
So faithfully that it pety was to here
And euery wight gan weyen for axes
A lech anon, and ſaid in this manere
Wen curen folke, this charme I wol the lere
But there ſate one, al liſt her nat to tech
That thought, yet beſt could I ben his lech

After complaint him gonnen they to preiſe
As folke don yet whā ſome wight hath begon
To preiſe a man, and with preiſe him reiſe
A thouſand fold yet higher than the ſon
He is, he can, that few Lords kon
And Pandarus of that they would affermē
He nought forgate her praiſing to conferme

Herd al this thing Creſeide wel inough
And euery word gan for to notiſie
For which with ſobre chere her hert lough
For who is that ne would her glorifie
To mowen ſuch a knight done liue or die
But al paſſe I, leſt ye to long dwell
But for o fine is al that euer I tell

The time came fro diner for to riſe
And as hem ought, ariſen euerichone
And gone a whyle of this and that deuiſe
But Pandarus brake al this ſpech anon
And ſaid to Deiphebus, wol ye gon
If your wil be, as I you praide
To ſpeken of the nedes of Creſeide

Heleine, which that by the hond her helde
Toke firſt the tale and ſaid, go we bliue
An goodly on Creſeide ſhe beheldē
And ſaid, Ioues let him neuer thriue
That doth you harm, & reue him ſone of liue
And yeue me ſorow, but he ſhal it rue
If that I may, and al folke be true

Tel thou thy nices caſe (qd. Deiphebus)
To Pandarus, for thou canſt beſt it tell
Wy Lords and my Ladies, it ſtant thus
What ſhould I lenger (qd. he) do you dwell
He rong hem out a proces like a bell
Upon her foe, that hight Polyphete
So heinous, that men might on it ſpete

Anſwerd of this ech worſe of hem than other
And Poliphete they gonnen thus to warien
An hanged be ſuch one, were he my brother
And ſo he ſhal, for it ne may nought varien
What ſhould I lenger in this tale tarien
Plainelich all at ones they her highten
To ben her frend, in all that euer they might

Spake than Heleine, and ſaid Pandarus
Wot aught my lord my brother of this matre
I meane Hector, or wote it Troilus
He ſaid ye, but wol ye me now here
Me thinketh thus, ſith that Troilus is here
It were good, if that ye would aſſent
She told him her ſelfe al this er ſhe went

For he wol haue the more her greſe at hart
Bicauſe lo, that ſhe a Lady is
And by your wil, I wol but in right ſkert
And do you wete, and that anon wois
If that he ſlepe, or wol aught here of this
And in he lept, and ſaid him in his eere
God ſaue thy ſoule, brought haue I thy here

To ſmilen of this gan tho Troilus
And Pandarus without rekening
Out went anon to Heleine and Deiphebus
And ſaid hem ſo there be no tarying
Ne more preaſe, he wol wel that ye bring
Creſeide my Lady, that is here
And as he may enduren, he wol her here

But wel ye wote, the chamber is but lite
And few folke may lightly make it warme
Now loketh ye, for I wol haue no wite
To bring in preaſe, ỹ might don him harme
Or him diſeaſen, for my better arme
Yet were it bet ſhe bidde till oft ſoonis
Now loke ye that knowen what to don is

I ſay for me beſt is, as I can know
That no wight in ne wend, but ye twey
But it were I, for I can not in a throw
Reherſe her caſe, vnlike that ſhe can ſey
And after this ſhe may ones him prey
To ben good Lord in ſhort, and take her leue
This may not mokel of his eſe him reue

And eke for ſhe is ſtraunge, he wol forbere
His caſe, which that him dare nat for you
Eke other thing that toucheth nat to her
He wol it tel, I wote it wel right now
That ſecret is, and for the toumes prow
And they that knew nothing of his entent
Without more, to Troilus in they went

Heleine

Heleine in all her goodly soft wise
Gan him salue, and womanly to plaie
And said ywis, ye mote algate arise
Now faire brother be all hole I praie
And gan her arme right ouer his shulder laie
And him with all her wit to recomfort
As she best could, she gan him to disport.

So after this (qd she) we you beseke
My dere brother Deiphebus and I
For loue of God, and so doeth Pandare eke
To been good Lord and frend right hartely
Unto Creseide, which that certainly
Receiued wrong, as wot wel here Pandare
That can her case well bet than I declare.

This Pandarus gan new his tong affile
And all her case rehearce, and that anone
Whan it was saied, sone after in a while
(Qd Troilus) as sone as I may gone
I woll right fame, with al my might been one
Haue God my trouth, her cause to sustaine
Now good thrift haue ye (qd Heleine ỳ quene)

(Qd Pandarus) and it your will be
That she may take her leaue, er that she go
O, els God forbid it (tho qd he)
If that she vouchsafe for to doe so
And with that word (qd Troilus) ye two
Deiphebus, and my sister leue and dere
To you haue I to speake of a mattere.

To been auised by your rede the better
And found (as hap was) at his beddes hedde
The copie of a treatise, and a letter
That Hector had him sent, to aske redde
If such a man was wort hie to been dedde
Wote I naught who, but in a grisly wise
He praied hem anone on it auise.

Deiphebus gan this letter for to vnfolde
In earnest great, so did Heleine the Quene
And rouning out ward, fast it gonne beholde
Downward a steire, into an herber grene
This ilke thing redden hem betwene
And largely the mountenance of an houre
They gonne on it to reden and to poure.

Now let hem rede, and tourne we anone
To Pandarus, that gon full soft pie
That all was well, and out he gan to gone
Into the great chamber, and that in hie
And saied, God saue all this companie
Come nece mine, my ladie Queue Heleine
Abydeth you, and eke my Lordes tweine.

Rise, take with you your nece Antigone
Or whom you list, or no force hardely
The lasse preasse the bet, come forth with me
And loke that ye thonken humbly
Hem all three, and whan ye may goodly
Your time ysee, taketh of hem your leaue
Lest we to long his restes him bireaue.

All innocent of Pandarus entent
(Qd tho Creseide) go we vncle dere
And arme in arme inward with him she went
Auising well her wordes and her chere
And Pandarus, in earnestfull manere
Saied, all folke for Goddes loue I praie
Stinteth right here, and softly you plaie.

Auiseth you what folke been here within
And in what plite one is, God him amende
And inward thus full softly begin
Nece I comme, and highly you defend
On his halfe, which that soule vs all sende
And in the vertue of corounes twaine
Slea nat this man, ỳ hath for you this paine

Fie on the deuill, thinke which one he is
And in what plite he lieth, come of anone
Thinke all such taried tide but lost it nis
That woll ye both saine, whan ye been one
Secondly, there yet deuineth none
Upon you two, come of now if ye conne
While folke is blent, lo, all the time is wonne.

In titering and pursute, and delaies
The folke deuine, at waggyng of a stree
And though ye would han after merie daies
Than dare ye nat, and why? For she and he
Spake such a worde, thus loked he and he
Lest time be lost, I dare nat with you deale
Come of therfore, and bringeth him to heale.

But now to you, ye louers that been here
Was Troilus nat in a cankedort
That laie, & might the whispring of hem here
And thought O lord, rist now reneth my sort
Fully to die, or haue anon comfort
And was the first time he should her praie
O loue, O mightie God, what shall he saie.

Explicit liber secundus.

O Blisfull light, of which the bemes clere
Adorneth all the thirde heauen faire
O sonnes leke, O Ioues dough-ter dere

Pleasaunce of loue, O goodly debonaire
In gentle hartes aie redy to repaire
O verie cause of heale and of gladnesse
Iheried be thy might and thy goodnesse.

In heauen and hell, in earth, and salt see
Is felt thy might, if that I well discerne
As man, beast, fish, herbe, and greene tree
They fele in times with vapour eterne
God loueth, and to loue woll naught werne
And in this world no liues creature
Withouten loue is worth, or may endure.

Ye Ioues first, to thilke affectes glade
Through which that thynges liuen all, & be
Comenden, and amorous hem made
On mortall thing, and as you list aie ye
Yeue him in loue, ease, or aduersitie
And in a thousand formes doune hem sent
For loue in earth, & whom you list he hent

Ye fiers Mars apeason of his ire
And as you list, ye maken hartes digne
Algates hem that ye woll set a fire
They dreden shame, and vices they resigne
Ye doen hem curteis be, freshe, and benigne
And hie or lowe, after a wight entendeth
The ioyes that he hath, your might it sendeth

Ye holden reigne and house in vnite
Ye sothfast cause of frendship been also
Ye knowen all thilke couered qualitie
Of things, which that folke wondren so
Whan they can not construe how it may go
Why he loueth him. or why he loueth here
As why this fish, & not that cometh to were

Ye folke a lawe haue set in vniuerse
And this knowe I by hem that louers be
That who so striueth with you hath ỳ werse
Now Ladie bright, for thy benignitie
At reuerence of hem that seruen thee
Whose clerke I am, so teacheth me deuise
Some ioy of that is felt in thy seruice.

Ye, in my naked harte sentement
Inhilde, and doe me shewe of thy swetnesse
Caliope, thy voice be now present
For now is neede, seest thou not my distresse
How I mote tell anon right the gladnesse
Of Troilus, to Venus heriyng
To which who nede hath, God him bring.

Incipit liber tertius.

L Aic all this meam while Troilus
Recording his lesson in this manere
Wa fete (thought hee) thus wol I say & thus
Thus wol I plain vnto my Ladie dere
That worde is good, & this shall be my chere
This nill I nat forgetten in no wise
God leue him werken as he can deuise.

And lord so that his harte gan to quappe
Hearing her come, and short for to sike
And Pandarus that ledde her by the lappe
Came nere, and gan in at the curtein pike
And saied, God doe bote on all sike
Se who is here, you comen to visite
Lo, here is she that is your death to wite

Therwith it semed as he wept almoste
A, a (qd Troilus) so routhfully
Where me be wo, O mightie God thou woste
Who is all there, I see nat truely
Sir (qd Creseide) it is Pandare and I
Ye swete harte alas, I may nat rise
To knele, and doe you honour in some wise.

And dressed him vpward, and she right tho
Gan bothe her hondes soft vpon him leie
O for the loue of God. do ye not so
To me qd she) ey what is this to seie
Sir, comen am I to you for cause tweie
First you to thonke, and of your Lordship eke
Continuance I would you beseke.

This Troilus that heard his Ladie praie
Of lordship, him wore neither quick ne dedde
Ne might o worde for shame to it saie
Although men shoulden smiten off his hedde
But Lorde so he wore sodainliche redde
And sir, his lesson that he wende conne
To praien her, is through his wit ronne.

Creseide all this aspied well ynough
For she was wise, & loued him neuer the lasse
All nere he in all aperte, or made it tough
Or was to bolde, to sing a foole a Masse
But whan his shame gan somwhat to passe
His reasons, as I may my tunes holde
I woll you tell, as teachen bookes olde

In changed voice, right for his very drede
Which voice eke quoke, & therto his manere
Goodly abaisht, and now his hewes rede

Now

Now pale, vnto Creseide his ladie dere
With loke doune cast, & humble yolden chere
Lo, the alderfirst worde that him astarte
Was twise, mercie, mercie, swete harte.

And stint awhile, & whā he might out bring
The next word was, God wot for I haue
As faithfully as I haue had konning
Been yours all, God so my soule saue
And shall till that I wofull wight be graue
And though I dare ne can vnto you plain
Iwis I suffer not the lasse pain.

Thus much as now, ah, womanliche wife
I may out bring, and if this you displease
That shall I wreke vpon mine owne like
Right sone I trowe, & doe your harte an ease
If with my death, your hart may apease
But sens that ye han heard me somwhat sey
Now retche I neuer how sone that I deie.

Therwith his manly sorowe to beholde
It might haue made an hart of stone to rew
And Pandare wept as he to water would,
And poked euer his nece newe and new
And saied, wo begon been hartes true
For loue of God, make of this thing an ende
Or slea vs bothe at ones, er that ye wende.

I, what (qd she) by God and by my trouth
I not nat what ye wilne that I scie
Eie, what (qd he) that ye haue on him routh
For Goddes loue, and docth him nat deie
Now than thus (qd she) I woll him preie
To tell me the fine of his entent
Yet wist I neuer well what that he mente.

What that I meane, O swete hart dere
(Qd Troilus) O goodly fresh free
That with the streames of your eyen clere
Ye woulden somtime frendly on me see
And than agreen that I may been he
Withouten braunche of vice, on any wise
In trouth alway, to doe you my seruice.

As to my ladie right, and chiefe resort
With all my witte and all my diligence
And to haue right as you list comfort
Under your yerde egall to mine offence
As death, if that I breake your defence
And that ye deigne me so much honour
Ye to commaunden aught in any hour.

And I to been your very humble true
Secrete, and in my paines patient
And euer to desiren freshly newe
To seruen, and to been aie ylike diligent
And with good harte, all wholly your talent
Receiuen well, how sore that me smart
Lo, this meane I, mine owne swete harte.

(Qd Pandarus) lo here an hard request
And reasonable, a Ladie for to werne
Now nece mine, by Natall Ioues fest
Were I a God, ye should serue as yerne
That heren wel this man wol nothing yerne
But your honor, and seen him almost sterue
And been so loth to suffer him you to serue.

With that she gan her eyen on him cast
Full easily, and full debonairly
Auising her, and hied not to fast
With never a worde, but saied him softly
Mine honour safe, I woll well truely
And in such forme, as I can now deuise
Receiuen him fully to my seruice.

Beseeching him for Goddes loue, that he
Would in honour of trouth and gentillesse
As I well meane, eke meanen well to me
And mine honour, with wit and businesse
Aye kepe, and if I may doen him gladnesse
From hence forth, ywis I nill not faine
Now bethe all whole, no lenger ye ne plaine.

But natheless, this warne I you (qd she)
A kings sonne although ye be ywis
Ye shall no more haue souerauntie
Of me in loue, than right in that case is
Ne nill forbeare if that ye doen amis
To wrath you, and while that ye me serue
Cherisben you, right after that ye deserue

And shortly dere hart, and all my knight
Beth glad, and draweth you to lustinesse
And I shall truely, with all my full might
Your bitter tournen all to swetenesse
If I be she, that may do you gladnesse
For euery wo ye shall recouer a blisse
And him in armes toke, and gan him kisse

Fill Pandarus on knees, and vp his eyen
To heauen threwe, and held his hondes hie
Immortall God (qd he) that maiest not dien
Cupide I meane, of this maiest glorifie
And Venus, thou maiest maken melodie
Withouten hond, me semeth that in toune
For this miracle iche here eche bell soune.

But ho, no more now of this matter

For

For why? This folke wol comen vp anone
That haue the letter rede, lo I hem here
But I conjure thee Creseide, and one
And two, that Troilus whã thou maist gone
That at mine house, ye been at my warning
For I ful wel shal shapen your comming.

And easeth there your harts right inough
And let se which of you shall be are the bell
To speke of loue aright, & therwith he lough
For there haue I a leiser for to tell
(Qd. Troilus) how long shal I dwell
Er this be doen: qd. he, whan thou maiest rise
This thing shal be right as you list deuise

With that Heleine, and also Deiphebus
Tho comen vp ward, right at the staires end
And Lord so tho gan gronen Troilus
His brother and his suster for to blend
(Qd. Pandarus) it time is that we wend
Take nece mine your leaue at all thre
And let hem speake, & commeth forth with me

She toke her leaue at hem ful thriftely
As she wel could, and they her reuerence
Unto the ful didden hardely
And wonder wel speaken in her absence
Of her, in praising of her excellence
Her gouernaunce, her wit, and her manere
Commendeden, that it ioy was to here.

Now let her wend vnto her own place
And tourne we to Troilus againe
That gan ful lightly of the letter pace
That Deiphebus had in the gardine laine
And of Heleine and hym he would feine
Deliuered been, and saied that him lest
To slepe, and after tales haue a rest

Heleine him kist, and toke her leue bliue
Deiphebus eke, and home went euery wight
And Pandarus, as fast as he may driue
To Troilus tho came, as line right
And on a paillet, all that glad night
By Troilus he lay, with mery chere
To tale, and wel was hem they were yfere

Whan euery wight was voided, but they two
And all the doores weren fast yshet
To tel in short, withouten wordes mo
This Pandarus, without any let
Up rose, and on his beddes side him set
And gan to speaken in a sober wise
To Troilus, as I shal you deuise

Mine alderleuest Lord, & brother dere
God wot and thou, that it sate me so sore
Whan I thee sawe so languishing to here
For loue of which thy wo wore alway more
That I with all my might, and all my lore
Haue euer sithen doen my busines
To bring thee to ioye out of distresse.

And haue it brought to such plite as thou wost
So ỹ through me thou stondest now in waie
To faren well, I saie it for no bost
And wost thou why, but shame it is to saie
For thee haue I begon a gamen plaie
Which that I neuer doen shal eft for other
All tho he were a thousand fold my brother

That is to saie, for thee am I becomen
Betwixen game and earnest, such a meane
As maken women vnto men to comen
All saie I nat, thou wost well what I meane
For thee haue I my nece, of vices cleane
So fully made thy gentillesse trist
That all shall been, right as thy selfe list.

But God, that all wotteth take I to witnesse
That neuer I this for conetise wrought
But onely for to abridge that distresse
For which well nie thou diedst, as me thought
But good brother, do now as thee ought
For Goddes loue, and kepe her out of blame
Since thou art wise, & saue alwaie her name

For wel thou wost, the name as yet of her
Emõges ỹ people, as (who saith) halowed is
For that man is vnbore I dare well swere
That euer wist that she did amis
But wo is me, that I that cause all this,
May thinken that she is my nece dere
And I her eme, and traitour eke yfere.

And were it wist, that I through mine engine
Had in mine nece yput this fantasie
To doen thy lust, and wholie to be thine
Why: all the world would vpon it crie
And saie, that I the worst trecherie
Did in this case, that euer was begon
And she fordon, and thou right nought ywon.

Wherfore er I woll ferther gone or paas
Yet efte I thee beseech, and fully saie
That priuete go with vs in this caas
That is to saine, that thou vs neuer wraie
And be not wroth, though I thee oft praie
To holden secre such an high matter
For skilfull is (thou wost well) my praier

And

And think, what wo there hath betide er this
For making of auauntes, as men rede
And what mischaunce in this world yet is
Fro date to date, right for that wicked dede
For which these wise clerkes that been dede
Haue euer this prouerbed to vs young
That the first vertue is to kepe the toung.

And nere it that I wilne as now abredge
Diffusion of speache, I could almoste
A thousand olde stories thee aledge
Of women loste, through false & fooles boste
Prouerbes canst thy self ynow, and woste
Ayenst that vice for to been a blabbe
All saied men sothe, as often as they gabbe.

O tongue alas, so often here before
Hast thou made many a ladie bright of hewe
Saied welawaie the day that I was borne
And many a maidens sorowe for to newe
And for the more part all is vntrue
That men of yelpe, & it were brought to preue
Of kinde, none auauntour is to leue.

A bauntour and a lier, all is one
As thus, I pose a woman graunt me
Her loue, and saieth that other woll she none
And I am swore to holden it secre
And after I tell it two or three
Iwis I am a bauntour at the lest
And lier eke, for I breake my beheste

Now loke than, if they be nat to blame
Such maner folk, what shal I clepe hē what
That hem auaunt of women, and by name
That yet behight hem neuer this ne that
Ne know hem more than mine old hat
No wonder is, so God me sende hele
Though women dreden with vs men to dele

I saie not this for no mistrust of you
Ne for no wise men, but for fooles nice
And for the harme that in the world is now
As well for folie oft, as for malice
For well wote I, in wise folke that vice
No woman dredeth, if she be well auised
For wise been by fooles harme chastised.

But now to purpose, leue brother dere
Haue all this thing ꝑ I haue saied in minde
And keepe thee close, & be now of good chere
For all thy daies thou shalt me true finde
I shall thy processe set in such a kinde
And God tofore, that it shall thee suffise
For it shall be, right as thou wolt deuise.

For well I wote, thou meanest wel parde
Therefore I dare this fully vndertake
Thou wost eke, what thy lady graunted thee
And day is set the charters to make
Haue now good night, I may no leger wake
And bid for me, sith thou art now in blisse
That God thee send death, or sone lisse.

Who might tellen halfe the ioy or feste
Which that the soule of Troilus tho felte
Hearing the effect of Pandarus beheste
His old wo, that made his harte swelt
Gan tho for ioy waslen, and to melt
And all the richelle of his sighes sore
As ones fled, he felt of hem no more.

But right so as these holtes, & these hayis
That han in Winter dedde been and drie
Reuesten hem in grene, whan that Maie is
Whan euery lusty listeth to plaie
Right in that selfe wise, sothe to saie
More sodainly his harte full of ioye
That gladder was there neuer man in Troie

And gan his loke on Pandarus vp cast
Full soberly, and frendly on to see
And saied, freend, in Aprill the last
As well thou wost, if it remember thee
How nigh the death for wo thou found me
And how thou diddest all thy businesse
To knowe of me the cause of my distresse.

Thou wost how long I it forbare to saie
To thee, that art the man that I best trist
And peril none was it to thee to bewraie
That wist I well: but tell me if thee list
Sith I so loth was, that thy selfe it wist
How durst I mo tellen of this matere
That quake now, and no wight may vs here.

But nathelesse, by that God I the swere
That as him list may all this world gouerne
And if I lie, Achilles with his spere
Mine harte cleue, & were my life eterne
As I am mortall, & I late or yerne
Would it bewraie, or durst, or should conne
For al the good that God made vnder sonne.

That rather die I would, and determine
As thinketh me now, stocked in prison
In wretchednesse, in filth, and in vermine
Captife to cruell king Agamemnon
And this in all the temples of this toun
Vpon the Goddes all, I woll thee swere
To morow day, if that thee liketh here.

And

And that thou hast so much ydoen for me
That I ne may it neuer more deserue
This know I well, all might I now for thee
A thousand times on a morowe sterue
I can no more, but that I will thee serue
Right as thy slaue, whither so thou wende
For euer more, vnto my liues ende.

But here with al mine hart I thee beseech
That neuer in me thou deme such folie
As I shal saine, me thought by thy speche
That this which thou me doest for cõpany
I should wene it were a baudrie
I am not woode, all if I leude be
It is not so, that wote I well parde.

But he that goeth for gold, or for richesse
On such messages, call him what ye list
And this that thou doest, call it gentilnesse
Compassion, and felowship, and trist
Depart it so, for wide where is wist
How that there is diuersitie required
Betwixen things like, as I haue lered.

And that thou know I thinke not ne wene
That this seruice a shame be or iape
I haue my faire sustern Polixene
Cassandre, Helein, or any of the frape
Be she neuer so faire, or well yshape
Tell me, which thou wilt of euerychone
To haue for thine, and let me than alone.

But sith that thou hast doen me this seruice
Hy like to saue, and for none hope of mede
So for the loue of God, this great empryse
Performe it out, now is the most nede
For high and lowe, withouten any drede
I will alwaie thine hestes all kepe
Haue now good night, and let vs both slepe

Thus helde hem eche of other well apaied
That all the world ne might it bet amende
And on the morowe, when they were araied
Eche to his owne nedes gan entende
But Troilus, though as the fire he brende
For sharpe desire of hope, and of pleasaunce
He nat forgate his good gouernaunce.

But in himself, with manhode gan restrain
Eche rakell deede, and eche vnbridled chere
That all that liuen sothe to saine
Ne should haue wiste, by worde or by manere
What that he ment, as touching this matere
From euery wight, as ferre as is the cloud
He was so wise, and well dissimulen coud.

And all the while which that I now deuise
This was his life, with all his full might
By daie he was in Martes high seruice
That is to sain, in armes as a knight
And for the more part the long night
He lay and thought how that he might serue
His ladie beste, her thanke for to deserue.

Nill I not sweare, although he laie soft
That in his thought he nas somwhat diseased
Ne that he tourned on his pilowes oft
And would of that him missed haue bē eased
But in such case, men be nat alway pleased
For naught I wote, no more than was he
That can I deme of possibilitie.

But certain is, to purpose for to go
That in this while, as written is in geste
He sawe his ladie somtime, and also
She with him spake, whā ỹ she durst ꝛ leste
And by her bothe auise, as was the beste
Appouncteden full warely in this nede
So as they durst, how they would procede

But it was spoken in so short a wise
In such awaite alway, and in such fere
Lest any wight deuinen or deuise
Would of hem two, or to it laie an ere
That all this worlde so lefe to hem ne were
As that Cupede would hem grace sende
To maken of her speache right an ende.

But thilke little that they spake or wrought
His wise ghoste toke aie, of all such hede
It semed her he wiste what she thought
Withouten worde, so that it was no nede
To bid him aught to doen, or ought forbede
For which she thought ỹ loue, al come it late
Of all ioy, had opened her the yate.

And shortly of this processe for to pace
So well his werke and wordes he beset
That he so full stode in his ladies grace
Twentie thousand times er she let
She thonked God she euer with him met
So could he him gouerne in such seruice
That all the world ne might it bet deuise

For she found him so discrete in all
So secrete, and of such obeisaunce
That well she felt he was to her a wall
Of steele, and sheilde of euery displeasaunce
That to been in his good gouernaunce
So wise he was, she was no more afered
I meane as ferre as aught been required.

And

And Pandarus to quicke alway the fire
Was euer like prest and diligent
To ease his frend was set al his desire
He shoue aie on, he to and fro was sent
He letters bare whan Troilus was absent
That neuer man, as in his frends nede
Ne bare him bet than he, withouten drede

But now paraucenture some man waitē would
That euery word or sond, loke or chere
Of Troilus, that I reherce shold
In al this while, vnto his lady dere
I trow it were a long thing for to here
Or of what wight that stant in such disioint
His words all, or euery loke to point

For loth I haue not herd it done er this
In story none, ne no man here I wene
And though I would, I could not wis
For there was some epistel hem betwene
That would (as saith min auctor) wel contene
Nie half this boke, of which him list not write
How should I than a line of it endite

But to the great effect, than say I thus
That stonding in concord and in quiete
This like two, Creseide and Troilus
As I haue told, and in this time swete
Saue only often might they not mete
Ne leiser have, her speches to fulfell
That it befil, right as I shal you tell

That Pandarus, that euer did his might
Right for the fine that I shal speke of here
As for to bringen to his house some night
His faire nece, and Troilus yfere
Where as at leiser all this high matere
Touching her loue, were at the full vp bounde
Had out of dout a time to it found

For he with great deliberacion
Had euery thing that therto might auaile
Fone cast, and put in execution
And neither left for cost ne for trauaile
Come if hem list, hem should nothing faile
And for to ben in aught aspied there
That wist he wel an impossible were

Nedeleste it clere was in the wind
Of euery pie, and euery let game
Now al is wel, for al the world is blind
In this mater, both fremed and tame
This timber is al redy vp to frame
Vs lacketh naught, but that we weten wold
A certaine houre, in which she comen shold

And Troilus, that al this purueiaunce
Knew at the ful, and waited on it aie
And here vpon eke made great ordinaunce
And found his cause, and therwith his aray
Yf that he were misled night or day
There while he was about this seruice
That he was gone to done his sacrifice

And must at such a temple alone wake
Answered of Apollo for to be
And first to sene the holy laurer quake
Er that Apollo spake out of the tre
To tel him next whan Grekes should flie
And for thy let him no man, God forbede
But pray Apollo helpe in this nede

Now is there litell more for to done
But Pandare vp, and shortly for to saine
Right sone vpon the chaunging of the Mone
Whan lightlesse is ỳ world a night or twaine
And that the welken shope him for to raine
He streight a morow vnto his nece went
Ye haue wel herd the fine of his entent

Whan he was comen, he gan anon to play
As he was wont, and of him selfe to iape
And finally he swore, and gan her say
By this and that, she should him not escape
No lenger done him after her to cape
But certainly, she must by her leue
Come soupen in his house with him at eue

At which she lough, and gan her first excuse
And said: it rameth: lo, how should I gone
Let be (qd. he) ne stond not thus to muse
This mote ne don, ye shal come there anone
So at the last, herof they fel at one
Or els fast he swore her in her ere
He nold neuer comen there she were

Sone after this, she to him gan rowne
And asked him if Troilus were there
He swore her nay, for he was out of towne
And said, nece: I pose that he were there
You durst neuer haue the more feere
For rather than men might him there aspie
We were leuer a thousand fold to die

Naught list mine auctour fully to declare
What that she thought, whan he said so
That Troilus was of toune yfare
And if he said therof soth or no
But that withouten await with him to go
She graunted him, sith he her that besought
And as his nece obeyed as her ought

But natheleſſe, yet gan ſhe him beſeech
(Although with him to gone it was no feere)
For to beware of goſſib peoples ſpeech
That dremen things, which that neuer were
And wel auiſe him whom he brought there
And ſaid him eme, ſens I muſt on you triſt
Loke al be wel, and do now as you liſt

He ſwore her this, by ſtockes and by ſtones
And by the goddes that in heuen dwell
Or els were him leauer ſoule and bones
With Pluto King, as depe ben in Hell
As Tantalus, what ſhould I more tell
When al was wel, he roſe and toke his leue
And ſhe to ſouper came when it was eue

With a certaine of her owne men
And with her faire nece Antigone
And other of her women nine or ten
But who was glad now, who as trowe ye?
But Troilus, that ſtode and might it ſe
Throughout a litel window in a ſlew
Ther he beſet, ſith midnight was in mew

Unwiſt of euery wight, but of Pandare
But to the point, now when ſhe was come
With al ioy, and al frends fare
Her eme anon in armes hath her nome
And than to the ſouper al and ſome
When time was, ful ſoft they hem ſet
God wot there was no deinte ferre to fet

And after ſouper gonnen they to riſe
At eaſe wel, with hart freſh and glade
And wel was him that coud beſt deuiſe
To liken her, or that her laughen made
He ſong, ſhe plaid, he told a tale of Wade
But at the laſt, as euery thing hath end
She toke her leaue, and nedes would wend

But o fortune, executrice of wierdes
O influents of theſe heuens hie
Soth is, that vnder God ye ben our hierdes
Though to vs beeſts, ben the cauſes wrie
This mene I now, for ſhe gan homward hie
But executе was all beſide her leue
At the goddes wil, for which ſhe muſt bleue

The bent Mone with her hornes pale
Saturnus and Joue, in Cancro ioyned were
That ſuch a raine from heuen gan auaile
That euery maner woman that was there
Had of that ſmoky raine a very feere
At which Pandare tho lough, & ſaid thenne
Now were it time a Lady to gone henne

But good nece, if I might euer pleaſe
You any thing, than pray I you (qd. he)
To don mine hart as now ſo great an eaſe
As for to dwell here al this night with me
For why, this is your owne houſe parde
For by my trouth, I ſay it nat in game
To wend as now, it were to me a ſhame

Creſeide, which that could as much good
As halfe a world, toke hede of his praire
And ſens it rained, and al was in a mode
She thought, as good chepe may I dwel here
And graunt it gladly with a frends chere
And haue a thonke, as grutch and than abide
For home to gon it may nat wel betide

I wol (qd. ſhe) mine vncle liefe and dere
Sens that you liſt, it ſkil is to be ſo
I am right glad with you to dwellen here
I ſaid but agame I would go
I wis graunt mercy nece (qd. he) tho
Were it agame or no, ſoth to tell
Now am I glad, ſens that you liſt to dwell

Thus al is wel, but tho began aright
The new ioy, and al the feſt againe
But Pandarus, if goodly had he might
He would haue hied her to bedde faine
And ſaid, loud this is an huge raine
This were a wether for to ſleepen in
And that I rede vs ſoone to begin

And nece, wote ye where I wol you lay
For that we ſhul nat liggen ferre a ſonder
And for ye neither ſhullen, dare I ſay
Her noiſe of raine, ne of thonder
By God right in my cloſet ponder
And I wol in that vtter houſe alone
Ben wardain of your women euerichone

And in this middle chambre that ye ſe
Shal your women ſlepen, wel and ſoft
And there I ſaid, ſhal your ſelven be
And if ye liggen wel to night, come oft
And careth not what wether is aloft
The wine anone, and when ſo you leſt
Go we to ſlepe, I trow it be the beſt

There nis no more, but here after ſone
They void, dronke, and trauers draw anone
Gan euery wight that had nought to done
More in the place, out of the chambre gone
And euer more ſo ſtormelich it rone
And blew therwith ſo wonderlich loud
That wel nigh no man heren other coud

Tho

Tho Pandarus her eme, right as him ought
With women, such as were her most about
Ful glad vnto her beddes side her brought
And toke his leaue, and gan ful low lout
And said, here at this closet doze without
Right ouerthwart your women liggen all
That whom ye list of hem, ye may sone call

So whan that she was in the closet laid
And all her women forth by ordinaunce
A bedde weren, there as I haue said
There nas no more to skippen nor to praunce
But boden go to bedde with mischaunce
If any wight sterung were any where
And let hem slepen, that a bedde were

But Pandarus, that wel couth ech adele
The old daunce, and euery point therin
Whan that he saw that al thing was wele
He thought he would vpon his werke begin
And gan the stew doze all soft vnpin
As still as a stone, without lenger lette
By Troilus adoun right he him sette

And shortly to the point right for to gone
Of all this werke he told him word and end
And said, make the redy right anone
For thou shalt into heuen blisse wend
Now blisful Venus, thou me grace send
(Qd. Troilus) for neuer yet no dede
Had I er now, ne halfendele the drede

(Qd. Pandarus) ne drede the neuer a dele
For it shal be right as thou wolt desire
So thriue I, this night shal I make it wele
Or casten al the gruel in the fire
Yet blisful Venus this night thou me inspire
(Qd. Troilus) as wis as I the serue
And euer bet and bet shal til I sterue

And if I had, O Venus ful of mirth
Aspects badde of Mars, or of Saturne
Or thou combust, or let were in my birth
Thy father pray, all thilke harme disturne
Of grace, and that I glad ayen may turne
For loue of him thou louedest in the shaw
I meane Adon, that with the bore was slaw

Joue eke, for the loue of faire Europe
The which in forme of a bulle away thou fet
Now help, o Mars, thou with thy blody cope
For loue of Cipria, thou me naught ne let
O Phebus, think whē Daphne her scluē shet
Under the barke, and Laurer wox for drede
Yet for her loue, o helpe now at this nede

Mercury, for the loue of her eke
For which Pallas was with Aglauros wroth
Now help, and eke Diane I the beseke
That this viage be nat to the loth
O fatall sustren, which or any cloth
Ye shapen was, my destine me sponne
So helpeth to this werke that is begonne

(Qd. Pandarus) thou wretched mouses hert
Art thou agast so that she wol the bite
Why, do on this furred clobe vpon my shert
And folow me, for I wol haue the wite
But bide, and let me gon before alite
And with that he gan vndone a trappe
And Troilus he brought in by the lappe.

The sterne wind so loud gan to rout
That no wight other noise might here
And they that laten at the doze without
Ful sikerly they slepten all yfere
And Pandarus, with ful sobre chere
Goth to the doze anon without en lette
There as they lay, and softly it shette

And as he came ayenward prively
His nece awoke, I aketh, who goeth there
Why dere nece (qd. he) it am I
Ne wondreth not, ne haue of it no fere
And nere he came, and said her in her eere
No word for loue of God I you beseech
Let no wight arise, and heren of our speech

What, which way be ye comen? benedicite,
(Qd. she) and how vnwist of hem all
Here at this secret trappe doze (qd. he)
(Qd. tho Creseide) let me some wight call
Eigh, God forbid that it should so fall
(Qd. Pandarus, that ye such foly wrought
They might demen thing thei neuer er thought

It is nat good a sleping hound to wake
Ne yeue a wight a cause for to deuine
Your women slepen al, I vndertake
So that for hem the house men might mine
And slepen wollen till the sunne shine
And when my tale is brought to an end
Un wist right as I came, so wol I wend

Now nece mine, ye shul wel vnderstond
(Qd. he) so as ye women demen all
That for to hold in loue a man in hond
And him her lefe and dere hart call
And maken him an howue aboue a call
I mene, as loue an other in this mene while
She doth her selfe a shame, and him a gile

Now wherby that I tel you al this
Ye wote your selfe, as wel as any wight
How that your loue all fully graunted is
To Troilus, the worthiest wight
One of the world, and therto trouth yplight
That but it were on him along, ye nold
Him neuer falsen, while ye liuen shold

Now stont it thus, that sith I fro you went
This Troilus, right platly for to seine
Is through a gutter by a priuy went
Into my chambre come in all this reine
Unwist of euery maner wight certeine
Saue of my selfe, as wisely haue I ioy
And by the faith I owe to Pan of Troy

And he is come in such paine and distresse
That but he be all fully wood by this
He sodainly mote fal into woodnesse
But if God helpe and cause why is this
He saith him told is of a frend of his
How ỹ he should louen one, that hight Horaste
For sorow of which this night shalbe his laste

Creseide, which that all this wonder herd
Gan sodainly about her hart cold
And with a sigh she sorowfully answerd
Alas, I wend who so tales told
My dere hart would me nat hold
So lightly fause, alas conceits wrong
What harme they don: for now liue I to long

Horaste alas, and falsen Troilus
I know him not, God helpe me so (qd. she)
Alas, what wicked spirit told him thus
Now certes eme, to morow and I him se
I shal therof as ful excusen me
As euer did woman, if him like
And with that word she gan ful sore sike

O God (qd. she) so worldly selinesse
Which clerkes callen false felicite
Ymedled is with many a bitternesse
Ful anguishous, than is God wote (qd. she)
Condicion of veine prosperite
For either ioyes comen nat yfere
Or els no wight hath hem alway here

O brotil wele of mannes ioy vnstable
With what wist so thou be, or how thou play
Either he wote, that thou ioy art muable
Or wote it nat, it mote ben one of tway
Now if he wote it nat, how may he say
That he hath very ioy and sikernesse
That is of ignorance aie in derkenesse

Now if he wote that ioy is transitory
As euery ioy of worldly thing mote flie
Than euery time, he that hath in memory
The drede of leting, maketh him, that he
May in no parfite sikernesse be
And if to lese his ioy, he set a mite
Than semeth it, that ioy is worth ful lite

Wherfore I wol diffine in this matere
That truely for aught I can espy
There is no very wele in this world here
But o thou wicked serpent Ialousie
Thou misbeleued, and enuious folie
Why hast thou Troilus made to me vntrist
That neuer yet agilt, that I wist

(Qd. Pandarus) thus fallen is this caas
Why vncle mine (qd. she) who told him this
Why doth my dere hert thus, alas
Ye wote, ye nece mine (qd. he) what is
I hope al shal be wel, that is amis
For ye may quench al this, if that you lest
And doeth right so, I hold it for the best

So shal I do to morow, iwis (qd. she)
And God toforne, so that it shal suffice
To morow alas, that were faire (qd. he)
Nay nay, it may nat stonden in this wise
For nece mine, this writen clerkes wise
That peril is with dretching in draw
Nay, such abodes ben nat worth an haw

Nece, al thing hath time I dare auow
For whan a chamber a fire is, or an hall
Wel more nede is, it sodainly rescow
Than to disputen and aske amongs all
How the candle in the straw is fall
Ah benedicite, for al among that fare
The harme is done, and farwel feldefare

And nece mine, ne take it nat a greefe
If that ye suffer him al night in this wo
God helpe me so, ye had him neuer lefe
That dare I sain, now there is but we two
But wel I wote that ye wol nat so do
Ye ben to wise to donc so great foly
To put his life al night in iopardy

Had I him neuer lefe: By God I wene
Ye had neuer thing so lefe, (qd. she)
Now by my thrift (qd. he) that shal be sene
For sith ye make this ensample of me
If iche al night would him in sorow se
For al the treasour in the toune of Troy
I bidde God, I neuer mote haue ioy

Now

Now loke than, if ye that ben his loue
Should put his life al night in ieopardy
For thing of nought, now be that God aboue
Nat onely this delaie cometh of folie
But of malice, if that I should nat lie
What, platly and ye suffer him in distresse
Ye neither bounte done ne gentilnesse.

(Qd tho Creseide) wolde ye done o thing
And ye therwith shal stinte al his disease
Haue here and here him this blew ring
For there is nothing might him better plese
Saue I my selfe, ne more his hart apese
And saue my dere harte, that his sorowe
Is causeles, that shall he sene to morowe

Creseide answerde, as wisely God at rest
My soule bring, as me is for him wo
And eme ywis, faine Gould I don the best
If that I a grace had for to do so
But whether that ye dwell, or for him go
I am, till God me better minde sende
At Dulcarnon, right at my wittes ende.

(Qd Pandarus) ye nece woll ye here
Dulcarnon is called fleming of wretches
It seemeth herd, for wretches wol nought lere
For very slothe, or other wilful tetches
This is said by hem, þ be not worth two fet-
But ye ben wise, & that ye han on hond (ches
Nis neither hard, ne skilfull to withstond.

A ring (qd he) ye hasel wodes shaken
Ye nece mine, that ring must haue a stone
That might deed men alive maken
And such a ring trowe I that ye haue none
Discrecion out of your heed is gone
That sele I now (qd he) and that is routhe
O time ylost, wel maist thou curse slouth.

Than eme (qd she) doeth here of as you list
But er he come, I woll vp first arise
And for the loue of God, sens al my trist
Is on you two, and ye beth both wise
So worketh now, in so discrete a wise
That I honour may haue, and he plesaunce
For I am here, al in your gouernaunce

Wote ye not wel that noble and hie corage
Ne soroweth not, ne stinteth eke for lite
But if a foole were in a iealous rage
I nolde letten at his sorowe a mite
But felle him with a fewe words white
In other daie, whan that I might him finde
But this thing stant all in another kinde.

That is wel said (qd he) my nece dere
There good thrift on that wise gentil harte
But liggeth still, and taketh him right here
It nedeth nat no ferther for him start
And eche of you easeth other sorowes smart
For loue of God, and Venus I the herie
For sone hope I, that we shall ben merie

This is so gentle and so tender of harte
þ with his death he woll his sorowes wreke
For trust well, how sore that him smarte
He woll to you no iealous words speke
And for thy nece, er that his hart breke
So speke your selfe to him of this matere
For with a worde ye may his hart stere

This Troilus full sone on knees him sette
Full soberly, right by her beddes heed
And in his best wise his Lady grette
But lord so she wore sodainliche reed
Ne though men should smitten of her heed
She could not o worde a right out bring
So sodainly for his sodaine coming.

Now haue I tolde what peril he is in
And his comming vnwist is to euery wight
Ne parde harme may there be none, ne sin
I wol my selfe be with you all this night
Ye know eke how it is your owne knight
And that by right, ye must vpon him triste
And I al prest to fetch him when you liste

But Pandarus that so well could fele
In euery thing, to play anon began
And said, nece, se how this Lord gan knele
Now for your trouth, se this gentil man
And with that word, he for a quishen ran
And said kneleth now while that thou leste
There God your hartes bring sone at rest

This accident so pitous was to here
And eke so like a sothe, at prime face
And Troilus her knight, to her so dere
His priue comming, and the siker place
That though she did him as than a grace
Considred all things as they stode
No wonder is, sens she did all for good,

Can I naught sain, for she bad him nat rise
If sorowe it put out of her remembraunce
Or els that she toke it in the wise
Of duetie, as for his obseruaunce
But well finde I, she did him this plesaunce
That she him kist, although she liked sore
And bad him sit adoun withouten more

(Od Pandarus) now woll ye well begin
Now doth him sitte, good nece dere
Upon your beddes side, al there within
That eche of you the bet may other here
And with that word he drew him to the fiere
And toke a light, & found his countenaunce
As for to loke vpon an olde romaunce

Eke al my wo is this, that folke now vsen
To saine right thus: ye, iealousie is loue
And would a bushel of venim all excusen
For that a grane of loue is on it shoue
But that wote high Joue that sit aboue
If it be liker loue, hate, or graine
And after that it ought beare his name

Creseide that was Troilus lady right
And clere stode in a ground of stedfastnesse
All thought she her seruant and her knight
Ne should none vntrouth in her gesse
That natheless, considred his distresse
And that loue is in cause of such folie
Thus to him spake she of his iealousie

But certeine is, some maner iealousie
Is excusable, more than some ywis
As whan cause is, and some such fantasie
With pite so well expressed is
That it vnneth doeth or saieth amis
But goodly drinketh vp all his distresse
And that excuse I for the gentilnesse

Lo hert mine, as would the excellence
Of loue, ayenst the which that no man may
Ne ought eke goodly maken resistence
And eke because I felte well and saie
Your great trouth, and seruice euery daie
And that your hart al mine was, soth to saine
This drove me for to rewe vpon your paine.

And some so full of furie is, and dispite
That it surmounteth his repression
But hart mine, ye be nat in that plite
That thonke I God, for which your passion
I woll nat call it but illusion
Of haboundance of loue, and besy cure
That doth your hart this disease endure

And your goodnes haue I founde alway yet
Of which my dere hert, and all my knight
I thanke it you, as ferre as I haue wit
Al can I nat as much as it were right
And I emforth my conning and my might
Haue, and aye shal, how sore that me smert
Ben to you trew & whole with all mine hert.

Of which I am sory, but nat wroth
But for your deuoir and your hartes reste
Where so you list, by ordal or by othe
By sorte, or in what wise so you leste
For loue of God, let preue it for the beste
And if that I be gylte, do me deie
Alas, what might I more done or seie

And dredeleste that shal be founden at preue
But hert mine, what al this is to saine
Shal wel be told, so that ye nouzt you greue
Though I to you right on your selfe cõplaine
For therewith meane I finally paine
That halt your hart and mine in heuinesse
Fully to slaine, and euery wrong redresse

With that a fewe bright teeres newe
Out of her eyen fell, and thus she seide
Now god thou wost, in thought ne dede vntru
To Troilus was neuer yet Creseide
With that her heed doun in the bed she leide
And with the shete it wrigh, and sighed sore
And held her pece, nat a word spake she more.

My good mine, not I, for why ne how
That iealously alas, that wicked wiuere
Thus causeleste is cropen into you
The harme of which I would faine deliuere
Als, that he all whole or of him stiuere
Should haue his refute in so digne a place
That Joue, him sone out of your hart race

But now help God, to quench al this sorow
So hope I that he shal, for he best may
For I haue seen of a full misty morow
Folowen full oft a mery Somers day
And after winter foloweth grene May
Men sene alday, and reden eke in stories
That after sharpe shoures ben victories.

But O thou, O auctour of nature
Jn this an honour to thy dignitie
That folke vngiltie suffren here iniure
And who that gilty is, all qute goeth he
O were it lefull for to plaine of the
That vndeserued suffrest ialousie
O, that I would vpon the plaine and crie

This Troilus, when he her words herde
Haue ye no care, him list not to slepe
For it thought him no strokes of a yerde
To heare or see Creseide his ladie wepe
But well he felt about his harte crepe
For euery teare which that Creseide asterte
The cramp of deth, to strain him by the hert.

And

And in his mind he gan the time acurse
That he came there, and that he was borne
For now is wicke tourned into worse
And al that labour he hath doen before
He wend it lost, he thought it nas but lorne
O Pandarus thought he, alas thy wile
Serueth of nought, so welaway the while.

And therwithall he hing adoun his hedde
And fel on knees, and sorowfully he sighte
What might he sain. he felt he nas but dedde
For wroth was she ẏ should his sorows light
But nathelesse, whan that he speaken might
Than said he thus, God wote ẏ of this game
Whan al is wist, than am I nat to blame.

Therwith the sorow of his hart shet
That from his yen fel there nat a tere
And euery spirit his vigour in knet
So they astonied or oppressed were
The feling of his sorow, or of his fere
Or of aught els, fiedde were out of toune
Adoune he fell all sodainly in swoune.

This was no little sorow for to se
But all was hulpt, and Pandare vp as fast
O nece peace, or we be lost (qd. he)
Beth nat agast, but certain at last
For this or that, he into bedde him cast
And said, O theefe, is this a mannes hert
And of he rent all to his bare shert.

And said nece, but ye helpe vs now
Alas, your owne Troilus is lorne
Iwis so would I, and I wist how
Ful fain (qd. she) alas that I was borne
Ye nece, wol ye pullen out the thorne
That sticketh in his hart (qd. Pandare)
Say all forgeue, and stint is all this fare

Ye that to me (qd. she) ful leuer were
Than all the good the Sunne about goeth
And therwithall she swore him in his eare
Iwis my dere hart I am not wroth
Haue here my trouth, and many an other oth
Now speake to me, for it am I Creseid
But all for naught, yet might he nat abreid

Therwith his poulce, & paumes of his honds
They gan to frote, & wete his temples twain
And to deliuer him fro bitter bonds
She oft him kist, and shortly for to sain
Him to rewaken she did all her pain
And at the last he gan his breath to draw
And of his swough sone after that adraw

And gan bet mind, and reason to him take
But wonder sore he was abashed iwis
And with a sigh whan he gan bet awake
He said, O mercy God, what thing is this?
Why do ye with your seluen thus amis?
(Qd. tho Creseide) is this a mannes game
What Troilus, wol ye doe thus for shame?

And therwithall her arme ouer him she laied
And all forgaue, and oft time him kest
He thonked her, and to her spake and said
As fill to purpose, for his harts rest
And she to that answerd him as her lest
And with her goodly wordes him disport
She gan, and oft his sorows to comfort

(Qd. Pandarus) for aught I can aspies
This light nor I me serue here of naught
Light is nat good for sike folkes yes
But for the loue of God, sens ye been brought
In this good plite, let now non heuy thought
Been hanged in the harts of you twey
And bare the candle to the chimney

Sone after this, though it no nede were
Whan she soch othes as her list deuise
Had of hem take, her thought tho no fere
Ne cause eke none, to bid hym thens rise
Yet selde thing than othes may suffice
In many a case, for euery wight I gesse
That loueth wel, meaneth but gentilesse.

But in effect she would wete anon
Of what man, and eke where, and why
He ialous was, sens there was cause non
And eke the signe that he toke it by
She bade him that to tell her bustly
Or els certain she bare him on hond
That this was doen of malice her to fond.

Withouten more, shortly for to sain
He must obey vnto his ladies hest
And for the lasse harme he must fain
He said her, whan she was at soch a fest
She might on him haue loked at the lest
Not I nat what, all dere inough a rish
As he that nedes must a cause fish

And she answerd, swete, all were it so
What harme was ẏ, sens I non euill meane
For by that God that bought vs both two
In all thing is mine entent cleane
Soch argumeuts ne be nat worth a beane
Wol ye thy childish ialous counterfete
Now were it worthy that ye were ybete

Tho Troilus gan sorowfully to sike
Lest she be wroth, him thought his hart deide
And saied, alas, vpon my sorowes like
Haue mercy swete hart mine Creseide
And if that in tho wordes that I seide
Be any wrong, I wol no more trespace
Doeth what you list, I am all in your grace.

And she answerd, of gilt misericorde
That is to saine, that I forgeue all this
And euermore on this night you recorde
And beth wel ware ye doe no more amis
Nay dere hart mine (qd. he) iwis
And now (qd. she) that I haue you doe smart
Forgeue it me, mine owne swete hart

This Troilus with blisse of that surprised
Put all in Goddes hand, as he that ment
Nothing but wel, and sodainly auised
Hir in armes fast to him hent
And Pandarus, with a ful good entent
Laied him to slepe, and saied, if ye be wise
Swcueneth not now, lest more folke arise

What might or may the sely Larke say
Whā that the sparhauke hath him in his fote
I can no more, but of these like tway
To whom this tale sugre be or sote
Though I tary a yere, somtime I mote
After mine auethour tellen her gladnesse
As wel as I haue told her heuinesse

Creseide, which that felt her thus ytake
(As writen clerkes in her bokes old)
Right as an aspen lefe she gan to quake
Whan she hir felt in her armes fold
But Troilus all hole of cares cold
Gan thanken tho the blisfull Goddes seuen
Through sondry pains to bring folk to heuen

This Troilus in armes gan her strame
And saied swete, as euer mote I gone
Now be ye caught, here is but we twaine
Now yeldeth you, for other boot is none
To that Creseide answerd thus anone
Ne had I er now, my swete hart dere
Been yold iwis, I were now not here

O soth is saied, that healed for to be
As of a feuer, or other great sickenesse
Men must drinken, as we oft se
Ful bitter drinke, and for to haue gladnesse
Men drinken oft pain, and great distresse
I meane it here by, as for this auenture
That through a pain hath founde al his cure

And now swetnesse semeth more swete
That bitternesse assaied was biforne
For out of wo in blisse now they flete
Non such they felten sens they were borne
Now is this bet, than both two be lorne
For loue of God, take euery woman hede
To werken thus, if it come to the nede.

Creseide all quite from euery drede and tene
As she that tist cause had him to trist
Made him such feast, it ioy was to sene
Whan she is trouth and cleane entent wist
And as about a tree with many a twist
Bitrent and writh the swete Wodbind
Can eche of hem in armes other wind.

And as the new abashed Nightingale
That stinteth first, whan she beginneth sing
Whan that she heareth any heerdes tale
Or in the hedges any wight stearing
And after siker doeth her voice out ring
Right so Creseide, whan her drede stent
Opened her hart, and told him her entent

And right as he that seeth his death ythapen
And dien mote, in aught that he may gesse
And sodainly rescous doeth him escapen
And from his death is drought in sikernesse
For al this world, in such present gladnesse
Was Troilus, and hath his lady swete
With worse hap God let vs neuer mete

Her armes small, her streight backe and soft
Her sides long, flesshly, smoth, and white
He gan to stroke, and good thrift bad ful oft
Her snowisse throte, her brests round and lite
Thus in this heauen he gan him to delite
And therwithall a thousand times her kist
That what to doen for ioy vneth he wist

Than saied he thus, O Loue, O Charite
Thy mother eke, Citherea the swete
That after thy self, next herie'd be she
Venus I meane, the well willy planete
And next that, Imeneus I thee grete
For neuer man was to you Goddes hold
As I, which ye haue brought fro cares cold

Benigne Loue, thou holy bond of things
Who so wol grace, & list thee not honouren
Lo, his desire wol flie withouten winges
For noldest thou of bounte hem socouren
That seruen best, and most alway labouren
Yet were all lost, that dare I wel sain certes
But if thy grace passed our desertes

And

And for thou me that lest thonk coud deserue
Of hem that nombred ben vnto thy grace
Hast holpen, there I likely was to sterue
And me bestowed in so high a place
That thilke bounds may no blisse pace
I can no more, but laude and reuerence
Be to thy bountie and thine excellence.

And therwithal Creseide anon he kist
Of which certain she felt no disease
And thus said he, now would God I wist
Mine harte swete, how I you might please
What man (qd he) was euer thus at ease
As I? On which the fairest, and the best
That euer I sete, deineth her to rest.

Here may men seen ỳ mercy passeth right
The experience of that is felt in me
That am vnworthie to so swete a wight
But hart mine, of your benignitie
So thinke, that though I vnworthy be
Yet mote I nede amenden in some wise
Right through the vertue of your hie seruice.

And for the loue of God my lady dere
Sith he hath wrought me for I shall you serue
As thus I meane: woll ye be my fere
To do me liue, if that you list or sterue
So teacheth me, how that I may deserue
Your thonk, so ỳ I through mine ignorance
Ne do nothing that you be displeasance.

For certes fresh womanliche wife
This dare I saie, that trouth and diligence
That shall ye finden in me all my life
Ne I woll not certain breaken your defence
And if I do, present or in absence
For loue of God, let slea me with the dede
If that it like vnto your womanhede.

I wis (qd she) mine owne hartes lust
My ground of ease, and al mine harte dere
Graunt mercie, for on that is all my trust
But let vs fall away fro this mattere
For it sufficeth, this that said is here
And at o word, without repentaunce
Welcome my knight, my peace, my sufficaunce

Of her delite or ioyes, one of the least
Were impossible to my wit to saie
But iudgeth ye, that haue been at the feast
Of such gladnesse, if that him list playe
I can no more, but thus these like twaie
That night, betwixt drede and sikernesse
Felten in loue the great worthinesse.

O blisful night, of hem so long ysought
How blithe vnto hem bothe two tho were
Why ne had I such feaste with my soule y-
Yea, or the lest ioy that was there (bought
Away thou foule daunger and thou fere
And let hem in this heauen blisse dwell
That is so high, that all ne can I tell.

But soth is, though I cannot tellen all
As can mine authour of his excellence
Yet haue I saied, and God to forme shall
In euery thing all wholly his sentence
And if that I, at loues reuerence
Haue any word in ecthed for the best
Doeth therwithall right as your seluen lest.

For my wordes here, and euery part
I speake hem all vnder correction
Of you that feeling haue in loues art
And put it all in your discretion
To intreat or make diminucion
of my language, and that I you beseche
But now to purpose of my rather speche.

These like two that been in armes laft
So loth to hem asonder gon it were
That eche from other wenden been biraft
Or els lo, this was her most fere
That all this thing but nice dreames were
For which full oft eche of hem said, O swete
Clippe I you thus, or els do I it mete.

And Lord so he gan goodly on her se
That neuer his loke ne blent from her face
And saied, O dere hart may it be
That it be sothe, that ye been in this place
Ye hart mine, God thanke I of his grace
(Qd tho Creseide) and therwithall him kist
That where her spirite was, for ioy the nist

This Troilus full oft her eyen two
Gan for to kisse, and saied: O eyen clere
It weren ye that wrought me such wo
Ye humble nettes of my ladie dere
Though there be mercy writtē in your chere
God wote the text full hard is for to finde
How coud ye, withouten bond me binde.

Therwith he gan her fast in armes take
And well an hundred times gan he sike
Not such sorowfull sighes as men make
For wo, or els whan that folke be sike
But easie sighes, such as been to like
That shewed his affection within
Of such sighes could he not blin.

Done

Sone after this, they spake of sondry things
As fill to purpose of this auenture
And playing enterchaungeden her rings
Of which I can not tellen no scripture
But well I wot, a broche of gold and assure
In which a Rubie set was like an herte
Creseide him yaue, and stacke it on his sherte.

Lord trow ye that a coueitous wretche
That blameth loue, and hait of it dispite
That of tho pens that he can muckre & ketch
Was euer yet yeue to him such delite
As is in loue, in o point in some plite
Naie doubtlesse, for also God me saue
So parfite ioy may no nigard haue.

They woll saie yes, but Lord so they lie
Tho busie wretches full of wo and drede
That callen loue a woodnesse of folie
But it shall fall hem, as I shall you rede
They shal forgon the white and eke the rede
& liue in wo, there God yeue hem misehaunce
And euery louer in his trouth auaunce

As would God tho wretches, that dispise
Seruice of loue, had eares also long
As had Mida, full of couetise
And therto dronken had as hotte and strong
As Crelus did, for his affectes wrong
To teachen hem, thot they been in the vice
And louers not, although they hold hem nice.

These like two, of whom that I you saie
Whan that her hartes well assured were
Tho gonnen they to speake and to plaie
And eke rehearsen how, whan, and where
They knewe first, and euery wo or fere
That passed was, but all such heuinesse
I thonke it God, was tourned to gladnesse.

And euermore, whan that hem fell to speake
Of any thing of such a time agone
With kissing all that tale should breake
And fallen into a new ioye anone
And didden all her might, sens they were one
For to recoueren blisse, and been at ease
And passed wo with ioy counterpaise.

Reason woll not that I speake of slepe
For it accordeth not to my mattere
God wote they toke of it full little kepe
But lest this night that was to hem so dere
Me should in vaine escape in no manere
It was biset in ioye and businesse
Of all that souneth into gentilnesse.

But whan the cock, commune Astrologer
Gan on his brest to beate, and after crowe
And Lucifer, the daies messanger
Gan for to rise, and out her beames throwe
And Estward rose, to him that could it knowe
Fortuna maior, that anone Creseide
With harte sore, to Troilus thus seide:

Mine hartes life, my trust, al my pleasaunce
That I was borne alas, that me is wo
That day of vs mote make disseueraunce
For time it is to rise, and hence go
Or els I am lost for euer mo
O night alas, why nilt thou euer vs houe
As long as what Alcmena late by Ioue.

O blacke night, as folke in bokes rede
That shapen art by God, this world to hide
At certain times, with thy derke wede
That vnder that men might in rest abide
Wel oughten beastes to plain, & folk to chide
That ther as day with labor would vs brest
That thou thus liest, and deinest vs not rest.

Thou doest alas, to shortly thine office
Tho rakle night, there God maker of kinde
Thee for thine haste, and thine vnkinde vice
So fast aie to our hun ysperte binde
That neuermore vnder ỹ ground thou winde
For now for thou so highest out of Troie
Haue I forgone thus hastely my ioie.

This Troilus, that with tho words felt
As thought him tho, for pitous distresse
The bloodie teares from his hart melt
As he that yet neuer such heuinesse
Assaied had, out of so great gladnesse
Gan therwithall Creseide his lady dere
In armes strain, and hold in louely manere.

O cruell day, accuser of the ioy
That night & loue haue stole, & fast ywrien
Accursed be thy comming into Troy
For euery bore hath one of thy bright eyen
Enuious day, what list thee so to spien
what hast thou lost, why sekst thou this place
There God thy light so quench for his grace.

Alas, what haue these louers thee agilt?
Dispitous day, thine be the paine of hell
For many a louer hast thou slain, and wilt
Thy poring in woll no where let hem dwell
What profrest thou thy light here to sell?
Go sell it hem that smale scales graue
We woll thee not, vs nedeth no daie haue.

And

And eke the sonne Titan gan he chide
And said, O foole, wel may men thee dispise
That hast all night the dauning by thy side
And suffrest her so sone vp fro thee rise
For to disease vs louers in this wise
what hold your bed, there thou & thy morow
I bid God so yeue you both sorowe.

Therwith ful sore he sighed, & thus he seide
My lady right, and of my weale or wo
The well & roote, O goodly mine Creseide
And shall I rise alas, and shall I so
Now fele I that mine harte mote a two
And how should I my life an houre saue
Sens that with you is all the life I haue.

What shall I doen? For certes I not how
Ne whan alas, I shall the time see
That in this plite I may been eft with you
And of my life God wote how shall that be
Sens that desire right now so biteth me
That I am dedde anon, but I retourne
How should I long alas, fro you sojorne

But natheleslle, mine owen ladie bright
Were it so that I wist vtterly
That your humble seruant, & your knight
Were in your harte yset so fermely
As ye in mine, the which truely
Me leuer were than these worldes twain
Yet should I bet enduren all my pain.

To that Creseide answerde right anon
And with a sigh she saied, O harte dere
The game ywis so ferforth now is gon
That first shal Phebus fallen frō the sphere
And euerich Egle been the Doues fere
And euery rocke out of his place sterte
Er Troilus go out of Creseides herte.

Be been so depe within mine harte graue
That tho I would it turne out of my thought
As wisely very God my soule saue
To dien in the paine, I could nought
And for the loue of God, ỹ vs hath wrought
Let in your brain none other fantasie
So crepe, that it cause me to die.

And that ye me would haue as fast in minde
As I haue you that would I you beseche
And if I wist sothly that to finde
God might not appoint my ioyes eche
But harte mine, wit houten more speche
Bethe to me true, or els were it routhe
For I am thine, by God and by my trouthe.

Beth glad for thy, and liue in sikernesse
Thus saied I neuer er this, ne shall to mo
And if to you it were a great gladnesse
To tourne ayen sone after that ye go
As faine would I as ye, it were so
As wisely God mine hart bring to reste
And him in armes take, and oft keste.

Ayenst his will, sith it mote nedes be
This Troilus vp rose and fast him cled
And in his armes toke his ladie free
An hundred times, and on his way him sped
And with such words, as his hart bled
He said: fare well my dere harte swete
That God vs graunt sound and sone to mete.

To which no word for sorowe she answerd
So sore gan his parting her distrain
And Troilus vnto his Paleis ferd
As wo begon as she was, sothe to saine
So hard him wrong of sharpe desire ỹ paine
For to been eft there he was in pleasance
That it may neuer out of his remembrance.

Retourned to his royal paleis sone
He soft vnto his bedde gan for to sinke
To slepe long, as he was wont to doen
But all for nought, he may wel ligge & winke
But slepe may there none in his hart sinke
Thinking how she, for who desire him brende
A M. fold was worth more than he wende.

And in his thought, gan vp & doun to wende
Her words all, and euery countenaunce
And fermely impressen in his minde
The lest point, that to him was pleasance
And verily of thilke remembrance
Desire all new him brend, and lust to brede
Gan more than erst, and yet toke he non hede.

Creseide also, right in the same wise
Of Troilus gan in her hart shet
His worthinesse, his lust, his deedes wise
His gentilnesse, and how she with him met
Thonking loue, he so well her beset
Desiring oft to haue her hart dere
In such a place as she durst make him chere

Pandare a morowe, which that comen was
Unto his nece, and gan her faire grete
And saied, all this night so rained it alas
That all my drede is, that ye nece swete
Haue little leiser had to slepe and mete
Al this night (qd he) hath rain so do me wake
That some of vs I trowe her heddes ake.

And

And nere he came & said, how stant it now
This merie morow, nece how can ye fare
Creseide answerd, neuer the bet for you
Fore that ye been, God yeue your hart care
God helpe me so, ye caused all this fare
Trowe I (qd she) for all your words white
O who so seeth you, knoweth you full lite.

With that she gan her face for to wrie
With the sheete and wore for shame all redde
And Pandarus gan vnder for to prie
And saied nece, if that I shall been dedde
Haue here a sworde, and smiteth off my hedde
With that his arme, all sodainly he thrist
Vnder her necke, and at the last her kist.

I passe al that, which chargeth naught to say
What, God forgaue his death, and she also
Forgaue: and with her vncle gan to plaie
For other cause was there none than so
But of this thing right to the effect to go
Whan time was, home to her house she went
And Pandarus hath fully his entent.

Now tourne we ayen to Troilus
That restlesse full long a bedde laie
And priuely sent after Pandarus
To him to come in all the hast he may
He come anon, not ones saied he nay
And Troilus full soberly he grete
And doune vpon the beddes side him sete.

This Troilus with all thaffectioun
Of frendly loue, that harte may deuise
To Pandarus on knees fill adoun
And er that he would of the place arise
He gan him thanken on his best wise
An hundred time he gan the time blesse
That he was borne, to bring him to distresse.

He said, O frend of frendes, the alderbest
That euer was, the sothe for to tell
Thou hast m heauē ybrought my soule at rest
Fro Phlegeton the fierie flood of hell
That though I might a thousand times sell
Vpon a day my life in thy seruice
It might not a mote in that suffice.

The Sunne, which that all the world mayse
Sawe neuer yet my life, that dare I leie
So wity, faire, and goodly, as is she
Whose I am all, and shall till that I deie
And that I thus am hers, dare I seie
That thanked be the high worthinesse
Of loue, and eke thy kinde busines.

Thus hast thou me no little thing ieeue
For why to thee obliged be for aie
My life, & why, for through thine help I liue
Or elis dedde had I been ago many a day
And with that word doun in his bed he lay
And Pandarus full soberly him herde
Till all was said, and than he him answerde.

My dere frende, if I haue doen for thee
In any case, God woote it is me lefe
And am as glad as man may of it be
God helpe me so, but take now not agreue
That I shall saine, beware of this mischefe
That there as now brought art to thy blisse
That thou thy selfe, ne cause it not to misse.

For al fortunes sharpe aduersitie
The worst kind of infortune is this
A man to haue been in prosperitie
And it remember, whan it passed is
Thou art wise ynough, for thy do not amis
Be not to rakell, though thou sit warme
For if thou be, certain it woll thee harme.

Thou art at ease, & hold thee well therin
For also sure as redde is euery fire
As great a craft is to kepe well as winne
Bridle alway well thy speach and thy desire
For worldly ioy holdeth not but by a wire
That preueth well, it best aldaie so ofte
For thy neede is to werken with it softe.

(Qd. Troilus) I hope, and God to forne
My dere frend, that I shal so me bere
That in my gilt there shal nothing been lorne
Ne I nill not rakle, as for to greuen here
It nedeth not this matter oft tere
For wistest thou mine hart wel Pandare
God wote of this thou wouldest lite care

Tho gan he tell him of his glad night
And whereof first his hearte dradde, and how
And saied frend, as I am true knight
And by that faith I owe to God and you
I had it neuer halfe so hote as now
And aie the more that desire me biteth
To loue her best, the more it me deliteth

I not my selfe not wisely, what it is
But now I feele a new qualite
Ye all an other than I did er this
Pandare answered and saied thus that he
That ones may in heauen blisse be
He feeleth other waies dare I lay
Than thilke time he first heard of it say

This

This is a word for al, that Troilus
Was neuer ful to speke of this matere
And for to prailen vnto Pandarus
The bounte of his right lady dere
And Pandarus to thanke, and maken chere
This tale was ate span new to beginne
Til that the night departed hem a twinne

Soon after this, for that fortune it would
Iomen was the blisful time swete
That Troilus was warned, that he should
There he was erst, Creseide his lady mete
For which he felt his hert in toy flete
And faithfully gan all the Goddes hery
And let se now, if that he can be mery

And holden was the forme, and all the gise
Of her comming, and of his also
As it was erst, which nedeth nought deuise
But plainly to the effect right for to go
In toy and surete Pandarus hem two
A bedde brought, whan hem both lest
And thus they ben in quiete and in rest

Naught nedeth it to you, sith they ben met
To aske at me, if that they blith were
For if it erst was wel, tho was it bet
A thousand fold, this nedeth not enquere
Ago was euery sorow and euery fere
And both twis they had, and so they wend
As moch toy as hart may comprehend

This nis no litel thing of for to sey
This passeth euery wit for to deuise
For ech of hem gan others lust obey
Felicite, which that these clerkes wise
Commenden so, ne may not here suffise
This toy ne may not ywritten be with inke
This passeth all that hart may bethinke

But cruel day, so wela way the stound
Gan for to aproch, as they by signes knew
For which hem thought felen dethes wound
So wo was hem, that chaungen gan her hew
And day they gonnen to dispise all new
Calling it traitour, enuious and worse
And bitterly the daies light they corse

(Nd. Troilus) alas, now am I ware
That Argus, and tho swift stedes thre
Which that drawen forth the sunnes chare
Han gon some by path in dispite of me
And maketh it so sone day to be
And for the sunne him hasteth thus to rise
Ne shal I neuer don him sacrifise

But nedes day depart hem must sone
And whan her speech don was, and her chere
They twin anon, as they were wont to done
And setten time of meting eft yfere
And many a nigt they wrought in this manere
And thus fortune a time ladde in toy
Creseide, and eke this kings son of Troy

In sufficiaunce, in blisse, and in singings
This Troilus gan all his life to lede
He spendeth, iueth, and maketh festings
He geueth frely oft, and chaungeth wede
He held about him alway out of drede
A world of folke, as come him wel of kind
The freshest, and the best he could find

That such a noise was of him, as a steuen
Throughout the world, of honor and largesse
That it vp rong vnto the yate of Heuen
And as in loue he was in such gladnesse
That in his hart he demed, as I gesse
That there nis louer in this world at ese
So wel as he, and thus gan loue him plese

The goodlihede or beaute, which that kind
In any other lady had ylette
Can not the mountenaunce of a gnat vnbind
About his hert, of all Creseides nette
He was so narow ymasked, and yknette
That is vndon in any maner side
That nil nat ben, for aught that may betide

And by the hond ful oft he would take
This Pandarus, and into garden lede
And such a feest, and such a proesse make
Him of Creseide, and of her womanhede
And of her beaute, that withouten drede
It was an heuen his words for to here
And than he would sing in this manere

Loue, that of erth and sea hath gouernaunce
Loue, that his heestes hath in heuen hie
Loue, that with an holsome alliaunce
Halt people ioyned, as him list hem gie
Loue, that knitteth law and company
And couples doth in vertue for to dwel
Bind this accord, that I haue told and tel

That, ỹ the world with faith, which ỹ is stable
Diuerseth so his stounds according
That elements that beth discordable
Holden a bond perpetually during
That Phebus mote his rosy day forth bring
And that ỹ mone hath lordshipe ouer ỹ nights
All this doeth loue, aie heried be his mights

That, that the sea, that gredy is to flowen
Constraineth to a certaine end so
His floods, that so fiersly they ne growen
To drenchen earth and all for euer mo
And if that loue aught let his bridel go
Al that now loueth a sonder should lepe
And lost were all, that loue hait now to hepe

So would to god, that authour is of kind
That with his bond, loue of his vertue list
To serchen herts all, and fast bind
That frō his bond no wight the wey out wist
And herts cold hem, wold I that hem twist
To maken hem loue, and that hem list aie rew
On harts sore, and kepe hem that ben trew

In all nedes for the tounes werre
He was, and aie the first in armes dight
And certainly, but if that bokes erre
Saue Hector, most ydradde of any wight
And this encrease of hardinesse and might
Come him of loue, his ladies thanke to win
That altered his spirit so within

In time of truce on hauking would he ride
Or els hunt Bore, Beare, or Lioun
The smal bestes let he gon beside
And when that he come riding into the toun
Ful oft his lady from her window doun
As fresh as faucon, comen out of mue
Ful redely was him goodly to salue

And most of loue and vertue was his spech
And in dispite had all wretchednesse
And doutelesse no nede was him besech
To honouren hem, that had worthinesse
And casen hem, that weren in distresse
And glad was he, if any wight wel ferd
That louer was, whan he it wist or herd

For soth to saine, he lost held euery wight
But if he were in loues hie seruice
I meane folke that aught it ben of right
And ouer all this, so wel could he deuise
Of sentement, and in so vncouth wise
All his array, that euery louer thought
That all was well, what so he said or wrought

And though that he be come of blood royal
Yet list of pride, at no wight for to chace
Benigne he was to ech in general
For which he gate him thanke in euery place
Thus would loue, ypriced by his grace
That pride and Ire, Enuy, and Auarice
He gan to flie, and euery other vice

Thou lady bright, the doughter of Diane
Thy blind and winged sonne eke dan Cupide
Ye sustren nine eke, that by Helicone
In hil Pernaso, listen for to abide
That ye thus ferre han deined me to gide
I can no more, but sens that ye wol wend
Ye heried ben for aie withouten end

Though you haue I said fully in my song
The effect and ioy of Troilus seruice
Al be that there was some disease among
As mine auctour listeth to deuise
My third boke now end I in this wise
And Troilus in lust and in quiete
Is with Creseide, his owne hert swete

Explicit liber tertius.

But all to litell, welaway the while
Lasteth such ioy, ythonked be fortune
That semeth trewest, whan she wol begile
And can to fooles so her song entune
That she hem hent, ẏ vilent traitour commune
And whan a wight is from her whele ythrow
Than laugheth she, and maketh him the mow

From Troilus she gan her bright face
Away to writh, and toke of him non hede
And cast him clene out of his ladies grace
And on her whele she set vp Dionede
For which min hert right now ginneth blede
And now my pen alas, with which I write
Quaketh for drede, of that I must endite

For how Creseide Troilus forsoke
Or at the lest, how that she was vnkind
Mote hence forth, ben mater of my boke
As writen folke, through which it is in mind
Alas that they should euer cause find
To speke her harme, and if they on her lie
Iwis hem selfe should haue the vilany

O ye Herynes nightes doughters thre
That endelesse complaine euer in paine
Megera, Allecto, and eke Tesiphonee
Thou cruel Mars eke, father of Quirine
This ilke fourth boke helpe me to fine
So that the loos, and loue, and life piere
Of Troilus be fully shewed here

Incipit liber quartus.

LYgging in hoſt, as I
haue ſaid er this
The Grekes ſtrong, a-
bout Troy toune
Bifell, that whan that
Phebus ſhining is
Upon the breſt of Her-
cules Lion
That Hector, with many a bold Baron
Caſt on a day with Grekes for to fight
As he was wont, to greue hem what he might

Not I how long or ſhort it was betwene
This purpoſe, and that day they fighten ment
But on a day wel armed bright and ſhene
Hector and many a worthy knight out went
With ſpeare in hond, & bigge bowes bent
And in the herd withouten lenger lette
Her fomen in the feld anon hem mette

The long day with ſpeares ſharp yground
With arowes, darts, ſwerds, and maces fel
They fight, & bringen horſe, & man to ground
And with her axes out the braines quel
But in the laſt ſhoure, ſoth to tel
The folke of Troy hem ſelven ſo miſleden
That with ỹ worſe at night home they fleden

At which day was taken Anthenor
Maugre Polimidas, or Monesteo
Fantippe, Sarpedon, Paleſtinor
Polite, or eke the Troyan dan Rupheo
And other laſſe folke, as Phebuleo
So that for harme ỹ day the folke of Troy
Dreden to leſe a great part of her ioy

Of Priamus was yeue, at Grekes requeſt
A time of truce, and tho they gonnen trete
Her priſoners to chaungen moſt and leſt
And for the ſurplus yeuen ſommes grete
This thing anon was couth in euery ſtrete
Both in thaſſege, in toun, and euery where
And with the firſt it came to Calcas ere

Whē Calcas knew this tretiſe ſhould hold
In conſiſtory among the Grekes ſone
He gan in thring, forth with lords old
And ſet him there as he was wont to done
And with a chaunged face, hem bade abone
For loue of God, to done that reuerence
To ſtinten noiſe, and yeue him audience

Than ſaid he thus, lo lords mine I was
Troyan, as it is knowen out of drede
And if that you remembre, I am Calcas
That alderfirſt yaue comfort to your nede
And told wel how that you ſhould ſpede
For dredeleſſe through you ſhal in a ſtound
Ben Troy ybrent, and beaten doun to ground

And in what forme, or in what maner wiſe
This toun to ſhend, and al your luſt atheue
Ye haue er this wel herd me deuiſe
This know ye my lords, as I leue
And for the Grekes weren me ſo leue
I came my ſelfe in my proper perſone
To tech in this, how you was beſt to done

Hauing vnto my treaſour ne my rent
Right no regard in reſpect of your eaſe
Thus all my good I left, and to you went
Wening in this you lords for to pleaſe
But all that loſſe ne doth me no diſeaſe
I vouchſafe, as wiſely haue I ioy
For you to leſe, al that I haue in Troy

Saue of a doughter that I left, alas:
Sleping at home, when out of Troy I ſtert
O ſterne, O cruel father that I was
How might I haue in that ſo hard an hert:
Alas that I ne had brought her in my ſhert
For ſorow of which I wol nat liue to morow
But if ye lords rew vpon my ſorow

For bicauſe that I ſaw no time er now
Her to deliuer, iche holden haue my pees
But now or neuer, if that it like you
I may her haue right now doutlees
O helpe and grace, among al this prees
Rew on this old caitife in diſtreſſe
Sith I through you haue all this heuineſſe

Ye haue now caught, and fettred in priſon
Troyans inow, and if your willes be
My child with one may haue redemption
Now for the loue of God, and of bounte
One of ſo fele alas, ſo yeke him me
What nede were it this praier for to wern
Sith ye ſhul haue, both folke & toune as yern

On peril of my life I ſhal nat lie
Apollo hath me told ful faithfully
I haue eke found by aſtronomy
By ſort, and by augury trewely
And dare wel ſay the time is faſt by
That fire and flambe on al the toun ſhal ſpreede
And thus ſhal Troy turne to aſhen dede

For certaine Phebus and Neptunus both
That makeden the walles of the toun

Ben with the folke of Troy alway so wroth
That they wol bring it to confusioun
Right in dispite of king Lamedoun
Bicause he nold paien hem her hire
The toune of Troy shal ben set on fire

Telling his tale alway this old grey
Humble in his speech and loking eke
The salt teeres from his eien twey
Ful fast ronnen doune by either cheke
So long he gan of socour hem beseke
That for to heale him of his sorowes sore
They gaue him Antenor, withouten more

But who was glad inough but Calcas tho
And of this thing ful sone his nedes leide
On hem that shoulden for the tretise go
And hem for Antenor ful oft preide
To bringen home king Thoas, and Creseide
And whan Priam his safegard sent
Themballadours to Troy streight they went

The cause I told of her comming, the old
Priam the king, ful sone in generall
Let here vpon his parliment hold
Of which the effect rehercen you I shall
Themballadours ben answerd for finall
The eschaunge of prisoners, and all this nede
Hem liketh wel, and forth in they procede

This Troilus was present in the place
Whan asked was for Antenor Creseide
For which ful sone chaungen gan his face
As he that with tho wordes wel nigh deide
But nathelesse he no word to it seide
Lest men should his affection espie.
With mannes hert, he gan his sorows dry

And ful of anguish and of gresly drede
Abode, what other lords would it ley
And if they would graunt, as God forbede
The eschaunge of her, thē thought he things twey
First, how to saue her honor, and what wey
He might best the eschaunge of her withstond
Ful fast he cast how all this might stond

Loue him made al prest to done her bide
And rather dien, than she should go
But Reason said him on that other side
Withouten assent of her, do nat so
Lest for thy werke she would be thy foe
And sain, that through thy medling is yblow
Your bother loue, ther it was erst know

For which he gan deliberen for the best
And though the lords would that she went
He would let hem graunt what hem lest
And tel his lady first what that they ment
And when that she had said him her entent
Therafter would he worken also blinde
Tho all the world ayen it would striue

Hector which that wel the Grekes herd
For Antenor, how they would haue Creseide
Gan it withstond, and soberly answerd
Sirs, she nis no prisoner (he seide)
I not on you who that this charge leide
But on my part, ye may eftsones hem tell
We vsen here, no women for to sell

The noise of people vp stert them atones
As brimme as blase of straw yset on fire
For infortune it would for the nones
They shoulden her confusion desire
Hector (qd. they) what gost may you enspire
This woman thus to shield, and done vs lese
Dan Antenor, a wrong way now ye chese

That is so wise, and eke so bold baroun
And we haue nede to folke, as men may se
He is one the greatest of this toun
O Hector, let thy fantasies be
O king Priam (qd. they) thus segge we
That all our voice is to forgone Creseide
And to deliuer Antenor they preide

O Iuuenal lord, trew is thy sentence
That litel wenen folke what is to yerne
That they ne finden in her desire offence
For cloud of errour lette hem discerne
What best is, and lo, here ensample as yerne
These folke desiren now deliuerance
Of Antenor that brought hem to mischance

For he was after traitour to the toun
Of Troy alas, they quitte him out to rath
O nice world, lo thy discrecion
Creseide, which that neuer did hem scath
Shal now no lenger in her blisse bath
But Antenor, he shal come home to toune
And she shal out, thus said heere and houne

For which delibered was by parliment
For Antenor to yelden out Creseide
And it pronounced by the president
Though that Hector nay ful oft praid
And finally, what wight that it withsaid
It was for naught, it must ben, and should
For substaunce of the Parliment it would

Departed

Departed out of the parliment echone
This Troilus, without wordes mo
Unto his chambre spedde him fast alone
But if it were a man of his or two
The which he bad out fast for to go
Bicause he wold slepen, as he saio
And hastely vpon his bedde him laid

And as in winter leaues ben biraft
Ech after other til trees be bare
So that there nis but barke & braunch ylaft
Lithe Troilus, biraft of ech welfare
Ibounden in the blacke barke of care
Dispoled wode out of his witte to breide
So sore hym sate the chaunging of Creseide

He rist him vp, and euery dore he shette
And window eke, and tho this sorowful man
Upon his beddes side doune him sette
Ful like a deed image, pale and wan
And in his brest the heaped wo began
Out burst, and he to worken in this wise
In his woodnesse, as I shal you deuise

Right as the wild Bulle begynneth spring
Now here now there, ydarted to the hart
And of his death roreth, in complaining
Right so gan he about the chambre stert
Smiting his brest, ale with his fistes smert
His heed to the wal, his body to the ground
Ful oft he swapt hym seluen to confound

His eyen two for pite of his hert
Out streemeden as swift as welles twey
The high sobbes of his sorows smert
His speech him reft, vnnethes might he sey
O death alas, why nilt thou do me dey
Acursed by that day which that nature
Shope me to ben a liues creature

But after whan the fury and al the rage
Which that his hart twist, and fast threst
By length of time somwhat gan aswage
Upon his bedde he laid him doune to rest
But tho begon his teares more out to brest
That wonder is the body may suffise
To halfe this wo, which that I you deuise

Than saied he thus: Fortune alas the while
What haue I done, what haue I the agilt
How mightest thou for routh me begile
Is there no grace, and shal I thus be spilt
Shal thus Creseide away for that thou wilt
Alas, how mightest thou in hart find
To ben to me thus cruel and vnkind

Haue I the nat honoured all my liue
As thou wel wotest, aboue the goddes all
Why wilt thou me fro ioy thus depriue
O Troilus, what may men now the cal
But wretch of wretches, out of honour fal
Into misery, in which I wol bewaile
Creseide alas, til that the breth me faile

Alas Fortune, if that my life in ioy
Displeased had vnto thy foule Enuy
Why ne haddest thou my father king of Troy
Biraft the life, or done my brethren die
Or slain my self, that thus complaine and crie
I combre world, that may of nothing serue
But euer die, and neuer fully sterue

If that Creseide alone were me laft (shere
Naught raught I whider thou wouldest me
And her alas, than hast thou me biraft
But euermore, lo this is thy manere
To reue a wight that most is to him dere
To preue in that thy gierful violence
Thus am I lost, there helpeth no defence

O very lord, O loue, O God alas
That knowest best min hert, & all my thought
What shal my sorowful life done in this cas
If I forgo that I here haue bought
Sens ye Creseide and me haue fully brought
Into your grace, and both our herts sealed
How may ye suffer alas it be repealed

What I may done I shal, while I may dure
On liue, in turment and in cruel paine
This infortune, or this disaventure
Alone as I was borne I wol complaine
Ne neuer wol I sene it shine or raine
But end I wol as Edippe in derkenesse
My sorowful life, and dien in distresse

O wery gost, that errest to and fro
Why nilt thou flien out of the wofullest
Body, that euer might on ground go
O soule, lurking in this wofful nest
Flie forth out mine hart, and let it brest
And folow alway Creseide thy lady dere
Thy right place is now no lenger here

O wofful eien two, sens your disport
Was al to sene Creseides eien bright
What shal ye done, but for my discomfort
Stoden for naught, and wepen out your light
Sens she is quemt, þ wont was you to light
In vein from this forth haue I eien twey
Iformed, sens your vertue is awey

O my Creseide, O lady soueraine
Of this woful soule that thus crieth
Who shal now yeuen comfort to thy paine
Alas no wight, but whan mine hert dieth
My spirit, which that so vnto you hieth
Receiue in gree, for that shal aie you serue
For thy no force is, though the body sterue

O ye louers, that high vpon the whele
Ben sette of Fortune, in good auenture
God lene that ye finden aie loue of stele
And long mote your life in ioy endure
But when ye comen by my sepulture
Remembreth that your felow resteth there
For I loued eke, though I vnworthy were

O old vnholsome and misliued man
Calcas I meane, alas what ciled the
To ben a Grekes sens thou art borne Troian
O Calcas, which that wolt my bane be
In cursed time was thou borne for me
As would blisful Ioue for his ioy
That I the had where I would in Troy

A thousand sighes hotter than the glede
Out of his brest, ech after other went
Medled with plaint new, his wo to fede
For which his woful teres neuer stent
And shortly so his sorows him to rent
And wore so mate, that ioy or penaunce
Ne feleth none, but lieth in a traunce

Pandare, which that in the parliment
Had herd what euery Lord and burgeis seide
And how ful graunted was by one assent
For Antenor, to yelden out Creseide
Gan wel nigh wode out of his wit to breide
So that for wo he nist what he ment
But in a rage to Troilus he went

A certaine knight, that for the time kept
The chambre doore, vndid it him anone
And Pandare that ful tenderly wept
In to the derke chambre as stil as stone
Toward the bedde gan softly to gone
So confuse, that he nist what to say
For very wo, his witte was nigh away

And with chere and loking al to torne
For sorow of this, and with his armes folden
He stode this woful Troilus beforne
And on his pitous face he gan beholden
But so oft gan his hart colden
Seyng his frend in wo, whose heuinesse
His hart slough, as thought him for distresse

This woful wight, this Troilus that felt
His frend Pandare ycomen him to se
Gan as the snow ayenst the sunne melt
For which this woful Pandare, of pite
Gan for to wepe, as tenderly as he
And spechlesse thus ben these like twey
That neither might for sorow o word sey

But at the last, this woful Troilus
Nigh deed for smert, gan bresten out to rore
And with a sorowful noise he said thus
Amongs his sobbes, and his sighes sore
Lo Pandare I am deed, withouten more
Hast thou nat herd at parliment he seide
For Antenor how lost is my Creseide

This Pandare ful deed and pale of hew
Ful pitously answerd, and said yes
As wisely were it false as it is trew
That I haue herd, and wote al how it is
O mercy God, who would haue trowed this
Who would haue wend ỹ in so litel a throw
Fortune our ioy would haue ouerthrow

For in this world there is no creature
As to my dome, that euer saw ruine
Straunger thē this, through case or auenture
But who may al eschue or al deuine
Such is this world, for thy I thus define
Ne trust no wight to find in Fortune
Aie property, her yefts ben commune

But tel me this, why thou art now so mad
To sorowen thus, why list thou in this wise
Sens thy delire all holly hast thou had
So that by right, it ought inough suffice
But I that neuer felt in my seruice
A frendly chere or loking of an eye
Let me thus wepe and waulen til I dye

And ouer al this, as thou wel wost thy selue
This toune is ful of ladies al about
And to my dome, fairer than such twelue
As euer she was, shal I finden in some rout
Ye one or twey, withouten any dout
For thy be glad mine owne dere brother
If she be lost, we shal recouer an other

What God forbid alway that ech pleasaunce
In o thing were, and in non other wight
If one can sing, another can wel daunce
If this be goodly, she is glad and light
And this is faire, and that can good aright
Ech for his vertue holden is for dere
Both heroner and faucon for riuere

And

And eke as writ Zanſis, that was full wiſe
The newe loue out chaſeth oft the old
And vpon newe caſe lieth new auiſe
Thinke eke thy ſelfe to ſauen art thou hold
Such fire by proceſſe, ſhall of kind cold
For ſens it is but caſuell pleaſaunce
Some caſe ſhal put it out of remembraunce.

For al ſo ſure as day cometh after night
The newe loue, labour, or other wo
Or elſ ſelde ſeing of a wight
Doen old affections all ouergo
And for thy part, thou ſhalt haue one of tho
To abredge with thy bitter paines ſmarte
Abſence of her, ſhall driue her out of harte.

Theſe wordes ſaied he for the nones all
To helpe his frend, leſt he for ſorowe deide
For doubtleſſe to doen his wo to fall
He raught nat what vntrift that he ſeide
But Troilus that nigh for ſorowe deide
Toke little hede, of all that euer he ment
One eare it heard, at the other out it went.

But at the laſt he anſwerde, and ſaid frend
This lecherafft, or healed thus to be
Were well ſitting, if that I were a fend
To traien a wight, that true is vnto me
I pray God let this counſaile neuer thee
But doe me rather ſterue anon right here
Er I thus doen, as thou me wouldeſt lere.

She that I ſerue ywis, what ſo thou ſeie
To whom mine harte enhabite is by right
Shall haue me wholly hers till that I deie
For Pandarus, ſens I haue trouth her hight
I woll nat been vntrue for no wight
But as her man I woll aie liue and ſterue
And neuer non other creature ſerue.

And there thou laieſt thou ſhalt as faire find
As ſhe, let be, make no compariſon
To creature yformed here by kinde
O leue Pandare, in concluſion
I woll nat been of thine opinion
Touching all this, for which I thee beſeche
So holde thy peace, thou ſlaeſt me with thy ſpeche.

Thou biddeſt me I ſhould loue another
All freſhly new, and let Creſeide go
It lithe nat in my power leue brother
And though I might, yet would I nat doe ſo
But canſt thou plaien raket to and fro
Nettle in dock out, now this now ſ Pandare
Now foule fall her for thy wo that care.

Thou fareſt eke by me Pandarus
As he, that whan a wight is wo bigon
He cometh to him apace, & ſaith right thus
Thinke not on ſmart, & thou ſhalt fele none
Thou maieſt me firſt tranſmewen in a ſtone
And reue me my paſſions all
Or thou ſo lightly do my wo to fall.

The death may well out of my breſt depart
The life ſo long may this ſorowe mine
But fro my ſoule ſhall Creſeides dart
Out neuermore, but doune with Proſerpine
Whan I am dedde, I woll won in pine
And there I woll eternally complain
My wo, & how that twunned be we twain

Thou haſt here made an argument for me
How that it ſhould laſſe pain be
Creſeide to forgon, for ſhe was mine
And liued in eaſe and in felicitie
Why gabbeſt thou, that laiedſt vnto me
That him is worſe that is fro wele ythrow
Than he had erſt none of that wele knowe.

But tel me now, ſens ſ thee thinketh ſo light
To changen ſo in loue aie to and fro
Why haſt thou nat doen buſily thy might
To changen her, that doeth thee all thy wo
Why nilt thou let her fro thine hart go
Why nilt thou loue an other lady ſwete
That may thine harte ſetten in quete.

If thou haſt had in loue aie yet miſchaſice
And canſt it not out of thine harte driue
I that liued in luſt and in pleaſance
With her, as much as creature on liue
How ſhould I that forget, and that ſo blithe
O where haſt thou been hid ſo long in mewe
That canſt ſo well and formeliche argewe.

Naie God wot, naught worth is al thy rede
For which, for what that euer may befall
Withouten words mo I woll been dede
O death that ender art of ſorowes all
Come now, ſens I ſo oft after thee call
For ſelp is that death, loth for to fain
That oft ycleped, cometh and endeth pain.

Wel wote I, whyle my life was in quiete
Er thou me ſiue, I would haue peuen hire
But now thy comming is to me ſo ſwete
That in this world, I nothing ſo deſire
O death, ſens with this ſorowe I am a fire
Thou either doe me anon in teares drenche
Or with thy cold ſtroke mine harte quenche.

Sens that thou slaest so fele in sondry wise
Ayenst her will, vnpraied day and night
Doe me at my request this seruice
Deliuer now the world, so doest thou right
Of me that am the wofullest wight
That euer was, for tune is that I serue
Sens in this world of right nought do I serue

Yet dede I most her hart to perturbe
With violence, if I doe such a game
For if a would it openly disturbe
It must be disclaundre to her name
And me were leauer die than her diffame
As nolde God, but I should haue
Her honour, leauer than my life to saue

This Troilus in teares gan distill
As licour out of a Lambike full fast
And Pandarus gan hold his tong still
And to the ground his eyen doun he cast
But natheless, thus thought he at last
What parde, rather than my felow deie
Yet shall I somwhat more vnto him seie.

Thus am I lost, for aught that I can see
For certain is that I am her knight
I must her honour leauer haue than me
In euery case, as louer ought of right
Thus am I with desire and reason twight
Desire for to disiourden her me redeth
And reason nill not, so mine hart dredeth.

And said frend, sens thou hast such distresse
And sens thee list mine arguments blame
Why nilt thy seluen helpe doen redresse
And with thy manhode letten all this game
Go rauish her, ne canst thou not for shame
And either let her out of toune pace
Or hold her still, and leaue thy nice face.

Thus weping, that he could neuer cease
He saied alas, how shall I wretche fare
For well fele I alwaie my loue encrease
And hope is lesse and lesse Pandare
Encreasen eke the causes of my care
So welawaie, why nill mine hart brest
For as in loue there is but little rest.

Art thou in Troy, & hast non hardiment
To take a wight, which loueth thee
And would her seluen been of thine assent
Now is not this a nice vanite
Rise vp anon, and let this weping be
And sith thou art a man, for in this hour
I woll been dedde, or she shall been our.

Pandare answerd, frend thou maiest for me
Doen as thee list, but had I it so hote
And thine estate, she should go with me
Tho all this toun cried on this thing by note
I nolde set at all that noise a grote
For whā men haue cried than woll they roun
Eke wonder last but ix. daies neuer in toun.

To this answerde him Troilus full soft
And saied, ywis my leue brother dere
All this haue I my selfe yet thought full oft
And more thing than thou deuisest here
but why this thing is last, thou shalt wel here
And whan thou hast me yeuen audience
Therafter maiest thou tell all thy sentence.

Deuine not in reason ale so depe
Ne curtesly, but helpe thy selfe anon
Bet is that other than thy seluen wepe
And namely sens ye two been all one
Rise vp, for by mine hedde she shall not gone
And rather been in blame a little yfound
Than sterue here as a gnat withoute wound

First sin thou wost this toun hath all this
For rauishing of women so by night (werre
It should not been suffred me to erre
As it stont now, ne doen so great vnright
I should haue also blame of euery wight
My fathers graunt if that I so withstood
Sens she is chaunged for the tounes good.

It is no shame vnto you ne no vice
Her to withholden, that ye loueth moste
Paraventure she might holde thee for nice
To letten her go thus vnto the Grekes hoste
Think eke fortune, as well thy seluen woste
Helpeth hardie man vnto his emprise
And weliueth wretches, for her cowardise.

I haue eke thought, so it were her assent
To aske her of my father of his grace
Than thinke I, this were her accusement
Sens well I wot I may her not purchace
For sens my father in so high place
As Parliment, hath her exchange enseled
He nill for me his letter be repealed.

And though thy lady would a lite her greue
Thou shalt thy self thy peace hereafter make
But as to me certain I can not leue
That she would it as now for euill take
Why should than for feare thine hart quake
Think how Paris hath, that is thy brother
A loue, and why shal thou not haue another.

And

And Troilus, o thing I dare thee swere
That if Creseide, which that is thy leue
Now loueth thee, as well as thou doest here
God helpe me so, she will not take a greue
Though thou do bote anone in this mischefe
And if she wilneth fro thee for to passe
Than is she false, so loue her wel the lasse.

For thy take hart, & thinke right as a knight
Through loue is broken aldaie euery lawe
Kith now somwhat thy corage & thy might
Haue mercie on thy self for any awe
Let not this wretched wo thine hart gnawe
But manly set the worlde on fire and seuen
And if thou die a martir go to heauen.

I woll my selfe been with thee at this dede
Though I and all my kin vpon a stound
Should in a strete, as dogges liggen dede
Through girt with many a bloodie wound
In euery case I woll a frend be found
And if thee listeth here steruen as a wretche
Adieu, the deuill spede him that retche.

This Troilus gan with tho words quicken
And saied frend, graunt mercie, I assent
But certainly thou maiest nat so me pricken
Ne pain none ne may me so tourment
That for no case, it is not mine entent
At short wordes, though I dien should
To rauishen her, but if her selfe it would.

Why, so meane I (qd Pandarus) al this day
But tell me than, hast thou her wel assaied
That sorowest thus? & he answerd him naie
Wherof art thou (qd Pandare) than dismaied
That noste not that she wol been cuil apaied
To rauishen her, sens thou hast nat ben there
But if that Joue tolde it in thine eare.

For thy rise vp as naught ne were anon
And wash thy face, & to the king thou wend
Or he may wondren whider thou art gon
Thou must with wisedom, him & other blend
Or vpon case he may after thee send
Or thou beware, and shortly brother dere
Be glad, and let me werke in this mattere.

For I shal shape it so, that sikerly
thou shalt this nizt somtime in some manere
Come speaken with thy Lady priuely
And by her wordes eke, as by her chere
Thou shalt full sone aperceiue and well here
Of her entent, and in this case the best
And fare now well, for in this point I rest.

The swift fame, which that fals things
Equall reporteth like the thyngs true
was throughout Troie ysled with prest wigs
Fro man to man, & made his tale all new
How Calcas doughter with her bright hewe
At Parliment without wordes more
I graunted was, in chaunge of Antenore.

The which tale anon right as Creseide
Had heard, she which ỹ of her father rought
(as in this case) right nazt, ne whan he deide
Full busily to Jupiter besought
Neue him mischaunce, ỹ this tretis brought
But shortly lest these tales sothe were
She durst at no wight aske it for fere.

As she that had her hart and all her minde
On Troilus yset so wonder fast
That al this world ne mizt her loue vnbind
Ne Troilus out of her harte cast
She would ben his, while ỹ her life may last
And she thus bzenneth both in loue & drede
So that she nist what was best to rede.

But as men seen in toun, and all about
That women vsen her frendes to visite
So to Creseide of women came a rout
For pitous ioy, and wenden her delite
And with her tales dere ynough a mite
These women, which that in the citie dwell
They set hem doun, and saied as I shal tell.

(Nd first that one) I am glad truely
Because of you; that shal your father see
Another saied, ywis so am not I
For all to little hath she with vs be
(Nd tho the thirde) I hope ywis that shee
Shall bringen vs the peace on euery side
That whan she goth, almighty God her gide

Tho words and tho wamannish things
She herd hem rizt as though she thens were
For God it wote, her harte on other thing is
Although the body sat among hem there
Her aduertence is alway els where
For Troilus full fast her soule sought
Withouten word, on him alway she thought

These wome that thus wenden her to please
About naught gan all her taies spende
Such vanitie ne can doen her none ease
As she that all this meane while bzende
Of other passion that they wende
So that she felt almoste her harte die
For wo, and werie of that companie.

For

For whiche might she no lenger restrain
Her teares, they gan so vp to well
That gaue tignes of her bitter paine
In which her spirite was, and must dwell
Remembring her frō heauen vnto which hell
She fallen was, sens she forgo the sight
Of Troilus, and sorowfully she sight.

And thilke fooles, sitting her about
Wend that she wept and sighed sore
Because that she should out of the rout
Departen, and neuer plaie with hem more
And they that had knowen her of yore
Se her so wepe, and thought it was kindnes
And eche of hem wept eke for her distresse

And busilie they gonnen her to comforten
One thig God wot, on which she little thought
And with her tales wenden her disporten
And to be glad they ofte her besought
But such an ease therwith they her wrought
Right as a man is eased for to kele
For ache of hedde, to clawen him on his hele.

But after all this nice vanitie
They toke her leue, & home they wenten all
Creseide full of sorowfull pitie
Into her chambre vp went out of the hall
And on her bedde she gan for dedde to fall
In purpose neuer thens for to rise
And thus she wrought, as I shall you deuise.

Her owonded heer, that sunnish was of hewe
She rent, & eke her fingers long and small
She wrong full oft, and bad God on her rue
And with the death to doe bote on her bale
Her hewe whilom bright, that tho was pale
Bare witnesse of her wo, and her constreint
And thus she spake, sobbing in her complaint.

Alas (qd she) out of this regioun
I wofull wretche and infortuned wight
And borne in cursed constellacioun
Mote gon, and thus departen fro my knight
Wo worthe alas, that ilke daies light
On which I saw him first with eyen twaine
That causeth me, and I him all this pain.

Therwith the teares from her eyen two
Doune fell, as shoure in Aprill swithe
Her white brest she bet, and for the wo
After the death she cried a thousand sithe
Sens he that wont her wo was for to lithe
She mote forgon, for which disauenture.
She held her self a forlost creature.

She saied, how shal he doen and I also
How should I liue, if that I from him twin
O dere harte eke that I loue so
Who shall that sorowe slacn, that ye ben in:
O Calcas father, thine be all this sin
O mother mine, that cleped were Argiue
Wo worth that day, ꝑ thou me bare on liue.

To what fine should I liue, & sorowen thus
How should a fish withouten water dure:
What is Creseide worth from Troilus:
How should a plant or liues creature
Liue withouten his kinde norriture
For which full oft, a by worde here I seie
That rooteles mote grene sone deie

I shal doen thus, sens neither sword ne dart
Dare I none handle, for the cruelte
That ilke day that I fro you depart
If sorow of that nill nat my bane be
Than shall no meate ne drinke come in me
Till I my soule out of my brest vnbeath
And thus my seluen woll I doen to death.

And Troilus, my clothes euerichone
Shul blacke been, in tokening hart swete
That I am as out of this world agone
That wont was you to set in quiete
And of mine order aie, till death me mete
The obseruaunce euer in your absence
Shall sorowe been, complaint, & abstinence.

Mine harte, & eke the woful ghost therein
Biqueth I with your spirite to complain
Eternally, for they shall neuer twin
For though in earth twinned be we twain
Yet in the felde of pitie, out of pain
That hight Elisos, shall we been yfere
As Orpheus and Erudice his fere.

Thus harte mine, for Antenor alas
I soone shal be chaunged, as I wene
But how shull ye doen in this sorowful caas
How shall your tender harte this sustein
But harte mine, for yet this sorowe and tene
And me also, for sothly for to seie
So ye well fare, I retche not to deie.

How might it euer redde been or yong
The plaint that she made in her distresse
I not, but as for me my little tong
If I discriuen would her heuinesse
It should make her sorowe seeme lesse
Than that it was, and childishly deface
Her hie complaint, and therfore I it pace.

Pandare

Pandare, which that sent from Troilus
Was vnto Creseide, as ye haue heard deuise
That for the best it was accorded thus
And he ful glad to doen him that seruice
Unto Creseide in a ful secret wise
There as she lay, in tourment and in rage
Came her to tel all holly his message

And fond that she her seluen gan to trete
Ful pitously, for with her salt teares
Her brest and face ybathed was ful wete
Her mighty tresses of her sonnish heares
Unbroiden, hangen all about her eares
Which yaue him very signe of mattire
Of death, which that her hart gan desire

When she him saw, she gan for sorow anon
Her teary face, atwixt her armes hide
For which this Pandare is so wo bigon
That in the hous he might vneth abide
As he that felt sorow on euery side
For if Creseide had erst complained sore
Tho gan she plain a thousand times more

And in her alyre plaint, thus she seide
Pandare, first of ioies mo than two
Was cause, causing vnto me Creseide
That now transmued been in cruel wo
Whether shal I say to you welcome or no
That alderfirst me brought vnto seruise
Of loue alas, that endeth in such wise

Endeth than loue in woe? Ye or men lieth
And all worldly blisse, as thinketh me
The end of blisse aie sorow it occupieth
And who troweth not that it so be
Let him vpon me woful wretch se
That my self hate, and ate my birth curse
Feling alway, fro wicke I go to worse

Who so me seeth, he seeth sorow al atonis
Pain, tourment, plaint, wo, and distresse
Out of my woful body harme there none is
As langour, anguish, cruel bitternesse
Annoy, smart, drede, fury, and eke sickenesse
I trow twis from heauen teares rain
For pite of my alyre and cruel pain

And thou my suster, ful of discomfort
(Qd. Pandarus) what thinkest thou to do?
Why ne hast thou to thy seluen some resport?
Why wilt thou thus thy self alas fordo?
Leaue all this werke, and take now hede to
That I shal sain, and herken of good entent
This message, that by me Troilus you sent

Tourned her tho Creseide, a wo making
So great, that it a death was for to se
Alas (qd. she) what words may ye bring
What wol my dere hart sain to me
Which that I drede neuer more to se
Wol he haue plaint or teares er I wend
I haue inough, if he thereafter send

She was right soch to seen in her visage
As is that wight that men on beare bind
Her face like of Paradis the Image
Was all ychaunged in another kind
The play, the laughter, men wer wont to find
On her, and eke her ioies euerichone
Been fledde, and thus lieth Creseide alone

About her eyen two, a purpre ring
Bitrent, in sothfast tokening of her pain
That to behold it was a dedly thing
For which Pandare might nat restrain
The teares from his eyen for to rain
But nathelesse as the best might he seide
From Troilus these words to Creseide

Lo nece, I trow ye han heard all how
The king with other Lords for the best
Hath made eschaunge of Antenor and you
That cause is of this sorow and this vnrest
But how this case doeth Troilus molest
This may none earthly mannes tong say
For very wo, his wit is all away

For which we haue so sorowed, he and I
That into little, it had vs both slaw
But through my counsaile this day finally
He somwhat is fro weping withdraw
And semeth me that he desireth faw
With you to been all night for to deuise
Remedy of this, if there were any wise

This short and plain, the effect of my message
As ferforth as my wit can comprehend
For ye that been of tourment in such rage
Way to no long prologue as now entend
And herupon ye may answere him send
And for the loue of God my nece dere
So leaue this wo or Troilus be here

Great is my wo (qd. she) and sighed sore
As she that feleth deadly sharpe distresse
But yet to me his sorow is mokell more
That loue him bet than he himself I gesse
Alas, for me hath he such heuinesse
Can he for me so pitously complain
Iwis this sorow doubleth all my pain

Grenous

Grenous to me God wot it is for to twin
(Qd she) but yet it harder is to me
To seen that sorowe which that he is in
For wel wot I, it woll my bane be
And die I woll in certain tho (qd she)
But bid him cum, er deth ỳ thus me threteth
Drive out ỳ ghost, which in min hart beteth.

Thrise words saied, she on her armes two
Fill grufe, and gan to weyen pitously
(Qd Pandarus) alas why do ye so
Sens ye well wote the time is fast by
That he shal come, arise up hastely
That he you not biwopen thus ne finde
But ye wol haue him wood out of his minde.

For wist he that ye farde in this manere
He would himselfe slea: and if I wende
To haue this fare, he should not come here
For all the good that Priam may dispende
For to what fine he would anon pretende
That knowe I well, and for thy yet I seie
So leaue this sorowe, or plainly he woll deie

And shapeth you his sorow for to abredge
And nat encrease, lefe nece swete
Beth rather to him cause of plat than edge
And with some wisedom, ye his sorowes bete
What helpeth it to wepen full a strete
Or though ye both in salt teares dreint
Bet is a time of cure aie than of pleint.

I meane thus, whan I him hither bring
Sens ye be wise, and both of one assent
So shaped how to disiourne your going
Or come ayen sone after ye be went
Women been wise, in short auisement
And let seen how your wit shall auaile
And what that I may help, it shal nat faile

Go (qd Creseide) and uncle truely
I shall doen all my might me to restrain
From weping in his sight, and busily
Him for to glad, I shall doen all my pain
And in my harte seken euery vain
If to this sore there may been founden salue
It shall nat lacke certain on mine halue.

Goth Pandarus, and Troilus he sought
Till in a temple he found him all alone
As he that of his life no lenger routh
But to the pitous Goddes euerichone
Full tenderly he praied, and made his mone
To doen him sone out of this world to pace
For wel he thought ther was non other grace.

And shortly all the soth for to sey
He was fallen in dispaire that day
That vtterly he hope him for to dey
For right thus was his argument alway
He saied he nas but lorne welaway
For all that cometh, cometh by necessite
Thus to ben lorne it is my destine.

For certainly this wote I wel he said
That forsight of diuine purueiaunce
Had seen alway me to forgon Creseide
Sens God seeth euery thing out of doutaunce
And hem disposeth through his ordinaunce
In his merites sothly for to be
As they shul comen by predestine.

But natheless alas, whom shal I leue
For there been great clerkes many a one
That destiny, through arguments preue
And some sain that nedely there is none
But that free choice is yeuen vs euerichone
O welaway, so sligh arne clerkes old
That I nat whose opinion I may hold

For some men sain, that God seeth al biforne
Ne God may nat deceiued been parde
Thā mote it fallen, though mē had it sworne
That purueiaunce hath seen before to be
Wherfore I say, that from eterne if he
Hath wist beforn our thought eke as our dede
We haue no free choice, as these clerkes rede

For other thought, nor other deed also
Might neuer been, but soche as purueyaunce
Which may nat ben deceiued neuer mo
Hath seied biforne, withouten ignoraunce
For if there might been a variaunce
To writhen out fro Goddes purueying
There were no prescience of thing comming

But it were rather an opinion
Uncertain, and no stedfast foreseing
And certes that were an abusion
That God shuld haue no perfite clere weting
More than we men, ỳ haue doutous wening
But soch an errour vpon God to gesse
Were false and foule, and wicked cursednesse

Eke this is an opinion of some
That haue her top ful high and smoth yshore
They sain right thus ỳ thing is nat to come
For that the prescience hath seen before
That it shall come, but they sain that therfore
That it shal come, therfore the purueyaunce
Wote it beforne withouten ignorance

And

And in this maner this necessite
Retourneth in his part contrary againe
For nedefully behoueth it nat to be
That thilke things fallen in certaine
that ben purueyed, but nedefully as they saine
Behoueth it that things which that fall
That they in certaine ben purueyed all

For all though that forthing shal come twis
Therfore is it purueyed certainly
Nat that it cometh for it purueyed is
Yet nathelesse behoueth it nedefully
That thing to come be purueyed trewly
Or els things that purueyed be
That they betiden by necessite

I meane as though I laboured me in this
to enquire which thing cause of which thing be
Is whether that the prescience of God is
The certaine cause of the necessite
Of things that to comen be parde
Or if necessite of thing coming
Be cause certaine of the purueying

And this sufficeth right inough certaine
For to distroy our free choise euerydell
But now is this abusion to saine
That falling of the things temporell
Is cause of the Goddes prescience eternell
Now trewly that is a faise sentence
That thing to come shuld cause his prescience

But now ne enforce I me not in shewing
How ỳ order of the causes stant, but wel wot I
That it behoueth that the befalling
Of things wist before certainly
Be necessary, all seme it not therby
That prescience put falling necessaryе
To thing to come, al fal it foule or faire

What might I wene? I had such a thought?
But that God purueieth thing that is to come
For that it is to come, and els nought
So might I wene that things all and some
That whilom ben bifal and ouerrome
Ben cause of thilke soueraine purueyaunce
That forwote al, withouten ignorаunce

For if there sit a man pond on a see
That by necessite behoueth it
That certes thine opinion soth be
That wenest or coniectest that he sit
And further ouer, now ayenward yet
Lo, right so is it on the part contrary
Is thus, now herken for I wol nat tary

And ouer all this, yet say I more therto
That right as whan I wote there is a thing
Iwis that thing mote nedefully be so
Eke right so, whan I wote a thing coming
So mote it come, and thus they befalling
Of things that ben wist before the tide
They mow not ben eschewed on no side

I say that if the opinion of the
Be soth for that he sit, than say I this
That he mote sitten by necessite
And thus necessite in eyther is
For in him nede of sitting is iwis
And in the nede of soth, and thus forsoth
There mote necessite ben in you both

Than said he thus, almighty Ioue in trone
That wotest of all this thing the sothfastnesse
Rew on my sorow, and do me dien sone
Or bring Creseide and me fro this distresse
And while he was in all this heinesse
Disputing with him selfe in this matere
Came Pandare in, and said as ye may here

But thou maist saine the man sit nat therfore
That thine opinion of his sitting soth is
But rather for the man sate there before
Therfore is thine opinion soth iwis
And I say, though the cause of soth of this
Cometh of his sitting, yet necessite
Is enterchaunged, both in him and in the

O mighty God (qd. Pandarus) in trone
Sigh, who saw euer a wise man faren so?
Why Troilus, what thinkest thou to done?
Hast thou such lust to ben thine owne foe?
What parde, yet is nat Creseide ago
Why list thee so thy selfe fordon for drede
That in thine heed, thine eyen semen dede

Thus in the same wise out of doutaunce
I may wel maken, as it semeth me
Vpy reasoning of Goddes purueyaunce
And of the things that comen be
By which reason men may wel yse
That thilke things that in erth fall
That by necessite they comen all

Hast thou nat lived many a yere before
Without en her, and farde ful wel at ease
Art thou for her and for none other borne
Hath kind the wrought al only her to please
Let be and thinke right thus in thy disease
That in ỳ dice, right as there fallen chaunces
Right so in loue there come & gone pleasaunces

And yet this is a wonder most of al
Why thou thus sorowest seth thou wost nat yet
Touching her going, how that it shal fal
Ne if she can her selfe distourben it
Thou hast nat yet assaied all her wit
A man may all betime his necke bede
Whan it shal of, and sorowen at the nede

For thy take hede of all that I shal say
I haue with her yspoke and long yde
So as accorded was betwixe vs twey
And euermore me thinketh thus, that she
Hath somwhat in her harts priuite
Wherwith she can, if I shal aright rede
Disturbe al this, of which thou art in drede

For which my counsel is, whan it is night
Thou to her go, and make of this an end
And blisful Juno, through her great might
Shal as (I hope) her grace vnto vs send
Mine hart seith certaine she shal nat wend
And for thy put, thine hert a while in rest
And hold thy purpose, for it is the best

This Troilus answerd, and sighed sore
Thou saist right well, and I wil do right so
And what him list, he said vnto him more
And whan that it was time for to go
Ful priuely him selfe withouten mo
Vnto her came, as he was wont to done
And how they wrought, I shal you tel sone

Soth is, that when they gonne first to mete
So gan the paine her herts for to twist
That neither of hem other might grete
But hem in armes toke, and after kist
The lasse woful of hem both nist
Wher that he was, ne might o word out bring
As I said erst, for wo and for sobbing

The woful teres that they leten fal
As bitter weren out of teres kind
For paine, as is ligne aloes, or gal
So bitter teres wept nat as I find
The woful Mirra through the barke and rind
That in this world there nis so herd an hart
That nold haue rewed on her paines smart

But whan her wofull wery gostes twaine
Returned ben, there as hem ought to dwell
And that somwhat to weken gan the paine
By length of plaint, and ebben gan the wel
Of her teres, and the hart vnswel
With more voice, all horse for thright Creseide
To Troilus these like words seide

O Joue I die, and mercy the beseech
Helpe Troilus: and therwithal her face
Vpon his brest she laid, and lost speech
Her woful sprit from his proper place
Right with the word, away in point to pace
And thus she lith, with hewes pale and grene
That whilom fresh and fairest was to sene

This Troilus that on her gan behold
Cleping her name, and she lay as for deed
Withouten answere, and felt her limmes cold
Her eien throwen vpward to her heed
This sorowful man, can now non other rede
But oft time her cold mouth he kist
Where him was wo, God and himselfe it wist

He riseth him vp, and long strait he her leide
For signe of life, for aught he can or may
Can he none find, in nothing of Creseide
For which his song ful oft is weiaway
But whan he saw that spechlesse she lay
With sorowful voice, and hart of blisse all bare
He said, how she was fro this world yfare

So after that he long had her complained
His honds wrong, and said that was to sey
And with his teres salt her brest berained
He gan tho teres wipen of ful drey
And pitously gan for the soule prey
And said, lord that set art in thy trone
Rew eke on me, for I shal folow her sone

She cold was, and without sentement
For aught he wote, for dreth fr. it he none
And this was him a preignant argument
That she was forth out of this world agone
And when he saw there was non other wonne
He gan her limmes dresse, in such manere
As men don hem that shal ben laid on bere

And after this, with sterne and cruel hart
His sword anon out of his sheth he twight
Him selfe to sleen, how sore that him smart
So that his soule, her soule folowen might
There as the dome of Minos would it dight
Sith loue and cruel fortune it ne would
That in this world he lenger liuen should

Than said he thus, fulfilde of high disdaine
O cruel Joue, and thou fortune aduerse
This all and some, that falsely haue ye slaine
Creseide, and sith ye may do me no worse
Fie on your might and werkes so diuerse
Thus cowardly ye shul me neuer winne
There shal no deth me fro my lady twinne

For

For I this world, sith ye haue slaine her thus
Wol let, and folow her spirit low or hie
Shal neuer louer sain that Troilus
Dare nat for feare with his lady die
For certaine I wol beare her compane
But sith ye wol nat suffre vs liuen here
Yet suffreth that our soules ben yfere

And thou Cite, in which I liue in wo
And thou Priam, and bretheren al yfere
And thou my mother, farwel for I go
And Attropose make redy thou my bere
And thou Creseide, o swete hart dere
Receiue now my spirit, would he sey
With sword at hart, al redy for to dey

But as God would of swough she abraid
And gan to sigh, and Troilus she cride
And he answerd, lady mine Creseide
Liue ye yet, and let his sword doun glide
Ye hart mine, that thanked be Cupide
(Qd. she) and therwithal she sore sight
And he began to glade her as he might

Toke her in armes two and kist her oft
And her to glad, he did al his entent
For which her gost, that flikered aie a loft
Into her woful hart ayen it went
But at the last, as that her eye glent
Aside, anon she gan his sword aspy
As it lay bare, and gan for feare cry

And asked him, why he had it out drawe
And Troilus anon the cause her told
& how himself therwith he would haue slawe
For which Creseide vpon him gan behold
And gan him in her armes fast fold
And said, o mercy God, lo which a dede
Alas, how nigh we weren both deds

Than if I nadde spoken, as grace was
Ye would haue slain your selfe anon (qd. she)
Ye doutelesse: and she answerd alas
For by that ilke lord that made me
I nold a forlong way on liue haue be
After your death, to haue ben crowned Quene
Of all the lond the sunne on shineth shene

But with this selue sword, which ẏ here is
My selfe I would haue slaine (qd. she) tho
But ho, for we haue right inough of this
And let vs rise and streit to bedde go
And there let vs speken of our wo
For by that morter, which that I se brenne
Know I ful wel, that day is ferre henne

when they wer in her bedde in armes fold
Naught was it like tho nights here before
For petously ech other gan behold
As they that hadden all her blisse ylore
Bewailing aie the day that they were bore
Til at the last, this sorowful wight Creseide
To Troilus these like words seide

Lo hart mine, wel wote ye this (qd. she)
That if a wight alway his wo complaine
And seketh nat how holpen for to be
It nis but foly, and encrease of paine
And sens that her assembled be we twaine
To find bote of wo that we ben in
It were time all soone to begin

I am a woman, as ful wel ye wotte
And as I am auised sodainly
So wol I tel you, while it is hotte
Me thinketh thus, that neither ye nor I
Ought half this wo to maken skilfully
For there is art inough for to redresse
That yet is misse, and sleen this heuinesse

Both is, the wo the which we ben inne
For aught I wote, for nothing els is
But for the cause that we should twinne
Considred al, there nis no more amis
And what is than a remedy vnto this?
But that we shape vs sone for to mete
This all and some, my dere hart swete

Now that I shal wel bringen it about
To come ayen, sone after that I go
Therof am I no maner thing in dout
For dredelesse, within a weke or two
I shal ben here, and that it may be so
By all right, and in words fewe
I shal you wel an heape of wates shewe

For which I wol nat maken long sermon
For time ylost may nat recouered be
But I wol go to my conclusion
And to the best, in aught that I can se
And for the loue of God forgeue it me
If I speke aught ayenst your herts rest
For trewly I speke it for the best

Making alway a protestacion
That now these words which I shal say
Nis but to shewe you my mocion
To find vnto our helpe the best way
And take it none otherwise I pray
For in effect, what so ye me commaund
That wol I done, for that is no demaund

Now herkeneth this, ye haue wel vnderstond
My goyng graunted is by parliment
So ferforth that it may not ben withstond
For al this world, as by my iudgement
And sith there helpeth none auisement
To letten it, lette it passe out of mind
And let vs shape a better way to find

The soth is, the twinning of vs twaine
Wol vs disease, and cruelly anoy
But hym behoueth sometime haue a paine
That serueth loue, if that he wol haue ioy
And sith I shal no farther out of Troy
Than I may ride ayen on halfe a morow
It ought lasse causen vs for to sorow

So as I shal nat so ben hid in mew
That day by day, myn owen hert dere
Seng wel ye wote that it is now a trew
Ye shal ful wel al mine estate here
And er that truce is done, I shal ben here
Than haue ye both Antenor ywonne
And me also, beth glad now if ye conne

And think right thus, Creseide is now agon
But what, she shal come hastely ayen
And whan alas, by God, to right anon
Er daies ten, this dare I safely saine
And than at erst, shal we be so faine
So as we shal togithers euer dwell
That all this world ne might our blisse tell

I se that oft time, there as we ben now
That for the best, our counsaile for to hide
Ye speke nat with me, nor I with you
In fourtenight, ne se you go ne ride
May ye nat ten daies than abide
For mine honour, in such auenture
I wis ye now or els lite endure?

Ye know eke how that all my kin is here
But if that only it my father be
And eke mine other things all yfere
And namely my dere hert ye
Whom that I wold leauen for to se
For all this world, as wide as it hath space
Or els se I neuer Ioues face

Why trow ye my father in this wise
Coueiteth so to se me, but for drede
Lest in this toune that folkes me dispise
Bicause of him, for his vnhappy dede
What wote my father what life that I lede
For if he wist in Troy how wel I fare
Vs nedeth for my wending nat to care

Ye, that euery day eke more and more
Men treat of peace, and it supposed is
That men the quene Heleine shal restore
And Grekes vs restore that is mis
So though there nere comfort none but this
That men purposen peace on euery side
Ye may the better at ease of hart abide

For if that it be peace, mine hart dere
The nature of the peace mote nedes drive
That men must entrecommune yfere
And to and fro eke ride and gone as blive
Al day as thick as Bees flien from an hive
And euery wight haue liberty to bleue
Where as him list, the bet withouten leue

And though so be ꝑ peace there may ben none
Yet hither, though there neuer peace ne were
I must come, for whider should I gone
Or how mischaunce should I dwel there
Among tho men of armes euer in fere
For whych, as wisely God my soule rede
I can nat seue wherof ye should drede

Haue here another way, if it so be
That al this thing ne may you not suffise
My father as ye knowen wel parde
Is old, and eke ful of couetise
And I right now haue founden al the gise
Withouten nette, wherwith I shal him hent
And herkeneth now, if that ye wol assent

Lo Troilus, men saine that ful hard it is
The wolfe ful, and the wedder hole to haue
This is to saine, that men ful oft iwis
Mote spenden part, the remnant for to saue
For ale with Gold, men may the hart graue
Of him that set is vpon couetise
And how I meane, I shal it you deuise

The mouable, which ꝑ I haue in this toun
Unto my father shal I take, and say
That right for trust, and for saluacioun
It sent is, from a frend of his or tway
The which frends feruently him pray
To send after more, and that in hie
While that this toun stant thus in ieopardie

And that shalbe of gold an huge quantite
Thus shal I sain, but lest folke it aspide
This may be sent by no wight but by me
I shal eke shewen him, if peace betide
What frends that I haue on euery side
Toward the court, to don the wrath pace
Of Priamus, and do him stond in grace

So what for o thing and for other swete
I shal him so enchaunten with my sawes
That right in heuen his soule is, shal he mete
For al Apollo, or his clerkes lawes
Or calculing, auaileth nat three hawes
Desire of Gold shall so his soule blende
That as me list, I shal wel make an ende.

And if he would aught by his sort it preue
If that I lie, in certaine I shal fonde
Disturben him, and plucke by the sleue
Making his sorte, and bearen him on honde
He hath nat wel the goddes vnderstonde
For goddes speke in amphibologies
And for o sothe, they tellen twentie lies

Eke drede fond first goddes, I suppose
Thus shal I saine, & that his coward harte
Made him amis the goddes text to glose
whan he for ferde out of Delphos sterte
And but I make him sone to conuerte
And done my rede, within a day or twey
I wol to you oblige me to dey

And trewly, as written wel I finde
That al this thing was said of good entent
And that her hart trewe was and kinde
Towards him, & spake right as she ment
And that she starke for wo nigh whā she went
And was in purpose euer to be trewe
Thus writen they, that of her werks knewe.

This Troilus, with hart and eares spad
Herde al this thing deuised to and fro
And verily it semed that he had
The selue wit, but yet to let her go
His hart misyaue him euermo
But finally he gan his hart wrest
To trusten her, and take it for the best

For which the great fury of his penaunce
was queint with hope, & therewith hem be-
Began for ioy the amorous daunce (twene
And as the birdes, when the sunne is shene
Deliten in her song, in leues greene
Right so the words, that they spake yfere
Deliten hem, and made her hartes clere

But natheless, the wending of Creseide
For all this world may not out of his minde
For which ful oft he pitously her preide
That of her heste he might her trewe finde
And sade her, certes if ye be kinde
And but ye come at daie set in Troie
Ne shal I neuer haue heale, honor, ne ioie

For also sothe as sunne vprist a morow
And God so wisely thou me woful wretch
To rest bring, out of this cruel sorow
I wol my seluen slee, if that ye dretche
But of my death though litle be to retche
Yet er that ye me causen so to smarte
Dwel rather here my owne swete harte

For trewly mine owne lady dere
The sleightes yet, that I haue herd you stere
Ful sharpely ben to fallen al yfere
For thus men saith, ỹ one thinketh the bere
But al another thinketh the ledere
Your fire is wise, and said is out of drede
Men may the wise out renne, & nat out rede.

It is full hard to halten vnespied
Before a crepil, for he can the crafte
Your father is in sleight as Argus eied
For al be it that his mouable is him birafte
His olde sleight is yet so with him lafte
Ye shal nat blend him for your womanhede
Ne faine aright, and that is al my drede.

I not if peace shall euermo betide
But peace or no, for erneste ne for game
I wote sith Calcas on the Grekes side
Hath ones ben, and lost so foule his name
He dare no more come here ayen for shame
For which that we, for ought I can espie
To trusten on, nis but a fantasie.

Ye shal eke seen your father shal you glose
To ben a wife, and as he can wel preche
He shal some grecke so preise and wel alose
That rauisshen he shall you with his speche
Or do you done by force, as he shal teche
And Troilus on whom ye nil haue routh
Shal causelesse so steruen in his trouth.

And ouer all this your father shall dispise
Us al, and saine this citie nis but loyne
And that thassege neuer shall arise
For why the Grekes haue it all swoyne
Til we ben slaine, & doune our walles toyne
And thus he shall you with his wordes fere
That aie drede I, that ye wol bleuen there.

Ye shall eke sene so many a lusty knight
Among the Grekes ful of worthinesse
And eche of hem, with hart, wit, and might
To pleasen you, done all his busines
That ye shull dullen of the rudenesse
Of sely Troians, but if routhe
Remorse you, or vertue of your trouthe

And this to me so grieuous is to thinke
That fro my brest it wol my soule rend
Ne dredelesse, in me there may nat sinke
O good opinion, if that ye wend
For why, your fathers sleight wol vs shend
And if ye gone, as I haue told you yore
So thinke I nam but deed, withouten more

For which with humble, true & pitous hart
A thousand times mercy I you pray
So reweth on mine alyre paines smart
And doth somwhat, as that I shal you say
And let vs steale away betwixt vs tway
And think that folly is, whan a man may chese
For accident, his substaunce for to lese

I meane thus, that sens we mow or day
Well steale away, and ben togither so
What wit were it to putten in assay
(In case ye shoulden to your father go)
If that ye mighten come ayen or no
Thus meane I, that were a great foly
To put that likernesse in ieopardy

And vulgarly to speken of substaunce
Of treasour may we both with vs lede
Ynough to liue in honour and pleasaunce
Til vnto time that we shal ben dede
And thus we may eschewen al this drede
For euery other way ye can record
Mine hart wois may therwith nat acord

And hardely ne dredeth no pouerte
For I haue kin and frends eis where
That though we comen in our bare shert
Vs shold neither lack gold ne geere
But ben honoured while we dwelten there
And go we anon, for as in mine entent
This is the best, if that ye wol assent.

Creseide with a sigh, right in this wise
Answerd, wois my dere hart trew
We may wel steale away, as ye deuise
And finden such vntrusty waies new
But afterward ful sore it wol vs rew
And helpe me God so at my most nede
As causelesse ye suffren all this drede

For thilke day that I for cherishing
Or drede of father, or for any other wight
Or for estate, delite, or for weding
Be false to you, my Troilus my knight
Saturnus doughter Juno, thogh her might
As wood as Achaiuant do me dwell
Eternally with Furie in the pit of Hell

And this, on euery God celestiall
I swere it you, and eke on ech goddesse
On euery nimph, and deite infernall
On Satiry and Faury more and lesse
That haue goddes ben of wildernesse
And Attropos my threde of life to brest
If I be false, now trow me if you lest

And thou Mercurie, that as an arrow cleere
Thogh Troy renneth, aie downward to ỹ see
Be witnesse of this word, that said is here
That thilke day that I untrew be
To Troilus, mine owne hart free
That thou returne back ward to thy well
And I with body and soule sinke to hell

But that ye speke away thus for to go
And letten all your frends, God forbede
For any woman that ye shoulden so
And namely sens Troy hath now such nede
Of helpe, and eke of o thing taketh hede
If this were wist, my life lay in balaunce
And your honor, God shield vs fro mischaunce

And if so be that peace hereafter take
As all day happeth after angre game
Why lord the sorow and wo ye woulden make
That ye ne durst come ayen for shame
And er that ye ieoparden so your name
Beth nat to hasty in this hotte fare
For hasty man ne wanteth neuer care

What trow ye the people eke all about
Would of it saye it is ful light to arede
They wolden say, and I were it out of dout
That loue ne drawe you nat to don this dede
But lust voluptuous, and coward drede
Thus were all lost twois mine hart dere
Your honour, which that now shineth clere

And also thinketh on mine honeste
That floureth yet, how foule I should it shend
And with what filth it spotted should be
If in this forme I should with you wend
Ne though I liued vnto the worlds end
My name should I neuer ayenward winne
Thus were I lost, and that were routhe & sinne

And for thy, flee with reason all this hete
Wen latne the suffraunt ouercometh parde
Eke who so wol haue lefe, he lefe mote lete
Thus maketh vertue of necessite
By pacience, and thinke that lord is he
Of fortune aie, that naught wol of her retch
And she ne daunteth no wight but a wretch

And

And trusteth this, that certes hart swete
Or Phebus suster, Lucina the shene
The Lion passe, out of this Aricte
I woll been here, withouten any wene
I meane, as help me Juno heauens Quene
The tenth day, but if that death me assaile
I woll you seen, withouten any faile.

And now so this be soth (qd Troilus)
I shall wel suffre vnto the tenth day
Sens that I see that neede it mote been thus
But for the loue of God, if it be may
So let vs stealen priuely away
For euer in one, as for to liue in rest
Mine hart saith that it woll be the best.

O mercie God, what life is this (qd she)
Alas, ye slea me thus for very tene
I see well now that ye mistrusten me
For by your wordes it is well yseen
Now for the loue of Scinthia the shene
Mistrust me nat thus causelesse for routh
Sens to be true, I haue you plight my trouth.

And thinketh well, that somtime it is wit
To spend a time, a time for to win
Ne parde lorne am I nat fro you yet
Though that we been a day or two a twin
Driue out tho fantasies you within
And trusteth me, & leaueth eke your sorow
Or here my trouth, I wol nat liue til morow

For if ye wist how sore it doeth me smart
Ye would cesse of this, for God thou wost
The pure spirite wepeth in mine harte
To seen you wepen, which that I loue most
And that I mote gone vnto the Grekes hoste
Yea, nere it that I wist a remedie
To come ayen, right here I would die.

But certes I am not so nice a wight
That I ne can imaginen a waie
To come ayen that day that I haue hight
For who may holden a thing that wol away
Wy fader naught, for all his queint plaie
And by my thrift, my wending out of Troie
Another day shal tourne vs all to ioie.

For thy with all mine hart I you beseke
If that you list done aught for my praiere
And for the loue which that I loue you eke
That er that I depart fro you here
That of so good a comfort and a chere
I may you seen, that ye may bring at rest
Mine hart, which is at point to brest.

And ouer all this I pray you (qd she) tho
Mine owne hartes sothfast sikernesse
Sith I am thine al whole withouten mo
That while that I am absent, no pleasaunce
Of other, doe me fro your remembraunce
For I am euer agast, for why men rede
That loue is thing aie full of busie drede.

For in this world there liueth ladie none
If that ye were vntrue, as God defende
That so betraied were, or wo begon
As I, that all trouth in you entende
And doubtlesse, if that ich the other wende
I nere but dedde, and er ye cause finde
For Goddes loue, so beth me naught vnkinde

To this answerde Troilus, and seide
Now God, to whom there nis no cause ywrie
Be glad, as wis I neuer vnto Creseide
Sith thilke day I sawe her first with eye
Was false, ne neuer shall til that I die
At shorte wordes, well ye may me leue
I can no more, it shall be found at preue

Graunt mercy good hart mine ywis (qd she)
And blisful Venus let me neuer sterue
Er I may stonde of pleasaunce in degre
To quite him well, that so well can deserue
And while that God my wit wil me conserue
I shall so doen, so true I haue you found
That aie honor to me ward shall rebounde.

For trusteth well, that your estate royall
Ne vein delite, nor any worthinesse
Of you in werre or turnay marciall
Ne pompe, arraie, nobley, or eke richesse
Ne made me to rue on your distresse
But morall vertue, grounded vpon trouth
That was the cause I first had on you routh.

Eke gentle hart, and manhede that ye had
And that ye had (as me thought) in dispite
Euery thing that sowned in to bad
As rudenesse, and peoplish appetite
And that your reason bridled your delite
This made abouen euery creature
That I was yours, & shal while I may dure.

And this may lengthe of yeres nat fordo
Ne remouable fortune deface
But Iupiter, that of his mighte may do
The sorowfull to be glad, so yeue vs grace
Er nightes terme, to meten in this place
So that it may your hart and mine suffice
And farewe now well, for time is that ye rise

 And

And after that they long yplained had
And oft ykist, and straite in armes folde
The day gan rise, and Troilus him clad
And rufully his Ladie gan behold
As he that felt deathes cares cold
And to her grace he gan him recommaunde
Where he was wo, this hold I no demaunde

For mannes hedde imaginen ne can
Ne entendement conlider, ne tongue tell
The cruell paines of this sorowfull man
That passen euery tourment doune in hell
For whan he sawe that she ne might dwell
Which that his soule out of his harte rent
Withouten more, out of the chamber he wēt.

Explicit liber quartus.

Incipit liber quintus.

Prochen gan the fatall destine
That Ioue hath in disposicion
And to you angry Parcas sustren thre
Committeth to doen execucioun
For which Creseide must out of the toun
And Troilus shall dwell forth in pine
Till Lachesis his threde no lenger twine.

The golden tressed Phebus high on lofte
Thrise had all with his beames clere
The Snowes molt, and Zephirus as oft
Ibrought againe the tender leaues grene
Sens that the sonne of Ecuba the Quene
Began to loue her first, for whom his sorow
Was all, that she depart should a morowe.

Full redy was at prime Diomede
Creseide vnto the Grekes hoste to lede
For sorowe of which, she felt her harte blede
As she that nist what was best to rede
And truely, as men in bokes rede
Nen wist neuer woman haue the care
Ne was so lothe out of a toune to fare.

This Troilus withouten rede or lore
As man that hath his ioyes eke forlore
Was walking on his ladie euermore
As she that was lothfull croppe and more
Of all this dull or ioyes here tofore
But Troilus now farewell all thy lore
For shalt thou neuer seen her eft in Troie.

Soth is, that while he bode in this manere
He gan his wo full manly for to hide
That well vneth it seen was in his chere
But at the yate there she should out ride
With certain folke he hoped her to abide
So wo bigon, all would he not him plain
That on his hors vneth he sate for pain.

For ire he quoke, so gan his harte gnawe
Whan Diomede on hors gan him dight
And saied vnto himselfe this like sawe
Alas (qd he) thus foule a wretchednesse
Why suffre I it? Why nill I it redresse?
Were it not bet at ones for to die
Than euermore in langour thus to crie?

Why nill I make at ones riche and poore
To haue ynough to doen er that she go?
Why nill I bring all Troie vpon a roore?
Why nill I slaen this Diomede also?
Why nill I rather with a man or two
Steale her awaie? why woll I this endure?
Why nill I helpen to mine one cure?

But why he nolde doen so fell a deede
That shal I sain, and why him list it spare
He had in harte alwaie a maner drede
Lest that Creseide, in rumour of this fare
Should haue ben slain, lo this was al his care
And eke certain, as I saied yore
He had it doen, withouten woordes more.

Creseide whan she redy was to ride
Full sorowfully she sighed, and saied alas
But forth she rode, for ought ỳ may betide
And forth she rideth full sorowfully apaas
There is none other remedy in this caas
What wonder is, though that her sore smart
Whan she forgoeth her own swete harte.

This Troilus in gise of curtesie
With hauke on hond, and with an huge rout
Of knights, rode and did her companie
Passing all the valey, ferre without
And ferther would haue ridden out of doubt
Ful faine, and woo was him to gone so sone
But tourne he must, and it was eke to done

And right worthy that was Antenor prome
Out of the Grekes host, and euery wight
Was of him glad, and saied he was welcome
And Troilus, all nere his hart light
He pained him, with all his full might
Him to withhold of weping at least
And Antenor he kist, and made feast

And

And therewithall he must his leaue take
And cast his eye vpon her pitously
And nere he rode, his cause for to make
To take her by the hond all soberly
And Lord so she gan wepen tenderly
And he full soft and slightly gan her seie
Now holde your day, and doe me not to deie.

With that his courser turned he about
With face pale, and vnto Diomede
No word he spake, ne none of all his rout
Of which the sonne of Tideus toke hede
As he that kouth more than the crede
In such a craft, and by the rain her hent
And Troilus to Troie, homwardes went

This Diomede, that lad her by the bridell
Whan that he sawe the folk of Troie away
Thought, all my labor shal not been ydell
If that I may, for somwhat shal I saie
For at the worst, it short may our waie
I haue heard saie eke, times twise twelue
He is a foole that will foryete him selue.

But natheless, this thought he wel ynough
That certainly I am about naught
If that I speake of loue, or make it tought
For doubtlesse, if she haue in her thought
Him that I gesse, he may not been ybrought
So sone away, but I shal finde a meane
That she nat yet wete shal what I meane.

This Diomede, as he that could his good
Whã this was doen, gan falen forth in speche
Of this and that, and aske why she stood
In such disease, and gan her eke beseche
That if that he encreasen might or eche
With any thing her ease, that she should
Commaund it him, & said he doen it would.

For truely he swore her as a knight (plese
that there nas thing, with which he mizt her
That he nolde doen his pain, & all his might
To doen it, for to doen her hart an ease
And praied her she would her sorow apease
And saied, ywis we Grekes can haue ioie
To honouren you, as well as folke of Troie.

He said eke thus, I wot you thinketh strange
No wonder is, for it is to you newe
Thacquetntance of these Troians to change
For folke of Grece, that ye neuer knewe
But would neuer God, but if as true
A Greke ye should emong vs all finde
As any Troian is, and eke as kinde.

And because I swore you right now
To been your frende, & helply to my might
And for that more acquentance eke of you
Haue I had, than another stranger wight
So fro this forth, I pray you daie and night
Commaundeth me, how sore that me smart
To doen, all that may like vnto your harte.

And that ye me wold, as your brother treate
And taketh not my frendship in despite
And thouz your sorowes been for things grete
Not I nat why, but out of more respite
Mine hart hath for to amend it great delite
And if I may your harmes nat redresse
I am right sorie for your heauinesse.

For thouz ye Troiãs, with vs Grecks wroth
Haue many a day been: alway yet parde
O God of loue, in sothe we seruen bothe,
And for the loue of God my Ladie free
Whom so ye hate, as beth not wroth with me
For truely there can no wight you serue
That half so loth your wrath would deserue

And nere it that we been so nere the tent
Of Calcas, which that seen vs both maie
I would of this you tell all mine entent
But this enseled till another daie
Yeue me your honde, I am and shal be aie
God help me so, while that my life may dure
Your owne, abouen euery creature.

Thus said I neuer er now to woman born
For God mine hart as wisely glad so
I loued neuer woman here beforn
As paramours, ne neuer shal no mo
And for the loue of God be not my fo
All can I not to you my Lady dere
Complain aright, for I am yet to lere

And wondreth nought mine owen lady bright
Though ỳ I speake of loue to you thus blinde
For I haue heard or this of many a wight
Hath loued thing he neuer saw his liue
Eke I am not of power for to striue
Ayenst the God of Loue, but him obay
I wol alway, and mercy I you pray

There beth so worthy knights in this place
And ye so faire, that euerich of hem all
Wol pain him to stonden in your grace
But might me so faire a grace fall
That ye me for your seruaunt would call
So lowly, ne so truely you serue
Nill none of hem, as I shal til I sterue.

Creseide,

Creseide vnto that purpose lite answerde
As she that was with sorowe oppressed so
That in effect she naught his tales herde
But here and there, now here a worde or two
Her thought her sorowfull hart brast a two
For whan she gan her father ferre espie
Well nigh doune of her hors she gan to slie.

But natheless she thonketh Diomede
Of all his trauaile and his good chere
And that him list his frendship to her bede
And she accepteth it good manere
And woll doe faine what is him lefe and dere
And trusten him she would, & well she might
As saied she, and from her hors she alight.

Her father hath her in his armes nome
And twētie times he kist his doughter swete
And saied: O dere doughter mine welcome
She said eke, she was fain with him to mete
And stode forth mute, milde, and mansuete
But here I leaue her with her father dwell
And forth I woll of Troilus you tell.

To Troie is come this woefull Troilus
In sorowe abouen all sorowes smart
With felon loke, and face dispitous
Tho sodainly doune from his hors he start
And through his paleis with swoine hart
To chamber he went, of nothing toke he hede
Ne none to him dare speke o word for drede.

And there his sorowes that he spared had
He yaue an issue large, and death he cride
And in his throwes, frenetike and mad
He curseth Juno, Apollo, and eke Cupide
He curseth Bachus, Ceres, and Cipride
His birth, himselfe, his fate, and eke nature
And saue his Ladie, every creature.

To bed he goth, & waileth there & turneth
In furie, as doeth he Jxion in hell
And in this wise he nigh till day soiourneth
But tho began his hart alite vnswell
Through teares, which that gonē vp to well
And pitously he cried vpon Creseide
And to himselfe right thus he spake and seide

Where is mine owne ladie lefe and dere?
Where is her white brest, where is it where?
Where been her armes, and her eyen clere
That yesterday this time with me were
Now may I wepe alone many a teare
And graspe about I mey, but in this place
Saue a pilowe, I finde naught to embrace.

How shall I doen whā shal she come againe
I not alas, why let I her go?
As would God I had as tho ben slain
O harte mine Creseide, O swete so
O Ladie mine, that I loue and no mo
To whom for euer more mine harte I dowe
So how I die, ye will me not rescowe.

Who seeth you now, my right lode sterre?
Who sitteth right now in your presence?
Who can comforten now your harts werre?
Now I am gon, whom yeue ye audience?
Who speaketh for me rizt now in your absēce
Alas no wight, and that is all my care
For well wote I, as evil as I ye fare.

How should I thus ten daies full endure
Whan I the first night haue all this tene
How shall she eke sorowfull creature
For tendernesse, how shall she this sustene
Such wo for me, O pitous, pale, and grene
Shall been your fresh womanly face
For langour er ye tourne vnto this place.

And when he fill in any slombrings
Anon begin he should for to grone
And dreamen of the dreadfullest things
That might been, as mete he were alone
In place horrible, making aie his mone
Or meten that he was emongs all
His enimies, and in her hondes fall.

And therewithall his bodie should starte
And with the start all sodainly awake
And such a tremour fele about his harte
That of the feare his bodie should quake
And therewithall he should a noise make
And seme as though he should fall depe
From high aloft, and than he would wepe.

And rewen on himselfe so pitously
That wonder was to here his fantasie
An other time he should mightely
Comfort himselfe, and sain it was folie
So causelesse, such drede for to drie
And eft begin his aspre sorowes newe
That every man might on his paines rewe.

Who could tell all, or fully discrive
His wo, his plaint, his langour, and his pine
Nat all the men that han or been on live
Thou reader maist thy self full well devine
That such a wo my wit cannot define
On ydell for to write it should I swinke
Whan that my wit is werie it to thinke.

On

On heauen yet the sterres weren seen
Although full pale ywoxen was the Mone
And whiten gan the oxisont shene
All Eastward, as it is wont to doen
And Phebus with his rosie carte sone
Gan after that to dxesse him vp to fare
Whan Troilus hath sent after Pandare.

This Pandare, that of all the day beforne
Ne might him comen this Troilus to see
Although he on his hedde it had sworne
For with the king Priam alday was he
So that it lay nat in his libertie
No where to gon, but on the morow he went
To Troilus, when that he for him sent.

For in his hart he could well deuine
That Troilus all night for sorowe woke
And that he would tell him of his pine
This knew he wel ynough without boke
For which to chãber streight the way he toke
And Troilus tho soberly he grette
And on the bedde ful sone he gan him sette.

My Pandarus (qd Troilus) the sorow
Which that I dxie, I may not long endure
I trow I shall not liuen till to morow
For which I would alwaies on auenture
To the deuisen of my sepulture
The forme, and of my mouable thou dispone
Right as thee semeth best is for to done.

But of the fire and flambe funerall
In which my body brennen shall to glede
And of the feast and plaies palestrall
At my vigile, I praie thee take good hede
That that be well, and offer Mars my stede
My sword, mine helme, & leue brother dere
My shelde to Pallas yeue, that shineth clere.

The poudre, i which min hart ibred shal turn
That pray I thee thou take, and it conserue
In a vessell that men clepeth an vrne
Of golde, and to my lady that I serue
For loue of whom thus pitously I sterue
So yeue it her, and do me this pleasaunce
To praien her to kepe it for a remembraunce

For well I fele by my maladie
And by my dreames, now and yore ago
All certainly, that I mote nedes die
The oule eke, which that hight Ascaphilo
Hath after me shright all these nightes two
And God Mercurie now of me wofull wretch
The soule guide, and whan thee list it fetche.

Pandare answerde, and saied Troilus
My dere frend, as I haue tolde thee yore
That it is folie for to sorowen thus
And causeleslie, for which I can no more
But who so woll not trowen rede ne lore
I can not seen in him no remedie
But let him worchen with his fantasie.

But Troilus I praie thee tell me now
If that thou trow er this that any wight
Hath loued paramours as wel as thou
Yea God wot, & fro many a worthie knight
Hath his Ladie gon a fourtnight
And he nat yet made haluendele the fare
What neede is thee to maken all this care?

Seng day by day thou maiest thy selue see
That from his loue, or els from his wife
A man mote twinnen of necessitie
Yea, though he loue her as his own life
Yet will he with himselfe thus maken strife
For well thou wost my leue brother dere
That alway frends may not been yfere.

How doen this folk, ỳ seen her loues wedded
By frends might? as it betydeth ful oft
And seen hem in her spouses bedde ybedded
God wote they take it wisely faire and soft
For why, good hope halt vp her hart aloft
And for they can a time of sorowe endure
As time hem hurteth, a time doeth hem cure

So shouldest thou endure, & letten slide
The time, and fond to been glad and light
Tenne daies nis not so long to abide
And sens she to comen thee hath behight
She will her hest breaken for no wight
For dxede thee nat, that she will finde waie
To come ayen, my life that durst I laie.

Thy swetenes eke, and all such fantasie
Dxiue out, and let hem faren to mischaunce
For they procede of thy melancolie
That doeth thee fele in slepe al this penaũce
A strawe for all swetenesse signifiaunce
God help me so, I coumpt hem not a Beane
Ther wot no mã arizt what dxemes meane

For pricstes of the temple tellen this
That dxeames been the reuelacions
Of Goddes, and als well they tell ywis
That they been infernalles illusions
And Leches saine, that of complections
Proceden they of fast, or glotonie
Who wot in soth thus what they signifie.

Eke

Eke other sain, that through impressions
As if a wight hath fast a thing in minde
That thereof cometh such auisions
And other sain, as they in bokes finde
That after times of the yere by kinde
Men dreme, & that theffect goth by the mone
But leaue no dreame, for it is nat to doen.

Well worth of dreames aie these old wines
And truely eke, augurie of these foules
For feare of which, men wenen lese her liues
As rauēs qualm, or schriching of these oules
To trowen on it, both false and foule is
Alas alas, that so noble a creature
As is a man, should drede such ordure.

For which with all mine hart I thee beseech
Unto thy self, that all this thou forgeue
And rise now vp, withouten more speche
And let vs cast how forth may best be driuen
The time, & eke how freshly we may liuen
When she cometh, ỹ which shall be right sone
God helpe me so, the best is thus to doen.

Rise, let vs speake of lustie life in Troie
That we haue lad, and forth the time driue
And eke of time coming vs reioie
And bringen shall our blisse now so blithe
And langour of these twise daies fiue
We shal therwith so forget or oppresse
That well vneth it doen shall vs duresse.

This toune is full of lordes all about
And truce lasten all this meane while
Go we plaien vs in some lustie rout
To Sarpedon, not hens but a mile
And thus thou shalt the time well begile
And driue it forth, vnto that blisfull morowe
That thou her see, that cause is of thy sorowe

Now rise my dere brother Troilus
For certes it non honour is to thee
To wepe, and in thy bedde to rouken thus
For truely of o thing trust to me
If thou thus ligge, a daie, two or three
The folke wol wene, that thou for cowardise
Thee fainest sick, and that thou darst not rise.

This Troilus answerde: O brother dere
This knowen folke that haue ysuffred pain
That thouz he wepe, & make sorowfull chere
That feleth harme and smart in euery vain
No wonder is, and though I euer plain
Or alway wepe, I am nothing to blame
Sens that I haue lost, ỹ cause of al my game

But sens of fine force I mote arise
I shall arise as sone as euer I may.
And God, to whom mine hart I sacrifice
So send vs hastely the tenth daie
For was there neuer foule so faine of Maie
As I shal ben, whā that she cometh in Troie
That cause is of my tourment and my ioie.

But whider is thy rede (qd Troilus)
That we may play vs best in all this toun
By God my counsaile is (qd Pandarus)
To ride and play vs with king Sarpedoun
So long of this they spaken vp and doun
Till Troilus gan at the last assent
To rise, and forth to Sarpedon they went.

This Sarpedon, as he that honourable
Was euer his liue, and full of hie prowesse
With all that might yserued been on table
That deintie was, all cost it great richesse
He fedde hem day by day, that such noblesse
As sauden bothe the moste and eke the least
Was neuer er that day wist at any feast

Nor in this world there is none instrument
Delicious, through winde or touche on corde
As ferre as any wight hath euer ywent
That tong tell, or hart may recorde
But at that feast, it nas well heard recorde
Ne of Ladies eke so faire a companie
On daunce er tho, was neuer yseen with eye

But what auaileth this to Troilus
That for his sorowe, nothing of it rought
But euer in one, as hart pitous
Full busily Creseide his Ladie sought
On her was euer all that his harte thought
Now this now that, so fast imagining
That glad ywis can him no feasting.

These Ladies eke, that at this feast been
Sens that he saw his Ladie was away
It was his sorowe vpon hem for to seen
Or for to heare on instruments play
For she that of his harte hath the kay
Was absent, lo this was his fantasie
That no wight should maken melodie.

Nor there nas hour in all the day or night
When he was ther as no man mizt him here
That he ne said, O louesome lady bright
How haue ye faren sins that ye were there
Welcome ywis mine own ladie dere
But welaway, all this nas but a mase
Fortune his houe, entended bet to glase.

The

The letters eke, that she of old time
Had him ysent, he would alone rede
An hundred sith, atwixt noone and prime
Refiguring her shappe, and her womanhede
Within his hart, and euery word and dede
That passed was, & thus he drouc to an end
The fourth day, and said he wol wend

And said leue brother Pandarus
Intendest thou that we shal here bleue
Til Sarpedon wol forth conueyen vs
Yet were it fairer that we toke our leue
For Goddes loue, let vs now sone at eue
Our leaue take, and homward let vs turne
For trewly I nil nat thus sojourne

Pandare answerd, be we comen hither
To fetchen fire, and reumen home againe
God helpe me so, I can nat tellen whither
We might gone, if I shal sothly saine
There any wight is of vs more faine
Than Sarpedon, and if we hence hie
Thus sodainly, I hold it vilanie

Whan that we saiden we would bleue
With him a weke, and now thus sodainly
The fourth day to take of him our leue
He would wondren on it trewly
Let vs holden forth our purpose fermely
And sens that ye behighten hem to abide
Hold forward now, and after let vs ride

This Pandarus, with all pine and wo
Made him to dwel, and at the wekes end
Of Sarpedon they toke her leaue tho
And on her way the speden hem to wend
(Qd. Troilus) now lord me grace send
That I may find at mine home comming
Creseide comen, and therwith gan he sing

Pe haselwode thought this Pandare
And to him selfe ful softly he seide
God wotte refroiden may this hotte fare
Er Calcas send Troilus Creseide
But natheless he iaped thus and seide
And swore twis, his hart him wel behight
She would come, as sone as euer she might

Whan they vnto the paleis were ycomen
Of Troilus, they doun of horse alight
And to ỹ chambre her way haue they nommen
And vnto time that it gan to night
They speken of Creseide the lady bright
And after this, when hem both lest
They spede hem fro the supper vnto rest

On morow as sone as day began to clere
This Troilus gan of his slepe to abreide
And to Pandarus, his owne brother dere
For loue of God, ful pitously he seide
As go we sene the paleis of Creseide
For sens we yet may haue no more feest
So let vs sene her paleis at the leest

And therwithall his meine for to blend
A cause he fond in toun for to go
And to Creseides house they gon wend
But lord this sely Troilus was wo
Him thought his sorowful hart brast a two
For when he saw her doores sperred all
Wel nigh for sorow adoun he gan to fall

Therwith when he was ware, & gan behold
How shet was euery window of the place
As frost him thought his hart gan to cold
For which with chaunged deedly pale face
Withouten word, he forth by gan to pace
And as God would, he gan so fast ride
That no wight of his countenaunce aspide

Than said he thus: O paleis desolate
O house of houses, whilom best yhight
O paleis empty and disconsolate
O thou lanterne, of which queint is the light
O paleis, whilom day that now art night
Wel oughtest thou to fal, and I to die
Sens she is went, that wont was vs to gie

O paleis whilom croune of houses all
Enlumined with sunne of all blisse
O ring, of which the ruby is out fall
O cause of wo, that cause hast ben of blisse
Yet sens I may no bet, faine would I kisse
Thy cold doores, durst I for this rout
And farwel shrine, of which the saint is out

Therwith he cast on Pandarus his eie
With chaunged face, and pitous to behold
And whan he might his time aright aspie
Ne as he rode, to Pandarus he told
His new sorow, and eke his ioyes old
So petously, and with so deed an hew
That euery wight, might on his sorow rew

Fro thence forth he rideth vp and doune
And euery thing came him to remembraunce
As he rode forth by the places of the toune
In which he whilom had all his pleasaunce
Lo, ponder saw I mine owne lady daunce
And in that temple with her eyen clere
Me caught first my right lady dere

And yonder haue I herd ful lustely
My dere hart laugh, and yonder play
Saw I her ones eke ful blisfully
And yonder ones to me gan she say
Now good swete, loue me wel I pray
And yond so goodly gan she me beheld
That to the death mine hart is to her held

And at the corner in the yonder house
Herd I mine alderleuest lady dere
So womanly, with voice melodious
Singen so wel, so goodly and so clere
That in my soule yet me thinketh I here
The blisful sowne, and in that yonder place
My lady first me toke vnto her grace

Than thought he thus, o blisful lord Cupide
Whan I the processe haue in memory
How thou me hast wered on euery side
Men might a boke make of it like a story
What nede is the to seke on me victory
Sens I am thine, and holly at thy will
What ioy hast thou thine owne folke to spill

Wel hast thou lord ywroke on me thine ire
Thou mighty God, and dredful for to greue
Now mercy lord, thou wost wel I desire
Thy grace most, of all lusties leue
And liue and die I wol in thy beleue
For which I ne aske in guerdon but a bone
That thou Creseide ayen me send sone

Distraine her hart as fast to returne
As thou doest mine to longen her to se
Than wote I wel that she nil nat sojourne
Now blisful lord, so cruel thou ne be
Unto the blood of Troy, I pray the
As Juno was vnto the blode Thebane
For which the folke of Thebes cauzt her bane

And after this he to the yates went
Ther as Creseide out rode, a ful good paas
And vp and doun there made he many a went
And to himselfe ful oft he said alas
Fro hence rode my blisse and my solas
As would blisful God now for his ioy
I might her sene ayen come to Troy

And to the yonder hill I gan her gide
Alas, and there I toke of her my leue
And yond I saw her to her father ride
For sorow of which mine hart shal to cleue
And hither home I come whan it was eue
And here I dwel, out cast from all ioy
And shal, til I may sene her eft in Troy

And of him selfe imagined he oft
To ben defaited, pale, and woxen lesse
Than he was wont, and that men saiden soft
What may it be? who can the soth gesse
Why Troilus hath all this heuinesse
And all this nas but his melancoly
That he had of himselfe such fantasie

Another time imaginen he would
That euery wight that went by the wey
Had of him routh, and that they saine should
I am right sory, Troilus wol dey
And thus he droue a day yet forth or twey
As ye haue herd, such life gan he lede
As he that stode betwixen hope and drede

For which him liked in his songs shew
Thencheson of his wo, as he best might
And made a song, of wordes but a few
Somwhat his woful hart for to light
And when he was from euery mannes sight
With soft voice, he of his lady dere
That absent was, gan sing as ye may here

O sterre, of which I lost haue all the light
With hart sore, wel ought I to bewaile
That euery derke in turment, night by night
Toward my deth, with wind I stere and saile
For which the tenth night, if that I faile
The guiding of thy bemes bright an hour
My ship and me Caribdes wol deuour

This song when he thus longen had sone
He fil ayen unto his sighes old
And euery night, as was his wont to doone
He stode the bright moone to behold
And all his sorow he to the moone told
And said, iwis whan thou art horned new
I shal be glad, if all the world be trew

I saw thine hornes old eke by that morow
Whan hence rode my right lady dere
That cause is of my turment and my sorow
For which, o bright Lucina the clere
For loue of God ren fast about thy spere
For whan thine hornes new gunnen spring
Than shal she come that may my blisse bring

The day is more, and lenger euery night
Than they ben wont to be, him thought tho
And that the sunne went his course vnright
By lenger way than it was wont to go
And said, iwis I drede me euer mo
The sunnes sonne Pheton be on liue
And that his fathers cart amisse he driue

Upon

Upon the walles fast eke would he walke
And on the Grekes host he would se
And to him selfe right thus he would talke
Lo, yonder is mine owne lady fre
Or els yonder, there the tents be
And thence cometh this ayre that is so soot
That in my soule I fele it doth me boot

And hardly this wind that more and more
Thus stoundmele encreaseth in my face
Is of my ladies depe sighes sore
I preue it thus, for in none other place
Of all this toun, fame only in this place
Fele I no wind, that soumeth so like paine
It saith alas, why twinned be we twaine

This long time he dryueth forth right thus
Til fully passed was the ninth night
And aie beside him was this Pandarus
That busily did all his ful might
Him to comfort, and make his hart light
Yeuing him hope alway the tenth morow
That she shal comen, & stinten al his sorow

Upon that other side eke was Creseide
With women few, among the Grekes strong
For which ful oft a day, alas she seide
That I was borne, wel may mine hart long
After my death, for now liue I to long
Alas, and I ne may it nat amend
For now is worse than euer yet I wend

My father nil for nothing do me grace
To gone ayen, for aught I can him queme
And if so be, that I my terme pace
My Troilus shal in his hart deme
That I am false, and so it may wel seme
Thus shal I haue vnthonke on euery side
That I was borne so welaway the tide

And if that I me put in ieopardy
To steale away by night, and it befal
That I be caught, I shal be hold a spy
Or els lo, this drede I most of al
If in the honds of some wretch I fall
I nam but lost, al be mine hart trew
Now mighty God, thou on my sorow rew

Ful pale ywoxen was her bright face
Her limmes leane, as she that al the day
Stode whan she durst, and loked on the place
There she was borne, and dwelt had aie
And al the night weping alas she laie
And thus despeired out of al cure
Shе lad her life, this woful creature

Ful oft a day she sighed eke for distresse
And in her selfe she went aie purtraying
Of Troylus the great worthinesse
And al his goodly words recording
Sens first that day her loue began to spring
And thus she fette her woful hart a fire
Through remembraunce of ỹ she gan desire

In all this world there nis so cruel hart
That her had herd complainen in her sorow
That nold haue wepten for her paines smart
So tenderly she wept, both eue and morow
Her neded no teeres for to borow
And this was yet the worst of all her paine
There was no wight, to whom she durst plaine

Ful rewfully she loked vpon Troy
Beheld the Toures high, and eke the Hallis
Alas (qd. she) the pleasaunce and the ioy
The which that now all turned into gallis
Haue I had oft, within yonder wallis
O Troilus, what dost thou now she seide
Lord whether thou yet thinke vpon Creseide

Alas, that I ne had ytrowed on your lore
And went with you, as ye me redde er this
Than had I now not sighed halfe so sore
Who might haue said, that I had don amis
To steale away with such one as he is
But all to late cometh the lechcraft
Whan men the corse vnto the graue carf

To late is now to speke of that matere
Prudence alas, one of thine eien thre
Me lacked alway, er that I came here
For on time passed wel remembred me
And present time eke could I wel se
But future time, er I was in the snare
Could I not sene, that causeth now my care

But natheless, betide what betide
I shal to morow at night, by east or west
Out of this host steale, on some side
And gon with Troilus, where as him lest
This purpose wol I hold, and this is the best
No force of wicked tonges iaugleries
For euer on loue, haue wretches had enuy

For who so wol of euery word take hede
Or rulen hem by euery wights wit
Ne shal he neuer thriuen out of drede
For that that some men blamen euer yet
Lo, other maner folke commenden it
And as for me, for all such variaunce
Felicite clepe I my suffisaunce

For which, without any wordes mo
To Troye I wol, as for conclusioun
But it wote, er fully monthes two
She was full ferre fro that intencioun
For both Troilus and Troy toun
Shal knotlesse throughout her hart slide
For she wol take a purpose for to abide

And saue her browes ioyneden yfere
There nas no lacke, in aught I can espien
But for to speken of her eyen clere
Lo, truely they written that her sien
That paradis stode formed in her cien
And with her rich beaute euermore
Strong loue in her, ate which of hē was more

This Diomede, of whom I you tel gan
Goth now within himselfe aie arguing
With al the sleight and al that euer he can
How he maie best with shortest tarying
Into his nette Creseides hart bring
To this intent he couth neuer fine
To fishen her he layd out hoke and line

She sorie was eke, simple, and wel wise withall
The best ynorished eke that might be
And goodly of her speech in generall
Charitable, estately, lusty, and free
Ne neuer more ne lacked her pitie
Tendre harted, sliding of corage
But truely I can nat tel her age

But natheless, wel in his hart he thought
That she nas nat without a loue in Troie
For sithen he her thence brought
Ne couth he seene her laugh, or maken ioie
Ne nist how best her hart for to coie
But for talley, he said naught it ne greueth
For he ŷ naught assaieth naught atcheueth

And Troilus wel worthy was in sight
And complete formed by proporcioun
So wel, that kind it naught amenden might
Long, fresh, strong, and hardy as a lioun
Trew as steele, in ech condicioun
One of the best entetched creature
That is or shal, while that ŷ world may dure

Yet said he to him selfe vpon a night
Now am I nat a fole, that wot wel how we
Her wo is, for loue of another wight
And herupon to gon assaie her nowe
I maie wel wete, it nil nat ben my prowe
For wise folks in bookes it expresse
Men shal nat wowe a wight in heuinesse

And certainly, in story as it is fond
That Troilus was neuer vnto no wight
As in his time, in no degree second
In daring do, that longeth to a knight
Al might a Giaunt passen him of might
His hart aie with the first and with the best
Stode peregall to dare done what him lest

But who so might winnen such a floure
Fro him, for whō she mourneth night & daie
He might sain he were a conqueroure
And right anone as he that boulde was aie
Thought in his hart, hap how hap may
All should I die, I wol her hart secch
I shal no more lesen but my speech

But for to tellen forth of Diomede
It fil, that after on the tenth day
Sens that Creseide out of the cite yede
This Diomede, as fresh as braunch in May
Came to the tent there as Calcas lay
And fained him with Calcas haue to done
But what he ment, I shal you tellen sone

This Diomede, as bokes vs declare
Was in his nedes prest and coragious
With sterne voice, and mighty limmes square
Hardy, testife, strong, and chenalrous
Of dedes like his father Tidius
And some men saine, he was of tong large
And heire he was, of Calcidony and Arge

Creseide at short words for to tell
Welcomed him, and doun him by her sette
And he was ethe inough to maken dwell
And after this, withouten long lette
The spices and the wine men forth hem sette
And forth they spake of this and that yfere
As frends done, of which some shal ye here

Creseide meane was of her stature
Therto of shape, of face, and eke of chere
There might ben no fairer creature
And oft time this was her maner
To gone ytressed with her heeres clere
Doune by her colere, at her backe behind
Which with a threde of gold she would bind

He gan first fallen of the warre in speech
Betwixen hem and the folke of Troy toun
And of thassiege he gan her eke beseech
To tellen him what was her opinion
Fro that demaund he so discendeth doun
To asken her, if that her straunge thought
The grekes gise, & werkes that they wrought

And

And why her father tarieth so long
To wedden her vnto some worthy wight
Creseide that was in her paines strong
For Loue of Troilus her owne knight
So ferforth as she conning had or might
Answerd him tho, but as of his entent
It semed nat she wist what he ment

But natheless this like Diomede
Gan on him selfe assure, and thus he seide
If I aright haue taken on you hede
Me thinketh thus, o lady mine Creseide
That sens I first hond on your bridel leide
When ye out came of Troy by the morow
Ne might I neuer sene you but in sorow

I can nat saine what may the cause be
But if for loue of some Troian it were
The which right sore would a thinken me
That ye for any wight that dwelleth there
Shulden spil a quarter of a teere
Or pitously your selfen so begile
For dredelesse it is nat worth the while

The folke of Troy, as who saith all at some
In prison ben, as ye your selfen se
Fro thence shal nat on liue come
For all the Gold atwixen sunne and see
Trusteth wel, and vnderstondeth me
There shal nat one to mercy gone on liue
All were he lord of worlds twise liue

Such wrech on hem for fetching of Helene
There shal be take, er that we hence wend
That Maunes, which ỹ Goddes ben of peine
Shal ben agast that Grekes wol hem shend
And men shal drede vnto the worlds end
From hence forth, to ravishen any Quene
So cruel shal our wrech on hem be sene

And but if Calcas lede vs with ambages
That is to saine, with double words slie
Such as men clepē a word with two visages
Ye shal wel knowen that I nat ne lie
And al this thing right sene it with your eie
And that anon, ye nil nat trow how soone
Now taketh hede, for it is for to doone

What wene ye your wise father would
Haue yeuen Antenor for you anon
If he ne wist that the cite should
Distroied ben? why nat so mote I gone
He knew ful wel there shal nat scapen one
That Troyan is, and for the great fere
He durst nat that ye dwelt lenger there

What wol ye more, o louelom lady dere
Let Troy and Troyans fro your hart passe
Driue out ỹ bitter hope, and make good chere
And clepe ayen the beaute of your face
That ye with salt teeres so deface
For Troy is brought in such a leopardy
That it to saue is now no remedy

And thinketh wel, ye shal in Grekes find
A more parfite loue, er it be night
Than any Troyan is, and more kind
And bet to seruen you woll doen his might
And if ye vouchsafe my lady bright
I wol ben he, to seruen you my selue
Yea leauer than be lord of Greces twelue

And with that word he gan to waxen reed
And in his speech a litell while he quoke
And cast aside a litel with his heed
And stint a while, and afterward he woke
And sobrely on her he threw his loke
And said I am, al be it to you no ioy
As gentil a man, as any wight in Troy

For if my father Tideus, he seide
Yliued had, I had ben er this
Of Calcidony and Arge a king Creseide
And so hope I that I shall be twis
But he was slaine alas, the more harme is
Vnhappely at Thebes all to rath
Polimite, and many a man to scath

But hart mine, sith that I am your man
And ben the first, of whom I sech grace
To serue you as hertely as I can
And euer shal while I to liue haue space
So that, er I depart out of this place
Ye wol me graunt that I may to morow
At better laiser tel you of my sorow

What should I tel his words that he seide?
He spake inough for o day at the mest
It preueth well he spake so, that Creseide
Graunted on the morow at his request
For to speke with him at the lest
So that he nold speke of such matere
And thus she to him said, as ye mow here

As she that had her hart on Troilus
So fast, that there may it none arace
And straungely she spake, and said thus
O Diomede, I loue that like place
There I was borne, and Ioue for thy grace
Deliuer it sone of all that doth it care
God for thy might so leue it wel to fare

That grekes wold her wrath on Troy wreke
If that they might I know it wel twis
But it shal naught befallen as ye speke
And God to forne, and farther ouer this
I wote my father wise and redy is
And that he me hath bought, as ye me told
So dere am I the more vnto him hold

That Grekes ben of high condition
I wote eke well, but certaine men shal find
As worthy folke within Troy toun
As conning, as parfite, and as kinde
As ben betwixt Orcades and Inde
And that ye could wel your lady serue
I trow eke wel, her thonke for to deserue

But as to speke of loue, twis she seide
I had a lord, to whom I wedded was
The whole mine hart was al til he deide
And other loue, as helpe me now Pallas
There in mine hart nis, ne neuer was
And that ye ben of noble and high kinrede
I haue wel herd it tellen out of drede

And that doth me to haue so great a wonder
That ye wol scornen any woman so
Eke God wote, loue and I ben fer a sonder
I am disposed bet so mote I go
Vnto my death plaine and make wo
What I shal after done, I can nat say
But truely as yet me list nat play

Mine hart is now in tribulacioun
And ye in armes besie day by day
Hereafter when ye wonnen haue the toun
Paraventure than, so it happen may
That whan I se that I neuer ere say
Than wol I werke that I neuer ere wrought
This word to you inough sufficen ought

To morow eke wol I speken with you fain
So that ye touchen naught of this matere
And whan you list, ye may come here again
And er ye gon, thus much I say you here
As helpe me Pallas, with her heeres clere
Yf that I should of any Greke haue routh
It should be your selven by my trouth

I say nat therfore that I wol you loue
Ne say nat nay, but in conclusioun
I meane wel by God that sit aboue
And therwithal she cast her eien doun
And gan to sigh, & said, Troilus, Troy toun
Yet bidde I God, in quiet and in rest
I may you sene or do mine hart brest

But in effect, and shortely for to say
This Diomede all freshly new againe
Gan pressen on, and fast her mercy pray
And after this the soth for to saine
Her glove he toke, of which he was ful faine
And finally, whan it was worn eue
And al was wel, he rose and toke his leue

The bright Venus folowed and aie taught
The way there rode Phebus doune alight
And Cithera her chare horse ouer raught
To whirle out of the Lion, if she might
And Signifer his candels shweth bright
Whan that Creseide vnto her bed went
Within her fathers faire bright tent

Retourning in her soule aie vp and doun
The words of this sodaine Diomede
His great estate, and peril of the toun
And that she was alone, and had nede
Of frends helpe, and thus began to rede
The cause why, the soth for to tell
She toke fully purpose for to dwell

The morow came, and gostly for to speke
This Diomede is come vnto Creseide
And shortly, lest that ye my tale breke
So wel he for him selfe spake and seide
That all her sighes sore, doun he leide
And finally, the soth for to saine
He left her the great of all her paine

And after this, the story telleth vs
That she him gaue the faire bay stede
The which she ones wan of Troilus
And eke a broch (and that was litel nede)
That Troilus was, she gaue this Diomede
And eke the bet from sorow him to relene
See made him weare a pencell of her slene

I find eke in stories els where
Whan trough the body hurt was Diomede
Of Troilus, the wept she many a teere
Whan that she saw his wide wounds blede
And that she toke to kepen him good hede
And for to healen him of his smart
Wen saine, I not, that she gaue him her hart

But truely the story telleth vs
There made neuer woman more wo
Than she, whan that she falsed Troilus
She said alas, for now is clene ago
My name in trouth of loue for euermo
For I haue falsed one the gentilleste
That euer was, and one the worthieste

Alas,

Alas, of me vnto the worldes end
Shal neither been ywritten ne ysong
No good word, for these bokes wol me shend
Ircolled shal I been on many a tong
Thyroughout the world, my bel shal be rong
And women most wol hate me of all
Alas, that such a caas me should fall.

They wol sain, in as moth as in me is
I haue hem doen dishonour welaway
All be I not the first that did amis
what helpeth that, to doen my blame away
But seuis I se there is no better way
And that to late is now for me to rue
To Diomede I wol algate be true

But Troilus, sens I no better may
And sens that thus departen ye and I
yet pray I God so yeue you right good day
As for the gentilest knight truely
That euer I saw, to seruen faithfully
And best can aie his ladies honour kepe
And with that word she brast anon to wepe

And certes you ne haten shal I neuer
And frends loue, that shal ye haue of me
And my good word, all should I liuen euer
And truely I would right sory be
For to seen you in aduersite
And giltlesse I wot wel I you leaue
And all shall passe, and thus take I my leaue.

But truely how long it was bitwene
That she forsoke him for this Diomede
There is none auctbour telleth it I wene
Take euery man now to his bookes hede
He shal no terme finden, out of drede
For though that he began to wooe her sone
Er he her wan, yet was there more to done

Ne me ne list this sely woman chide
Ferther than the story wol deuise
Her name alas, is published so wide
That for her gilt it ought inough suffice
And if I might excuse her in any wise
For she so sory was for her vntrouth
Iwis I would excuse her yet for routh.

This Troilus, as I before haue told
Thus driueth forth, as wel as he hath might
But oft was his hart hote and cold
And namely that ilke ninth night
Which on the morow she had him behight
To come ayen, God wote ful little rest
Had he that night, nothing to slepe hun lest

The laurer crouned Phebus, with his heat
Gan in his course aie vpward as he went
To warmen of the East sea the wawes weat
And Circes doughter song, with fresh entent
Whan Troilus his Pandare after sent
And on the walles of the toune they pleide
To loke, if they can seen aught of Creseide

Till it was noone, they stoden for to se
Who that there came, and euery maner wight
That came fro ferre, they saiden it was she
Til that they coulden knowen him aright
Now was his hart dull, now was it light
And thus betaped stoden for to stare
About naught, this Troilus and Pandare

To Pandarus, this Troilus tho seide
For aught I wot, before noone sikerly
Into this toune ne cometh not here Creseide
She hath inough to doen hardely
To winnen from her father, so trow I
Her old father wol yet make her dine
Er that she go, God yeue his hart pine

Pandarus answerd, it may wel been certain
And for thy let vs dine, I thee beseech
And after noone than maist thou come again
And home they go, without more speach
And comen ayen, but long may they seach
Er that they find that they after gape
Fortune hem both thinketh for to tape

(And. Troilus) I se wel now that she
Is taried with her old father so
That er she come it wol nigh euen be
Come forth, I woll vnto the yate go
These porters been vnkonning euermo
And I wol doen hem holden vp the yate,
As naught ne were, although she come late

The day goth fast, and after that came eue
And yet came nat to Troilus Creseide
He loketh forth by hedge, by tree, by greue
And ferre his hedde ouer the wal he leide
And at the last he tourned him, and seide
By God I wote her meaning now Pandare
Almost twis all new was my care

Now doubtlesse this Lady can her good
I wote she commeth riding prively
I commend her wisedome by mine hood
She wol nat maken people nicely
Gaure on her, whan ỳ she cometh, but softely
By night into the toune she thinketh ride
And dere brother, thinke nat long to abide

We haue naught els for to doen ywis
And Pandarus, now wilt thou trowen me
Haue here my trouth I see her, yond she is
Heaue vp thine eyen man, maist thou nat see
Pandare answerde, nay so mote I thee
Al wrong by god, what saist thou mā wher art
That I see yond, nis but a farre cart.

Alas thou saiest right sothe (qd Troilus)
But hardly it is not all for nought
That in mine hart I now reioyce thus
It is ayenst some good, I haue a thought
Not I nat how, but sens ꝑ I was wrought
Ne felt I such a comfort dare I say
She cometh to night, my life that durst I lay

Pandarus answerd, it may be well ynough
And helde with him, of all that euer he saied
But in his harte he thought, & soft lough
And to himselfe full soberly he saied
From haselwood, there holy Robin played
Shall come all that thou abidest here
Yea, farewell all the snowe of ferne yere.

The Wardein of the yates gan to call
The folke, which that without the yates wer
And badde hem driuen in her beastes all
Or all the night they must bleuen there
And ferre within ꝑ night, with many a teare
This Troilus gan homward for to ride
For well he seeth it helpeth nat to abide.

But natheless he gladded him in this
He thought he misacompted had his daie
And saied, I vnderstand haue all amis
For thilke night I last Creseide saie
She saied, I shall been here, if that I may
Er that the Mone, O dere harte swete
The Lion passe, out of this Ariete.

For which she may yet hold all her behest
And on the morowe, vnto the yate he went
And vp and doune, by West and eke by East
Upon the walles made he many a went
But al for naught, his hope alway him blent
For which at night, in sorow and sighes sore
He went him home, without en any more.

This hope all cleane out of his hart fledde
He ne hath wheron now lenger for to hong
But for ꝑ pain him thought his hart bledde
So wer his throwes sharp, & wonder strong
For whan he sawe that she abode so long
He nist what he iudgen of it might
Sens she hath broken that she him behight.

The third, fourth, fifte, and sixt daie
After tho daies tenne, of which I told
Betwixen hope and drede his harte laie
Yet somwhat trusting on her hestes old
But whan he sawe she nolde her terme hold
He can now seen none other remedie
But for to shape him sone for to die.

Therwith the wicked spirit, God vs blesse
Which that men clepen woode ialousie
Gan in him creepe, in all this heuinesse
For which because he would sone die
Ne ete ne dronke for his melancolie
And eke from euery company he fledde
This was the life that all this time he ledd.

Ne so defaite was, that no maner man
Unneth he might knowen there he went
So was he leane, and thereto pale and wan
And feble, that he walketh by potent
And with his ire he thus himselfe shent
But who so asked him wherof him smart
He saied, his harme was all about his harte.

Priam full oft, and eke his mother dere
His bretherne and his sistern gan him frain
Why he so sorowfull was in all his chere
And what thing was the cause of al his pain
But all for naught, he nold his cause plain
But saied, he felt a grenous maladie
About his hart, and faine he would die.

So on a day he layed him doune to slepe
And so befell that in slepe him thought
That in a forest fast he walked to wepe
For loue of her, ꝑ him these paines wrought
And vp and doune, as he that forest sought
He met he saw a Bore, with tuskes great
That slept ayenst the bright Sunnes heate.

And by this Bore, fast in her armes fold
Lay kissing aie his ladie bright Creseide
For sorow of which whan he it gan behold
And for dispite, out of his slepe he breide
And loude he cried on Pandarus, and seide
O Pandarus, now know I crop and roote
I nam but deade, there nis none other boote

My lady bright Creseide hath me betraid
In whom I trusted most of any wight
She els where hath now her harte apaied
The blisful Gods, through her great mizt
Haue in my dreame ybewed it full right
Thus in my dreame, Creseide haue I behold
And all this thing to Pandarus he tolde.

O my Creseide alas what subtiltie
What new lust, what beautie, what science
What wrathe of iust cause haue ye to me
What gylt of me? What fell experience
Hath me rafte alas, thine aduertence
O trust, O faith, O depe assuraunce
Who hath me raft Creseid, al my pleasaunce

Alas, why let I you from hens go
For which well nigh out of my wit I breide
Who shall now trow on any othes mo
God wote I wende, O Ladie bright Creseid
That euery worde was Gospel that ye seide
But who may bet begile, if him list
Than he on whom men wenen best to trist.

What shall I doen, my Pandarus alas
I fele now so sharpe a newe pain
Sens that there is no remedy in this caas
That bet were it, I with mine hondes twain
My seluen slowe, than alway thus to plain
For thrugh ỹ death my wo shuld haue an end
There euery day with like my selfe I shende.

Pandare answerd and said, alas the while
That I was borne, haue I nat saied er this
That dreames many a maner man begile
And why? For folke expounden hem amis
How darst thou sain that false thy lady is
For any dreame, right for thine owen drede
Let be this thought, thou canst no dremes rede

Paraventure there thou dremest of this bore
It may so be that it may signifie
Her father, which that old is and eke hore
Ayen the sonne lyeth on pounct to die
And she for sorowe gineth wepe and crie
And kisseth him, there he lieth on the ground
Thus shuldest thou thy dreme arigt expound

How might I than doen (qd Troilus)
To know of this, yea were neuer so lite
Now saiest thou wisely (qd this Pandarus)
My rede is this, sens thou canst well endite
That hastely a letter thou her write
Through which thou shalt wel bringē about
To know a soth, of that thou art in doubt

And se now why: for this I dare wel sain
That if so is, that she vntrue be
I can not trowen that she woll write again
And if she write, thou shalt full sone ysee
As whether she hath any libertie
To come ayen, or els in some clause
If she be let, she woll assigne a cause.

Thou hast not written to her sens ỹ she went
Nor she to thee, and this I durst lay
There may such cause been in her entent
That hardly thou wolt thy seluen say
That her abode the best is for you tway
Now write her than, and thou shalt sele sone
A sothe of all, there is no more to doen.

Acorded been to this conclusioun
And that anon, these ilke lordes two
And hastely fate Troilus adoun
And rolleth in his hart to and fro
How he may best discriuen her his wo
And to Creseide his owne ladie dere
And wrote right thus, ỹ said as ye may here

¶ The copie of the letter.

Right fresh flour, whose I haue been ỹ shal
Without en part of els where seruice
With hart, bodie, life, lust, thought, and all
I wofull wight, in euery humble wise
That tong can tell, or harte may deuise
As oft as matter occupieth place
We recommaund vnto your noble grace

Liketh it you to weten swete harte
As ye well know, how long time agon
That ye me left in aspre paines smart
Whan that ye went, of which yet bote non
Haue I none had, but euer worse begon
Fro day to day am I, and so mote dwell
While it you list, of wele and wo my well.

For which to you, with dredfull harte true
I write, as he that sorow driueth to write
My wo, that euery houre encreaseth newe
Complaining as I dare, or can endite
And that defaced is, that may ye wite
The teares, which that from mine eyen rain
That wulden speke, if ỹ they durst and plain

You first beseche I, that your eyen clere
To loke on this defouled ye nat hold
And ouer all this, that ye my lady dere
Woll vouchsafe this letter to behold
And by the cause eke of my cares cold
That slaeth my wit, if aught amis me starte
Forgeue it me, mine owen swete harte.

If any seruaunt durst or ought of right
Vpon his ladie pitously complain
Than wene I that I ought be that wight
Considred this, that ye these monthes twain
Haue taried, there ye saiden sothe to sain
But tenne daies ye nolde in hoste sojourne
But in two monethes, yet ye not retourne.

But

But for as much, as me mote nedes like
All that you list, I dare nat plain more
But humbly, with sorowfull sighes sike
You write I mine vnresties sorowes sore
Fro day to day, desiring euer more
To knowen fully, if your will it were
How ye haue fared & don while ye be there

Iwis mine owne dere hart true
I wote that whan ye next vpon me se
So lost haue I mine heale, and eke mine hew
Creseide shal nat come knowen me
Iwis mine harts day, my lady free
So thrilleth aie mine hart to behold
Your beaute, that vnneth my life I hold

To whose welfare & heale eke God encrease
In honour such, that vpward in degree
It growe alwaie, so that it neuer cease
Right as your harte aie can my lady free
Deuise, I pray to God so mote it be
And graunt it that ye sone vpon me rewe
As wisely as in al I am to you trew.

I say no more, all haue I for to sey
To you wel more than I tel may
But whether that ye do me live or dey
Yet pray I God, so yeue you right good day
And fareth wel goodly faire fresh May
As ye that life or death me may commaund
And to your trouth aie I me recommaund

And if you liketh knowen of the fare
Of me, whose wo there may no wight discriue
I can no more, but chest of euery care
At writing of this letter I was on liue
All redy out my wofull ghost to drive
Which I delaie, and hold him yet in honde
Upon the sight of matter of your sonde.

With heale soch, that but ye yeuen me
The same heale, I shal non heale haue
In you lieth, whan you list that it so be
The day in which me clothen shal my graue
And in you my life, in your might for to saue
Me fro disease of all paines smart
And fare now well mine owne swete hart
Le vostre T.

Mine eyen two in vain, with which I see
Of sorowfull teares salt arn woren wellis
My song in plaint of mine aduersitie
My good in harme, mine ease eke worē hel is
My ioy in wo, I can say now nought ellis
But tourned is, for which my life I warie
Euery ioy or ease in his contrarie.

This letter forth was sent vnto Creseide
Of which her answere in effect was this
Ful pitously she wrote ayen, and seide
That al so sone as she might wis
She would come, & mend al that was amis
And finally she wrote and saied then
She would come, ye, but she nist when

Which with your coming home ayen to Troy
Ye may redresse, and more a thousand sith
Than euer I had encreasen in me ioy
For was there neuer hart yet so blith
To haue his life, as I shal ben as swith
As I you se, and though no maner routh
Can meuen you, yet thinketh on your trouth

But in her letter made she soch feasts
That wonder was & swore she loued him best
Of which he found but bottomlesse behestes
But Troilus thou maist now East and West
Pipe in an Ivy leafe if that thee lest
thus goth ỳ world, god shild vs fro mischaūce
And euery wight ỳ meaneth trouth auaunce

And if so be my gilt hath death deserued
Or if you list no more vpon me se
In guerdon yet of that I haue you serued
Beseech I you, mine owne lady free
That hereupon ye woulden write me
For loue of God, my right lode ster
That death may make an end of al my wer

Encreasen gan the wo fro day to night
Of Troilus, for tarying of Creseide
And lessen gan his hope and eke his might
For which al doun he in his bedde him leide
He ne eat, drunke, ne slept, ne word seide
Imagining aie that she was vnkind
For which wel nigh he went out of his mind

If other cause aught doeth you for to dwell
That with your letter ye may me recomfort
For though to me your absence is an hell
With pacience I wol my wo comfort
And with your letter of hope I wol disport
Now writeth swete, & let me thus nat plain
With hope or death, deliuereth me fro pain

This ireme, of which I told haue eke before
May neuer come out of his remembraunce
He thought aie wel, he had his lady yorn
And that Ioues, of his purueiaunce
Him shewed had in slepe the significaunce
Of her untrouth, and his disauenture
And that the bore was shewed him in figure

For

For which he for Sibille his suster sent
That called was Cassandre eke all about
And all his dreame he told her er he stent
And her besought assoilen him the doubt
Of the strong Bore, with tuskes stout
And finally, within a little stounde
Cassandre him gan thus his dreme expound.

She gan first smile, & said O brother dere
If thou a sothe of this desirest to knowe
Thou must a fewe of old stories heare
To purpose how that fortune ouerthrowe
hath lords old, throuz which within a throw
Thou shalt this Bore knowe, & of what kind
He comen is, as men in bokes finde.

Diane, which that wroth was and in ire
For Grekes nold doen her Sacrifice
Ne encens vpon her Altar set on fire
She for that Grekes gon her so dispise
Wrake her in a wonder cruell wise
For with a Bore as great as oxe in stall
She made vp fret her corne and vines all.

To slea ỹ Bore was all the countrie reised
Emong which there came this Bore to see
Amated, one of this world the best ypraised
And Meleager, lorde of that countre
He loued so this fresh maiden fre
That with his manhode, er he would stent
This Bore he slough, and her the hed he sent

Of which, as old bokes tellen vs
There rose a conteke and a great enuie
And of this Lorde discended Tideus
By ligne, or els olde bokes lie
But how this Meleager gan to die
Through his mother, woll I you not tell
For all to long it were for to dwell.

She tolde eke how Tideus, er she stent
Unto the strong citie of Thebes
(To claimen kingdome of the citie) went
For his felawe dan Polimites
Of which the brother dan Ethiocles
Full wrongfully of Thebes held the strength
This tolde she by processe all by length.

She tolde eke how Hemonides astarte
Whan Tideus slough fiftie knightes stoute
She tolde eke all the Prophecies by harte
And how that seuen kings with her rout
Besiegeden the citie all about
And of the holy Serpent, and the well
And of the furies all three gan him tell.

Associat profugum, Tideus primo Polimidem
Tidea legatum docet insidiasq; secundis
Tertius Hermodien canit & vates latitantes
Mors furie Leuine quinto narrantur & angues
Quartus habet reges ineuntes prelia septem
Archinon bustum, sexto ludiq; leguntur
Dat Graios Thebes vatem septimis vmbris
Octauo cecidit Tideus spes vita pelagis
Ipomedon nono moritur, cum Parthonepeo
Fulmine percusso, decimo Canapus superatur
Vndecimo sese perimunt per vulnera fratres
Argiuam flentem, narrat duodenis & ignem.

Of Archinories burying, and the plaies
And how Amphiorax fill through ỹ grounde
How Tideus was slain, lord of Argeies
And how Hipomedon in a little stounde
Was dreint, & dedde Parthonepe of wound
And also how Campaneus the proude
With thunder dint was slain, ỹ cryed loude.

He gan eke tell him how that either brother
Ethiocles and Polimites also
At a scarmish, eche of hem slough other
And of Argiues weping and her mo
And how the toun was brent she told eke tho
And tho discended doune from iestes old
To Diomede, and thus she spake and told.

This ilke Bore betokeneth Diomede
Tideus sonne, that doune discended is
Fro Meleager, that made the Bore to blede
And thy Ladie, where so she be ywis
This Diomede her hart hath, and she is
Wepe if thou wolt or leaue, for out of doubt
This Diomede is in, and thou art out

Thou saiest not sothe (qd he) thou sorceresse
With all thy false ghost of Prophecie
Thou weenest been a great deuineresse
Now seest thou not this foole of fantasie
Painen her on ladies for to lie
Away (qd he) there Joues yeue thee sorow
Thou shalt be fals parauẽture yet to morow.

As wel thou mightest lien on good Alceste
That was of creatures (but men lie)
That euer weren, kindest and the beste
For whan her husband was in ieopardie
To die himselfe, but if she would die
She chese for him to die, and gon to hell
And starke anon, as vs the bokes tell.

Cassandre goeth, and he with cruell harte
Forpate his wo, for angre of her speche

And

And fro his bedde all sodainly he starte
As though all hole him had ymade a leche
And day by day he gan enquire and seche
A clothe of this, with all his full cure
And thus he driueth forth his auenture.

Fortune, which that permutation
Of all things hath, as it is her committed
Through purueyance and disposicion
Of high Ioue, as reignes shall been flitted
Fro folk in folk, or whā they shall ben smitted
Gan pul away the fethers bright of Troy
Fro day to day, till they been bare of ioy.

Emong all this, the fine of the ieopardie
Of Hector gan approchen wonder bliue
The fate would his soule should vnbodie
And shapen had a mean it out to driue
Ayenst which fate him helpeth not to striue
But on a day to fighten gan he wend.
At which alas, he caught his liues ende.

For which me thinketh euery maner wight
That haunteth armes, ought to bewaile
The death of him that was so noble a knight
For as he drough a king by thauentaile
Vnware of this, Achilles through the maile
And through the body gan him for to riue
And thus the worthy knight was reft of liue

For whom as old bookes tellen vs
Was made such wo, that tong it may nat tell
And namely the sorowe of Troilus
That next him was of worthinesse the well
And in this wo gan Troilus to dwell
That what for sorow, loue, and for wrest
Full oft a daie he bad his hart brest.

But natheless, though he gon him dispaire
And drede aie that his lady was vntrue
Yet aie on her his harte gan repaire
And as these louers doen, he sought aie newe
To get ayen Creseide bright of hewe
And in his hart he went her excusing
That Calcas caused all her tarying.

And oft time he was in purpose great
Him seluen like a pilgrim to disguise
To seen her, but he may not counterfeate
To been vnknowen of folke that weren wise
Ne finde excuse aright that may suffice
If he emong the Grekes knowen were
For which he wept full oft many a teare.

To her he wrote yet oft time all newe
Full pitously, he left it nat for slouthe
Beseching her, sens that he was true
That she wol come ayen and hold her trouth
For which Creseide vpon a day for routh
I take it so, touching all this mattere
Wrote him ayen, and saied as ye may here.

Cupides sonn, ensample of goodlihede
O swerde of knighthode, sours of gentilnesse
How might a wight in turment and in drede
And heaselesse you send, as yet gladnesse
I hartelesse, I sicke, I in distresse
Sens ye with me, nor I with you may deale
You neither sende I hart may nor heale.

Your letters full the paper all yplainted
Conceiued hath mine hartes pitie
I haue eke seen with teares all depainted
Your letter, and how that ye requiren me
To come ayen, which yet ne may not be
But why, least that this letter founden were
No mencion ne make I now for feare.

Greuous to me (God wote) is your vnrest
Your hast, and that the Goddes ordinaunce
It semeth nat ye take it for the best
Nor other thing nis in your remembraunce
As thinketh me, but onely your pleasaunce
But beth not wroth, and that I you beseech
For that I tarie is all for wicked speche.

For I haue heard well more than I wend
Touching vs two, how things haue ystond
Which I shall with dissimuling amende
And beth nat wroth, I haue eke vnderstond
How ye ne do but holden me in honde
But now no force, I can nat in you gesse
But all trouth and all gentilnesse.

Come I wolle, but yet in such disioynt
I stond as now, that what yere, or what day
That this shall be, that can I nat apoint
But in effect I praie you as I maie
Of your good word, & of your frendship aie
For truely while that my life may dure
As for a frende ye may in me assure.

Yet pray I you on euill ye ne take
That it is short, which that I to you write
I dare nat there I am well letters make
Ne neuer yet ne could I well endite
Eke great effect, men write in place lite
Thentent is all, and nat the letters space
And fareth well, God haue you in his grace.

La vostre C.

This

This Troilus thought this letter al straunge
Whan he it saw, and sorowfully he sight
Him thought it like a kalends of eschaunge
But finally he ful ne trowen might
That she ne would him holden that she hight
For with ful yuel will list him to leue
That loueth wel in such case thorz him greue

But natheless, men sain that at the last
For any thing, men shal the soth see
And such a cas betide, and that as fast
That Troylus wel understood that she
Nas nat so kind, as that her ought be
And finally he wote now out of dout
That all is lost, that he hath ben about

Stode on a day in his melancoly
This Troilus, and in suspectioun
Of her, for whom he wend to dye
And so befil, that thzoughout Troy toun
As was the guise, yborne was vp and doun
A maner cote armour, as saith the storz
Before Dephebe, in signe of his victorz

The which cote, as telleth Lollius
Dephebe it had rent fro Diomede
The same day, and when this Troylus
It saw, he gan to taken of it hede
Auising of the length and of the brede
And all the werke, but as he gan behold
Ful sodainly his hert gan to cold

As he that on the colere fond within
A broch, that he Creseide yaue at morow
That she from Troy must nedes twin
In remembraunce of him, and of his sorow
And she him layd ayen her faith to borow
To kepe it ate, but now ful wel he wist
His lady nas no longer on to trist

He goeth him home, and gan ful sone send
For Pandarus, and all this new chaunce
And of this broch he told him word and end
Complaining of her harts variaunce
His long loue, his trouth, and his penaunce
And after death, without wordes more
Ful fast he cried, his rest him to restore

Than spake he thus, O lady mine Creseide
Where is your faith, and where is your behest?
Where is your loue, wher is your trouth he seid
Of Diomede haue ye now all this feest?
Alas, I would haue trowed at the leest
That sens ye nold in trouth to me stond
That ye thus nold haue holden me in hond

Who shal now trowen on any othes more
Alas I neuer would haue wend er this
That ye Creseide could haue chaunged so
Ne but I had agilt, and done amis
So cruel wend I nat your hart iwis
To slee me thus, alas your name of trouth
Is now forlorne, and that is all my routh

Was there none other brooch you list lete
To fetche with your new loue (qd. he)
But thilke broch that I with teares wete
You yaue, as for a remembraunce of me
None other cause alas, ne had ye
But for dispite, and eke for that ye ment
All vtterly to shewen your entent

Thzough which I see, ꝑ clene out of your mind
Ye haue me cast, and I ne can nor may
For all this world, within mine hart find
To vnlouen you a quarter of a day
In cursed time I borne was welaway
That you that done me all this wo endure
Yet loue I best of any creature

Now God (qd. he) me send yet the grace
That I may meten with this Diomede
And truely, if I haue might and space
Yet shal I make I hope his sides blede
Now God (qd. he) that aughtest taken hede
To forthren trouth, and wrongs to punice
Why nilt thou don a vengeaunce of this vice

O Pandarus, that in dremes for to trist
Me blamed hast, and wont art oft vpbreide
Now mayst thou sene thy selfe, if that the list
How trew is now thy nece bright Creseide
In sondry formes (God it wote) he seide
The Goddes shewen both ioy and tene
In slepe, and by my dreme it is now sene

And certainly, withouten more speech
From hence forth, as ferforth as I may
Mine owne death in armes wol I seech
I retch nat how soone be the day
But trewly Creseide, swete may
Whom I haue with all my might yserued
That ye thus done, I haue it nat deserued

This Pandarus, that all these things herd
And wist wel he said a soth of this
Ne nat a word ayen to him answerd
For sorz of his frends sorow he is
And shamed for his nece hath done amis
And stant astonied of these causes tway
As stil as stone, a word ne could he say

But at the last thus he spake, and seide
My brother dere, I may do the no more
What should I saine, I hate twis Creseide
And God it wote I wol hate her euermore
And that thou me beseoughtest don of yore
Hauing vnto mine honour ne my rest
Right no regard, I did all that the lest

Yf I did aught, that might liken the
It is me lefe, and of this treason now
God wote that it a sorow is to me
And dredelesse, for harts ease of you
Right faine I would amend it, wist I how
And fro this world, almighty God I pray
Deliuer her soone, I can no more say

Great was the sorow and plaint of Troilus
But forthy her course fortune aie gan hold
Creseide loueth the sonne of Tideus
And Troylus mote wepe in cares cold
Such is this world, who so it can behold
In ech estate is litell harts rest
God leue vs take it for the best

In many cruell battaile out of drede
Of Troylus, this like noble knight
(As men may in these old bokes rede)
Was seen his knighthod, and his great might
And dredelesse his ire day and night
Ful cruelly the Grekes aie abought
(And alway most this Diomede) he sought

And oft time (I find) that they mette
With bloody strokes, and with words great
Assaying how her speares were whette
And God it wote, with many a cruel heat
Gan Troylus vpon his helme to beat
But nathelesse, fortune naught ne would
Of outher hond that either dien should

And if I had ytaken for to write
The armes of this like worthy man
Than would I of his battelles endite
And for that I to writen first began
Of his loue, I haue said as I can
His worthy deeds, who so list hem here
Rede Dares, he can tel hem all yfere

Beseeching euery lady bright of hew
And euery gentil woman, what she be
Al be it that Creseide was vntrew
That for that gilt ye be nat worth with me
Ne may her gilt in other bokes se
And gladder I would write, if you lest
Penelopes trouth, and good Alcest

Ne say I nat this all only for these men
But most for women that betraied be
Through fals folke, god yeue hem sorow amen
That with her great witte and subtilte
Betraien you, and this meueth me
To speke, and in effect you all I pray
Beth ware of men, and herkeneth what I say.

Go litel boke, go my litel tregedy
There God thy maker yet er that I die
So send me might to make some comedy
But litell boke, make thou none enuy
But subiect ben vnto all poesie
And kisse the steppes, wher as thou seest pace
Of Vergil, Ouide, Homer, Lucan, and Stace

And for there is so great diuersite
In English, and in writing of our tong
So pray I to God, that none miswrite the
Ne the misse metre, for defaut of tong
And redde where so thou be, or els song
That thou be vnderstond, God I beseech
But yet to purpose of my rather speech.

The wrath, as I began you for to sey
Of Troilus, the Grekes boughten dere
For thousands his hondes maden dey
As he that was withouten any pere
Saue in his time Hector as I can here
But welaway, saue only goddes wil
Dispitously him slough the fierse Achil

And whan that he was slain in this manere
His light ghost, ful blissfully is went
Up to the holownesse of the seuenth sphere
In his place leting euerich element
And there he saw, with ful auisement
The erratike sterres, herkening armony
With sownes ful of heuines melody

And doun from thence, fast he gan auise
This litel spotte of earth, that with the see
Embraced is, and fully gan dispise
This wretched world, and held al vanite
To respect of the plaine felicite
That is in heauen aboue, and at the last
There he was slain, his loking doun he cast

And in himselfe he lough, right at the wo
Of hem that wepten for his death so fast
And dampned all our werks that folweth so
The blind lust, which that may nat last
And shulden al our hart on heauen cast
And forth he went, shortely for to tell
There as Mercury sorted him to dwell

Such

Such fine hath lo, this Troilus for loue
Such fine hath all his great worthinesse
Such fine hath all his estate royal aboue
Such fine his lust, such fine hath his noblesse
Such fine hath false worlds brotelnesse
And thus began his louing of Creseide
As I haue told, and in this wise he deide

O yong fresh folkes, he or she
In which ỳ loue vp groweth with your age
Repaireth home from worldely vanite
And of your harts, vp casteth the visage
To thilke God, that after his image
You made, and thinketh al nis but a faire
This world that passeth sone, as floures faire

And loueth him, the which that right for loue
Upon a crosse our soules for to buy
First starke and rose, and sit in heuen aboue
For he nil falsen no wight dare I sey
That wol his hart all holly on him ley
And sens he best to loue is, and most meke
What nedeth fained loues for to seke

Lo here of paynems, cursed old rites
Lo here what ail her goddes may auaile
Lo here this wretched worlds appetites
Lo here the fine and guerdon for trauaile
Of Ioue, Apollo, of Mars, and such raskaile
Lo here the forme of old clerkes speche
In poetry, if ye her bokes seche

O moral Gower, this boke I direct
To the, and to the Philosophicall Strode
To vouchsafe there nede is to correct
Of your benignitees and zeles good
And to the soothfast Christ that starfe on rood
With al mine hart, of mercy euer I pray
And to the lord aright, thus I spoke and say

Thou one, two, and three, eterne on liue
That raignest aie in three, two, and one
Uncircumscript, and all maist circumscriue
Us from visible and inuisible fone
Defend, and to thy mercy cucrichone
So make vs Iesus to thy mercy digne
For loue of maid, and mother thine benigne

¶ Thus endeth the fifth booke, and last of Troilus: and here followeth the pitefull and dolorous Testament of faire Creseide.

The Testament of Creseide.

A Doly season til a carefull dite
Should correspond, and be equipolent
Right so it was whan I began to write
This tragedy, the weder right feruent
Whan aries in middes of the lent
Showres of haile can fro the North discend
That scantly fro the cold I might me defend

Yet neuertheless within mine orature
I stode, whan Titan had his beames bright
Withdrawen doun, and seyled vnder cure
And faire Uenus the beaute of the night
Upraise, and set vnto the West ful right
Her golden face in oppositioun
Of God Phebus direct discending doun

Throughout ỳ glasse her beames brast so faire
That I might se on euery side me by
The northren wind had purified the aire
And shedde his misty clouds fro the sky
The frost freseth, the blastes bitterly
Fro pole Artike come whisking loud and shill
And causeth me remoue ayenst my will

For I trusted that Uenus loues Quene
To whom somtime I hight obedience
My faded hart of loue she would make grene
And ther vpon with humble reuerence
I thought to pray her hie magnificence
But for great cold as than I letted was
And in my chamber to the fire can pass

Though loue be hote, yet in a man of age
It kindleth nat so soone as in youth heed
Of whom the blode is flowing in a rage
And in the old, the corage dul and deed
Of which the fire outward is best remeed
To helpe by phisike wher that nature failed
I am expert, for both I haue assailed

I made the fire and beaked me about
Than toke I drinke my spirits to comfort
And armed me wel fro the cold therout
To cutte the winter night and make it short
I toke a quaire, and left all other sport
Writen by worthy Chaucer glorious
Of faire Creseide, and lusty Troilus

And there I found after that Diomede
Receiued had that lady bright of hew
How Troilus nere out of his witte abrede
And wept sore, with visage pale of hew
For which wanhope his teares gan renew
While Esperus reioyled him againe
Thus while in toy he liued, and while in paine

Of her behest he had great comforting
Trusting to Troy that she wold make retour
Which he desired most, of all erthly thing
For why she was his onely paramour
But whan he saw passed both day and hour
Of her gaincome, in sorow can oppresse
His woful hart, in care and heuinesse

Of his distresse me nedeth nat reherse
For worthy Chaucer in that same boke
In goodly termes, and in holy verse
Compiled hath his cares who wil loke
To breke my slepe another quicare I toke
In which I found the fatal destiny
Of faire Creseide, which ended wretchedly

Who wote if al that Chaucer wrate was trew
Nor I wote nat if this narracion
Be authorised, or forged of the new
Of some Poete by his inuencion
Made to report the lamentacion
And woful end of this lusty Creseide
And what distresse she was in or she deide

Whan Diomede had all his appetite
And more fulfilled of this faire lady
Upon another sette was all his delite
And send to her a libel repudy
And her excluded fro his company
Than desolate she walked vp and doune
As some men saine, in the court as commune

O faire Creseide, the floure and a per se
Of Troy and Grece, how were thou fortunate
To chaunge in filth all thy femmite
And be with fleshly lust so maculate
And go among the Grekes erly and late
So gigliotlike, taking thy foule pleasaunce
I haue pite the should fal such mischaunce

Yet neuertheles, what euer men deme or say
In scornful langage of thy brutelnesse
I shal excuse, as ferforth as I may
Thy womanhed, thy wildome and fairnesse
The which fortune hath put to such distresse
As her pleased, and nothing through the gilt
Of the, through wicked langage to be spilt

This faire lady on this wise destitute
Of all comfort and consolation
Right pruely without felowship or refute
Disheueld, passed out of the toun
A mile or two vnto a mansioun
Bilded ful gay, wher her father Calcas
Which that among the Grekes dwelling was

whan her he saw, the cause he can enquire
Of her comming, she said sighing ful sore
Fro Diomede had gotten his desire
He wox wery and would of me no more
Nd. Calcas doughter wepe thou nat therfore
Parauenture all cometh for the best
Welcome to me thou art ful dere a gest

This old Calcas, after the law was tho
Was keper of the temple as a priest
In which Uenus and her sonne Cupido
Were honoured, and his chambre was nest
To which Creseide with bale enewed in brest
Used to passe, her praiers for to say
While at the last vpon a solempne day

As custome was, the people ferre and nere
Before the noone, vnto the temple went
With sacrifice deuout in their manere
But stil Creseide heuy in her entent
Into the Church would nat her self present
For giuing of the people any deming
Of her expulse fro Diomede the king

But passed into a secret oratore
Where she might wepe her woful destiny
Behind her back she closed fast the dore
And on her knees bare fel doun in hie
Upon Uenus and Cupide angerly
She cried out, and said in this wise
Alas that euer I made you sacrifise

Ye gaue me ones a diuine responsaile
That I should be the floure of loue in Troy
Now am I made an vnworthy outwaile
And all in care translated is my ioy
Who shal me gide, who shal me now conuoy
Sith I fro Diomede, and noble Troilus
Am clene excluded, as abiect odious

O false Cupide, none is to wite but thou
And the mother of loue, that blind goddace
Ye caused me vnderstand alway and trow
The seed of loue was sowen on my face
And aie grew grene through your sople grace
But now alas, that seed with frost is slaine
And I fro loues left and all forlaine

whan

Whan this was said, doun in an extasy
Rauished in spirit, in a dreame she fel
And by apparaunce herd where she did lie
Cupide the king tinging a siluer bel
Which men might heare fro heuen into hel
At whose sound before Cupide aperes
The seuen planets discending fro their speres

Which hath power of all thing generable
To rule and stere by their great influence
Weder and wind, and course variable
And first of al Saturne gaue his sentence
Which gaue to Cupide litel reuerence
But as a boistus chorle in his manere
Came crabbedly with austern loke and chere

His face frounced, his lere was like the lede
His teeth chattred, and shouered with the chin
His eien drouped hole sonken in his heed
Out at his nose the mildrop fast gan rin
With lippes blo, and chekes leane and thin
The Ise ickels that fro his heer doun hong
Was wonder great, and as a speare as long

Attour his belt his liart lockes lay
Feltred vnfaire, ouer fret with frosts hooze
His garment and his gate ful gay of gray
His wriddred wede fro him the wind out wooze
A boistous bow with in his hond he booze
Under his girdle of fasly of felone flains
Feddred with yle, and herded with boistains

Than Jupiter right faire and amiable
God of the sterres in the firmament
And nozice to all thing generable
Fro his father Saturne farre different
With burly face, and browes bright and brent
Upon his heed a garlond wonders gay
Of floures faire, as it had ben in May

His voice was clere, as cristal was his cien
As golden waire so glittering was his heare
His garment and his gite ful gay of grene
With golden lisles grit on euery geare
A burly brand about his middle he beare
And in his right hand he had a grounden spere
Of his father, the wrath fro vs to bere

Next after him came Mars the God of ire
Of strife, debate, and all discencioun
To chide and fight, as fierce as any fire
In hard harneise hedmond and habergioun
And on his haunch a roustly fel fauchoun
And in his hand he had a rousty sword
Writhing his face, with many angry word

Shaking his brand, before Cupide he come
With reed visage, and grisly glowing eien
And at his mouth a blubber stode of fome
Like to a bore, whetting his tuskes keue
Right tulsure like, but temperaunce in tene
An horne blew with many boustous bragge
Which all this world with war hath made to wagge.

Than faire Phebus, lantern and lamp of light
Of man and beest, both fruit and floristhing
Tender norice, and banisher of night
And of the world, causing by his moning
And influence, like in all erthly thing
Without comfort of whome of force to nought
Must go die, that al this world hath wrought

As kyng royall, he rode vpon a chare
The which Phiton sometime gided vnright
The brightnesse of his face whan it was bare
Non might behold, for perling of his sight
This golden cart with firy beames bright
Foure yoked stedes ful different of hew
But bait or tiring through the speres drew

The first was sored, with mane as reed as rose
Called Eoye into the orient
The second stede to name, hight Ethiose
Whitely and pale, and somdele ascendent
The third Pirose, right hote and ek feruent
The fourth was black, called Philologee
Which rolleth Phebus doun into the see

Uenus was there present, that goddes gay
Her sonnes quarel to defend and make
His owne complaint, cladde in a nice aray
The one halfe grene, thother halfe sable blake
White heer as gold, kembed and shede abake
But in her face semed great variaunce
While parfite truth, and whyles inconstaunce

Under smiling she was dissimulate
Prouocatiue with blinkes amorous
And sodainly chaunged and alterate
Angry, as any serpent venomous
Right pungeaunt with wordes odious
Thus variaunt she was who list take kepe
With one eye laugh, and with the other wepe

In tokening that all fleshly paramour
Which Uenus hath in rule and gouernaunce
Is sometime swete, sometime bitter and sour
Right vnstable and ful of variaunce
Winged with carefull ioy and fall plesaunce
Now hotte now cold, now blith, now ful of wo
Now greene as leef, now wedred and ago

With boke in hand, than come Mercurious
Right eloquent and ful of eschozy
With polite termes and delicious
With penne and inke to repozt all redy
Setting songs, and singing merely
His hode was reed heeled attour his croun
Like til a Poete of the old fasioun

Boxes he bare with fine electuaries
And sugred siropes foz digestion
Spices belonging to the potiquaries
With many holsome swete confection
Docter in phisike cladde in a scarlet goun
And furred wel as such one ought to be
Honest and good, and nat a woxd couth lie

Next after him come lady Cinthia
The last of all, and swiftest in her spere
Of coulour blake, busked with hoznes two
And in the night she listeth best tapere
Haw as the leed, of colour nothing clere
Foz all the light she boxoweth at her bzother
Titan, foz of her selfe she hath non other

Her gite was gray and ful of spottes blake
And on her bzest a chozle painted ful euen
Bearing a bush of thoznes on his bake
Which foz his theft might clime no ner ȳ heuen
Thus when they gadzed were ȳ goddes seuen
Mercurius they chosed with one assent
To be foze speker in the parliment

Who had ben there and liking foz to here
His facond tong, and termes exquisite
Of rethozike the practike he might iere
In bzefe sermon, a preignant sentence write
Before Cupide valing his cappe a lite
Sper is the cause of that vacacioun
And he anon shewed his entencioun

Lo qd. Cupide, who wol blaspheme ȳ name
Of his owne God, either in woxd oz dede
To all Goddes he doth both losse and shame
And should haue bitter paines to his mede
I say this by yonder wzetch Creseide
The which thzough me was somtime floure of (loue
Wz my mother she stately can repzoue

Saying of her great infelicite
I was the cause, and my mother Uenus
She called a blind goddes and might nat see
With sclaunder and defame iniurious
Thus her liuing vnclcane and lecherous
She would retoxt in me and my mother
To whom I shewed my grace above all other

And sith ye ate all seuen deificate
Perticipant of diuine sapience
This great iniury done to our hie estate
We think with pain we should make recõpence
Was neuer to Goddes done such violence
As wel foz you as foz my selfe I say
Therefoze go helpe to reuenge I you pzay

Mercurius to Cupide gaue answere
And said, sir king: my counsaile is that ye
Referre you to the hiest planet here
And take to him the lowest of degree
The paine of Creseide foz to modifie
As God Saturne with him take Cinthia
I am content (qd. he) to take they twa

Than thus pzoceeded Saturne & the Mone
When they the mater rupely had degest
Foz the dispite to Cupide that she had done
And to Uenus open and manifest
In all her life with paine to be oppzest
And turment soze, with sickenesse incurable
And to all louers be abhominable

This doleful sentence Saturne toke on hand
And passed doun where careful Creseide lay
And on her heed he laid a frosty wand
Than lawfully on this wise can he say
Thy great fairnesse, and all thy beauty gay
Thy wanton blood, and eke thy golden heere
Here I exclude fro the foz euermeere

I chaunge thy mirth into melancoly
Which is the mother of all pensiuenesse
Thy moister and thy hete, into cold and dzy
Thine insolence, thy play, and thy wantonnesse
To great disease, thy pompe and thy richesse
Into moztal nede, and great penury
Thou suffre shalt, and as a begger die.

O cruel Saturne, froward and angry
Hard is thy dome, and to malicious
Of faire Creseide, why hast thou no mercy
Which was so swete, gentil and amozous
Withdzaw thy sentence and be gracious
As thou were neuer, so sheweth thzouz thy dede
A wzeke ful sentence giuen on Creseide

Than Cinthia, whan Saturne past away
Out of her seat, discended doun blime
And reed a bill on Creseide where she lay
Containing this sentence diffinitiue
Fro heale of body here I thee depziue
And to thy sickenesse shal be no recure
But in dolour thy daies to endure

Thy

Thy cbystal eyen menged with blod I make
Thy voice so clere unpleasant heere and hace
Thy lustie lere ouerspred with spottes blake
And lumpes hawe apearing in thy face
Wher thou comest ech man shal flye the place
Thus shalt thou go begging fro hous to hous
With cuppe and clapper like a Lazarous.

This doolie dreame, this vgly visioun
Brought till an end, Creseide fro it awoke
And all that court and conuocacioun
Vanished away, than rose she vp and toke
A polished glasse, and her shadowe couth loke
And whan she sawe her visage so deformate
If she in hart were wo, I ne wite God wate

Weping full sore, lo what it is (qd she)
With froward langage to moue and stere
Our crabbed Goddes, and so is seen on me
Wy blaspheming now haue I bought ful dere
All earthly ioy and mirth I set arere
Alas this day, alas this wofull tide
Whan I began with my Goddes to chide.

Be this was said, a child came fro the hall
To warne Creseide the supper was redie
First knocked at the doze, and eft couth call
Madame, your father biddeth you com in hie
He hath marueile so long on grofe ye lie
And saith your beades beth to long somedele
The Goddes wote all your entent full wele.

(Qd she) faire childe, go to my father dere
And pray him come to speake with me anon
And so he did, and saied daughter what chere
Alas (qd she) father, my mirth is gon
How so (qd he) and she can al expoun
As I haue told, the vengeaunce, & the wrake
For her trespas, Cupide on her couth take.

He loked on her vgly Lepers face
The which before was white as Lely flour
Wringing his hands, oft times saied alace
That he had liued to see that wofull hour
For he knew well that there was no socour
To her sickneste, and that doubled his pain
Thus was ther care ynow betwixt hem twain

Whan they togider mourned had ful lang
Qd Creseid, father I would not ben kende
Therfore in secret wise ye let me gang
To yon Hospitall at the tounes ende
And thider some meate for charitie me sende
To liue vpon, for all mirth in this earth
Is fro me gone, such is my wicked werth.

Whan in a mantil, and a Beuer hat
With cuppe and clapper wonder priuely
He opened a secrete gate and out thereat
Conueyed her, that no man should espie
There to a village halfe a mile therby
Deliuered her in at the Spittell hous
And daily send her part of his almous.

Som knew her well & som had no knowlege
Of her, because she was so deformate
With biles blacke ouerspred in her visage
And her faire colour faded and alterate
Yet they presumed for her hie regrate
And still mourning she was of noble kin
With bitter will there they toke her in.

The day passed, and Phebus went to rest
The clowdes blake ouerwheled all the skie
God wote if Creseide were a sorowful gest
Seing that vncouth fare and herborie
But meat or drinke she dressed her to lie
In a darke corner of the hous alone
And on this wise weping she made her mone.

Here foloweth the complaint of Creseide.

Soppe of sorowe lonken into care
O caitife Creseide now & euermare
Gon is thy ioy and al thy mirth in earth
Of all blithnesse now art thou blake and bare
There is no salue may helpe thy sare
Fell is thy fortune, wicked is thy werthe
Thy blisse is banished and thy bale vnberde
Under the great God if I grauen ware
Wher men of Grece ne yet of Troy mizt herd

Where is thy chamber wantonly be seen
With burly bedde and bankers brouded been
Spices and wine to thy colatioun
The cuppes all of gold and siluer shene
Thy swete meates serued in plates clene
With saurie sauce of a good fashioun
Thy gay garmẽts with many goodly goun
Thy pleasant laune pumed with golden pene
All is arere thy great royal renoun

Where is thy gardein with thy greces gaie
And fresh floures, which the quene Floraie
Had painted pleasantly in euery pane
Where thou were wont ful merily in Maie
To walke, and take the dewe be it was daie.

And heare the Merie and Mauise many one
With ladies faire in carroling to gone
And see the royall rewtes in their raie.

This leper loge take for thy goodly bour
And for thy bed, take now a bunch of stro
For wailed wine and meates thou had tho
Take mouled bread pirate, and sider soure
But cuppe and clapper is all now ago.

My clere voice and my courtly carolling
Is ranke as roke, full hidous heer and hace
Defourmed is the figure of my face
To loke on it no people hath liking
So sped in light, I saie with sore sighing
Lying emong the leper folke alas.

O ladies faire of Troie and Grece attende
My fraile fortune, mine infelicitie
My great mischief which no man can amend
And in your minde a mirrour make of me
As I am now parauenture that ye
For al your might may come to the same end
Or els worse if any worse may be
Beware therfore approches nere your ende.

Nought is your fairnesse but a fading floure
Nought is your famous laud & hie honour
But winde inflate in other mennes eares
Your rosing redde to rotting shal retoure
Exemple make of me in your memore
Which of such things, wofull witnes beares
All welth in earth, as winde away it weares
Beware therfore approcheth nere your hour.

Thus chiding with her drerie destenie
Weping, she woke the night fro end to end
But all in vain her dole, her carefull crie
might not remedy, ne yet her mourning mend
A leper ladie rose, and to her wende
And saied, why spurnest thou again the wall
To slea thy self, and mend nothing at all

Sith that thy weping but doubleth thy wo
I counsaile thee make vertue of a nede
Go learne to clappe thy clapper to & fro
And learne after the law of lepers lede
ther was no bote but forthwith than she yede
Fro place to place, while cold & hunger sore
Compelled her to be a ranke beggore.

The same time of Troie the garnisoun
Which had the chiefetain worthy Troilus
Throuz ieoperdy of warre had stricken doun
Knights of Grece in number mancions
With great triumph, and laud victorious
Againe to Troie right royally they rode
The way wher Creseide with the leper stode

Seing that company come al with o steuin
They gaue a crie, & bioke cuppes good spede
Worthie lordes, for Gods loue of heuin
To vs leper, part of your almose dede
Than to her crie noble Troilus toke hede
Hauing pitie, nere by the place gan pas
Wher Creseid sat, not weting what she was

Than vpon him she reft vp bothe her eyen
And with a blinke it come in till his thought
That he sometime her face before had seen
But she was in such plite he knew her nought
Yet than her loke into his mind he brought
The sweete visage, and amorous blenking
Of faire Creseide, sometime his own derling.

No wonder was suppose in mind that he
Toke her figure so sone, and lo now why
The Idoll of a thing in case may be
So depe enprinted in the fantasie
That it deludeth the wittes outwardly
And so appereth in forme and like estate
Within the minde, as it was figurate.

A spark of loue than til his hart couth spring
And kindeled his bodie in a fire
With hote fewer, in swette, and trembling
Him toke, while he was readie to expire
To beare his shilde his brest begon to tire
Within a while he changed many a hewe
And neuer theles not one another knewe.

For knightely pitie and memoriell
Of faire Creseide, a girdell gan he take
A purse of gold, and many a gay iewell
And in the skirte of Creseide doun can shake
Than rode away, and not a word he spake
Pensife in haste while he came to the toune
And for great care oft lith almost fell doune

The lepre folke to Creseide than couth drawe
To see the equall distributioun
Of the almose, but whan the gold they sawe
Eche one to other priuely can roun
And saied, yon lord hath more affectioun
How euer it be, vnto yon Lazarous
Than to vs all, we knew by his almous.

What lord is yon (qd she) haue ye no scie
That doeth to vs so great humanitie
Yes (qd a leper man) I knowe him wele

Sir

Sir Troilus it is, a knight gentle and free
Whan Creseide vnderstode that it was he
Stiffer than stele there sterte a bitter stound
Thrughout her hart, & fill doun to ỳ ground

Whan she ouercome with sighing sore & sad
With many a carefull crie and colo atone
Now is my brest with stormie stounds stad
Wrapped in wo wretch full will of one
Than fell in swoun ful oft or she would sone
And euer in her swouning cryed she thus
O false Creseide, and true knight Troilus.

Thy loue, thy laude, and all thy gentilnes
I counpted small in my prosperitie
So effated I was in wantonnesse
And clambe vpon the fickell whele so hie
All faith and loue I promitted to thee
Was in thy selfe feekel and furious
O false Creseide, and true knight Troilus.

For loue of me thou kept countenaunce
Honest and chast in conuersacion
Of all women protectour and defence
Thou were, and helped their opinion
My minde on fleibly foule affection
Was enclined to lustes lecherous
Fie false Creseide, O true knight Troilus.

Louers beware, and take good hede about
Whom that ye loue, for whan ye suffer pain
I let you wit there is right fewe thrughout
Whom ye may trust to haue true loue again
Prouc whan ye woll your labour is in vain
Therefore I rede ye take them as ye finde
For they are sad as Wedercocke in winde.

Bicause I know the great vnstablenesse
Brittle as glasse, vnto my selfe I sore
Trusting in other as great stedfastnesse
As inconstant, and as vntrue of late
Though some be true, I wot right few are they
Who findeth truth, let him his lady rule
None but my selfe as now I woll accuse.

Whan this was said, with paper she sat doun
And in this maner made her testament
Here I bequeth my corse and carioun
With wormes and with Toodes to be rent
My cuppe, my clapper, and mine ornament
And all my gold, these lepre folke shal haue
Whan I am dedde, to burie me in graue.

This roiall ring set with this Rubie redd
Which Troilus in dowrie to me sende
To him again I leaue it whan I am dedde
To make my carefull death vnto him kende
Thus I conclude shortly and make an ende
My spirit I leaue to Diane where she dwels
To walke with her in wast wodes & welles.

O Diomede thou hast both broche & belte
Which Troilus gaue me in tokening
Of his true loue, & with that word she swelt
And sone a leaper man toke of the ring
Than buried her withouten tarying
To Troilus forthwith the ring he bare
And of Creseide the death he can declare.

Whan he had heard her great infirmitie
Her legacie, and lamentacioun
And how she ended in such pouertie
He swelt for wo and fell doune in a swoun
For sorowe his harte to brast was boun
Sighing full sadly saied I can no more
She was vntrue, and wo is me therefore.

Some saith he made a tõbe of marble graie
And wrote her name and superscripcioun
And laied it on her graue where as she laie
In golden letters, conteining this reasoun
Lo faire ladies, Creseide of Troie the toun
Somtime compted the floure of womanhed
Under this stone, late leper lyeth dedde.

Now worthie women in this balade short
Made for your worship and instruction
Of charitie I monish and exhorte
Winge not your loue with false discepcion
Beare in your minde this sore conclusion
Of faire Creseide, as I haue saied before
Sith she is dedde, I speake of her no more.

Thus endeth the pitifull & dolorous Testament of faire Creseide: and here foloweth the Legende of good women.

The Legend of good Women.

A Thousand times I haue heard men tell
That there is ioy in heauen and pain in hell
And I accord it wele that it is so
But nathelesse yet wot I wele also

That

That there nis non dwelling in this countre
That either hath in heauen or in hell ibe
Ne may of it none other waies witten
But as he heard saied, or found it written
For by assay there may no man it preue
But God forbede, but men should leue
Well more thing than they han seen with eye
Men shal not wenen euery thing a lie
But if himselfe it seeth, or els it doeth
For God wote thing is neuer the lesse soth
Though euery wight ne may it not ysee.
Bernarde the Monke ne saugh all parde
Than mote we to bookes that we finde
(Through which ỹ old things ben in minde
And to the doctrine of these old wise)
Yeue credence, in euery skilfull wise
That tellen of these old appreued stories
Of holines, of reignes, of victories
Of loue, of hate, and other sundrie things
Of which I may not make rehearsings
And if that old bookes were awaie
Yloren were of all remembrance the kaie.
Well ought vs than, honouren and beleue
These bookes, there we han non other preue
And as for me, though that I can but lite
On bookes for to rede I me delite
And to hem yeue I faith and full credence
And in mine harte haue hem in reuerence
So hartely, that there is game none
That fro my bookes maketh me to gone
But if it be seldome on the holie day
Saue certainly, whan ỹ the month of May
Is comen, and that I heare the foules sing
And that the floures ginnen for to spring
Farewell my booke, and my deuocion.
Now haue I than eke this condicion
That of all the floures in the Mede
Than loue I most these floures white & rede
Such that men callen Daisies in our toun
To hem haue I so great affection
As I saied erst, whan comen is the Maie
That in my bedde there daweth me no daie
That I nam vp, and walking in the Mede
To seen this floure ayenst the Sunne sprede
Whan it vp riseth early by the morowe
That blisfull sight softeneth all my sorowe
So glad am I, whan that I haue presence
Of it, to doen it all reuerence
As she that is of all floures floure
Fulfilled of all vertue and honoure
And euery like faire, and fresh of hewe
And euer I loue it, and euer like newe
And euer shall, till that mine harte die
All sweare I not of this, I will not lie
There loued no wight hotter in his like
And when that it is eue I renne blithe
Allone as euer the Sunne ginneth lithe
To seen this floure, how it will go to rest
For feare of night, so hateth she darknesse
Her chere is plainly spred in the brightnesse
Of the Sunne, for there it will vnclose
Alas that I ne had Englishe, rime, or prose
Sufficaunt, this floure to praise aright
But helpeth ye, that han conning and might
Ye louers that can make of sentement
In this case ought ye be diligent
To further me somwhat in my labour
Whether ye been with the lefe or with ỹ flour
For well I wote, that ye han here before
Of making, ropen, and lad alway the corne
And I come after, glening here and there
And am full glad, if I may finde an eare
Of any goodly word that ye han left
And though it happen me to rehearsen eft
That ye han in your fresh songes saied
Forbeareth me, and beth not euill apaied
Sith that ye see, I do it in the honour
Of loue: and eke in seruice of the flour
Whom that I serue, as I haue wit or might
She is the clerenesse and the very light
That in this darke world me wint and ledeth
ỹ hart within my sorowful brest you dredeth
And loueth so sore, that ye been verily
The maistres of my wit, and nothing I
My word, my workes, is knit so in your bond
That as an harp obeyeth to the hond
And make it soune after his fingering
Right so mowe ye out of mine hart bring
Such voice, right as you list, to laugh or plain
Be ye my guide, and Ladie soueraine
As to mine earthly God, to you I call
Both in this werke, and my sorowes all
But wherfore that I spake to yeue credence
To old stories, and doen hem reuerence
And that men musten more thing bilieue
Than men may seen at eye, or eis preue
That shal I seen, whan that I see my time
I may not all at ones speake in rime
My bulie ghost, that thursteth alway newe
To seen this flour so yong, so fresh of hewe
Constrained me, with so gredie desire
That in mine harte I felc yet the fire
That made me to rise er it were daie
And this was now the first morowe of Maie
With dredfull hart, and glad deuocion
For to been at the resurrection
Of this floure, whan that it should vnclose
Again the Sunne, that rose as redde as rose
That in the brest was of the beast that daie
That Augenores doughter ladde awaie

And

And doun on knees anon right I me sette
And as I could, this fresh floure I grette
Kneling alway, till it vnclosed was
Upon the small, soft, swete gras
That was with floures swete embrouded al
Of such swetnesse, and such odour ouer all
That for to speake of gomme, herbe, or tre
Comparison may none ymaked be
For it surmounteth plainly all odours
And of riche beautie of floures
Forgotten had the earth his poore estate
Of Winter, that him naked made and mate
And with his sworde of cloud so sore greued
Now hath the atempre sonne al that releued
That naked was, and clad it newe again
The small foules, of the season fain
That of the panter and the net been scaped
Upon the fouler, that hem made awhaped
In Winter, and destroyed had her brood
In his dispite him thought it did him good
To sing of him, and in her song dispise
The foule chorle, that for his couetise
Had hem betraied, with his Sophistrie
This was her song: The fouler we defie
And all his craft, and some songen clere
Laies of Loue, that ioy it was to here
In worshipping and prasing of her make
And for the newe blisfull Somers sake
Upon the braunches full of blosmes soft
In her delite, they tourned hem full oft
And songen, blisſed be saint Valentine
For on his day I chese you to be mine
Withouten repenting, mine harte swete
And therewithall her bekes gonnen mete
Yelding honour, and humble obeisance
To loue, and didden her other obseruance
That longeth vnto loue, and vnto nature
Construewe that as you list, I doe no cure
And tho that had doen vnkindnesse
As doeth the Tidife, for newe fangelnesse
Besought mercie of her trespasing
And humbly song her repenting
And sworen on the blosmes to be true
So that her makes would vpon hem rue
And at the last maden her acorde
All sound they Daunger for the time a lorde
Yet Pitie, through his strong gentil might
Forgaue, and made mercie passen right
Through Innocencie, and ruled Curtesie
But I ne cleape it nat Innocence folie
Ne falſe pitie, for vertue is the meane
As Ethicke saieth, in such maner I meane
And thus these foule, voide of all malice
Acorden to Loue, and lasten vice
Of hate, and song all of one acorde
Welcome Sommer, our gouernor and lord
And zephirus, and Flora gentelly
Gaue to the floures soft and tenderly
Her swote breth, and made hem for to sprede
As God and Goddesse of the flourie Mede
In which me thought I might day by day
Dwellen alway, the ioly month of May
Withouten slepe, withouten meate or drinke
Adoune full softly I gan to sinke
And leaning on my elbowe and my side
The long day I shope me for to abide
For nothing els, and I shal nat lie
But for to loke vpon the Deisie
That wel by reason men it call may
The Deisie, or els the ye of the day
The emprise, and floure of floures all
I pray to God that faire mote she fall
And all that louen floures, for her sake
But natheless, ne wene nat that I make
In prasing of the floure again the lefe
No more than of the corne again the sheefe
For as to me nis leuer none ne lother
I nam with holden yet with neuer nother
Ne I not who serueth lefe, ne who the flour
Wel brouken they her seruice or labour
For this thing is all of an other tonne
Of old story, er such thing was begonne
Whā that the sunne out the South gan West
And that this flour gan close, and gan to rest
For derknes of the night, the which she drede
Home to mine house ful swiftly I me spede
To gone to rest, and early for to rise
To seen this floure to sprede, as I deuise
And in a little herber that I haue
That benched was on turues fresh ygraue
I bad men should me my couch make
For deinty of the new Sommers sake
I bad hem strawen floures on my bedde
Whan I was laied, and had mine yen hedde
I fel a slepe, and slept an houre or two
Me met how I lay in the Medow tho
To seen this floure, that I loue so and drede
And from a ferre came walking in the Mede
The God of Loue, and in his hand a Quene
And she was clad in roiall habite grene
A fret of gold she had next her heare
And vpon that a wite croune she beare
With flourons small, and I shal nat lie
For all the world right as a Deisie
Icrouned is, with white leaues lite
So were the florons of her croune white
For of o perle fine orientall
Her white croune was ymaked all
For which the white croune, aboue the grene
Made her like a Deisie for to seme

Considred

Considred eke her fret of gold aboue
Yclothed was this mightie God of Loue
In silke embroided, full of grene greues
In which a fret of redde rose leues
The freshest lens the world was first begon
His gilt heere was crouned with a son
In stede of gold, for heuinesse and weight
Therwith me thouzt his face shone so bright
That wel vnnethes might I him behold
And in his hand, me thouzt I saw him hold
Two fierie dartes, as the gledes rede
And Angelike his winges sawe I spzede
And all be that men sain, that blinde is he
Algate me thought that he might see
For sternely on me he gan behold
So that his looking doth mine hart cold
And by the hand he held this noble Quene
Crouned with white, and clothed all in grene
So womanly, so benigne, and so meke
That in this world though ỳ men wold seke
Halfe her beautie should they not finde
In creature that formed is by kind
And therfore may I sain as thinketh me
This song in praising of this Ladie free.

Hide Absolon thy gilt tresses clere
Hester lay thou thy meknesse all adoun
Hide Jonathas all thy frendly manere
Penelopee, and Marcia Catoun
Make of your wifehode no comparisoun
Hide ye your beauties, Isoude and Helein
My lady cometh, that all this may distain.

Thy faire bodie let it not appere
Lauine, and thou Lucrece of Rome toun
And Polixene, that boughten loue so dere
And Cleopatras, with all thy passioun
Hide ye your trouth of loue, and your renoun
And thou Tisbe, that hast of loue such pain
My Lady cometh, that all this may distain.

Hero, Dido, Laodomia, all yfere
And Phillis, hanging for the Demophoun
And Canace, espied by thy chere
Hipsiphile betrayed with Jasoun
Maketh of your trouth neither boste ne soun
Nor Hipermistre, or Ariadne, ye twain
My ladie cometh, that all this may distain.

This balade may full well ysongen be
As I haue saied erst, by my ladie free
For certainly, all these mow not suffice
To appercen with my Ladie in no wise
For as the Sunne will the fire distain
So palleth all my Ladie souerain
That is so good, so faire, so debonaire
I pray to God that euer fall her faire
For nad comfort been of her presence
I had been dedde, withouten any defence
For drede of Loues wordes, and his chere
As whan time is, hereafter ye shall here.

Behind this God of Loue vpon the grene
I sawe comming of Ladies nineteene
In royall habit, a full easie pace
And after hem came of women such a trace
That sens that God Adam had made of earth
The third part of mankind, or the ferth
Ne wend I not by possibilite
Had euer in this wide world ybe
And true of loue, these women were echon
Now whether was ỳ a wonder thing or non
That right anon, as that they gonne espie
This floure, which that I clepe the Daisie
Full sodainly they stinten all at ones
And kneled doune, as it were for the nones
And songen with o voice, heale and honour
To trouth of womanhede, and to this flour
That beareth our alder prise in figuring
Her white croun beareth the witnessing
And with that worde, acompas enuiroun
They sitten hem full softly adoun
First sat the God of Loue, and sith his quene
With that white croune, clad all in grene
And sithen all the remnaunt by and be
And they were of estate, full curteisly
Ne not a worde was spoken in the place
The mountenãce of a furlong way of space

I kneling by this floure, in good entent
Abode to knowen what this people ment
As still as any stone, till at the last
This God of Loue, on me his eyen cast
And said, who kneleth there: and I answerd
Unto his asking, whan that I it herde
And saied, sir it am I, and come hun nere
And salued him (qd he) what doest thou here
So nigh mine owne floure, so boldly
It were better worthy truely
A worme to nighen nere my floure than thou.

And why sir (qd I) and it like you
For thou (qd he) art therto nothing able
It is my relike, digne and delitable
And thou my fo, and all my folke werriest
And of mine old seruants thou missaiest
And hinderest hem, with thy translacion
And lettest folke from her deuocion
To serue me, and holdest it folie
To serue Loue, thou maiest it nat denie
For in plain text, withouten nede of glose
Thou hast translated the Romaunt of ỳ rose
That is an hereSie ayenst my lawe

And

And makeſt wiſe folke fro me withdraw
And of Creſeide, thou haſt ſaid as the liſt
That maketh men to women leſſe triſt
That ben as trew as euer was any ſtele
Of thine anſwere auile the right wele
For though thou renied haſt my lay
As other wretches haue done many a day
By ſeint Uenus, that my mother is
If that thou liue, thou ſhalt repenten this
So cruelly, that it ſhal wel be ſene
Tho ſpake this lady, clothed all in grene
And ſaid, God right of your curteſy
Ye muſte herken if he can reply
Ayenſt all this, that ye haue to him meued
A God ne ſhould nat be thus agreued
But of his deite he ſhal be ſtable
And therto gracious and merciable
And if ye nere a God, that knowen all
Than might it be, as I you tellen ſhall
This man to you may falſly ben accuſed
That as by right, him ought ben excuſed
For in your court is many a loſengour
And many a queint totoler accuſour
That tabouren in your eares many a ſoun
Right after her imaginacioun
To haue your daliaunce, and for enuy
Theſe ben the cauſes, and I ſhal nat lie
Enuy is lauender of the court alway
For ſhe ne parteth neither night ne day
Out of the houſe of Cefar, thus ſaith Dant
Who ſo that goeth algate ſhe wol nat want
And eke peraunter this man is nice
He might done it, geſſing no malice
But for he uſeth things for to make
Him recketh nought of what mater he take
Or him was boden make thilke twey
Of ſome perſon, and durſt it nat withſey
Or him repenteth vtterly of this
He ne hath nat done ſo greuouſly amis
To tranſlaten that old clerkes writen
As though that he of malice would enditen
Deſpite of loue, and had himſelfe it wrought
This ſhuld a right wiſe lord haue in his thought
And nat be like tiraunts of Lombardy
That han no reward but at tirannyy
For he that king or lord is naturel
Him ought nat be tiraunt ne cruel
As is a fermour, to done the harme he can
He muſt thinke it is his liege man
And is his treſour, and his gold in cofer
This is the ſentence of the Philoſopher
A king to kepe his lieges in iuſtice
Withouten dout that is his office
All wol he kepe his lords in her degre
As it is right and ſkil, that they be
Enhaunſed and honoured, and moſt dere
For they ben halfe goddes in this world here
Yet mote he done both right to poore and rich
All be that her eſtate be nat both ylich
And haue of poore folke compaſſion
For lo, the gentil kind of the lion
For whan a flie offendeth him or biteth
He with his taile alway the flie ſmiteth
All eaſely, for of his gentry
Him deigneth nat to wreke him on a flie
As doeth a curre, or elſ another beeſt
In noble corage ought ben areeſt
And waien euery thing by equite
And euer haue regard vnto his own degre
For ſir, it is no maiſtry for a lord
To dampne a man, without anſwere of word
And for a lord, that is ful foule to vſe
And it ſo be, he may him nat excuſe
But aſketh mercy with a dredeful hart
And profereth him, right in his bare ſhert
To ben right at your own iudgement
Than ought a God by ſhort auiſement
Conſider his own honour, and his treſpace
For ſith no cauſe of death lieth in this caſe
You ought to ben the lightlier merciable
Letteth your ire, and beth ſomwhat tretable
The man hath ſerued you of his connings
And forthred wel your law in his makings
Al be it that he can not wel endite
Yet hath he made leud folke delite
To ſerue you, in preiſing of your name
He made the boke, that hight the houſe of fame
And eke the death of Blaunch the Ducheſſe
And the parlament of Foules, as I geſſe
And all the loue of Palamon and Arcite
Of Thebes, though the ſtory is knowen lite
And many an himpne, for your holy daies
That highten balades, rondels, vireliaies
And for to ſpeke of other holineſſe
He hath in proſe tranſlated Boece
And made the like alſo of ſaint Cecile
He made alſo, gone is a great while
Origenes vpon the Maudelaine
Him ought now to haue the leſſe paine
He hath made many a ley, and many a thing
Now as ye be a God, and eke a king
Of your Alceſte, whilom quene of Trace
I aſke you this man right of your grace
That ye him neuer hurt in all his liue
And he ſhal ſwearen to you, and that blithe
He ſhal neuer more agilten in this wiſe
But ſhal maken as ye wol deuiſe
Of women trew in louing all her life
Where ſo ye wol, of maiden or of wife
And forthren you, as much as he miſſeide

Or in the Rose, or elis in Creseide
The God of Loue answerd her thus anon
Madame (qd. he) it is so long agon
That I you knew, so charitable and trew
That neuer yet, sens the world was new
To me ne found I better none than ye
Ik that I wol saue my degre
I may nor wil nat werne your request
All lieth in you, doth with him as you lest
I all forgeue without en lenger space
For who so geueth a yest or doth a grace
Do it betime, his thanke shal be the more
And demeth ye what he shal do therfore
Go thanke now my lady here (qd. he)
I rose, and doun I set me on my kne
And said thus: Madame, the God aboue
For yeld thou that the God of Loue
Haue maked me his wrath to forgeue
And grace so long for to liue
That I may know sothly what ye be
That haue me holpen, and put in this degre
But trewly I wend, as in this caas
Nought haue a gilt, ne done to loue trespas
For why a trew man withouten drede
Hath nat to parten with a theues bede
Ne a trew louer ought me nat to blame
Though that I spoke a false louer some shame
They ought rather with me for to hold
For that I of Creseide wrote or told
Or of the Rose, what so mine author ment
Algate God wote it was mine entent
To forthren trouth in loue, and it cherice
And to ben ware fro falsenesse and fro vice
By which ensample, this was my mening
And she answerd, let be thine arguing
For loue ne wol not counterpleted be
In right ne wrong, and lerne that of me
Thou hast thy grace, and hold the right therto
Now wol I saine what penaunce thou shalt do
For thy trespace, vnderstand it here
Thou shalt while that thou liuest yere by yere
The most party of thy time spend
In making of a glorious legend
Of good women, maidens, and wiues
That weren trew in louing all her liues
And tel of false men that hem betraien
That all her life ne do nat but assaien
How many women they may done a shame
For in your world, that is now hold a game
And though thee like nat a louer be
Speke wel of loue, this penaunce yeue I the
And to the God of loue I shal so pray
That he shal charge his seruants by any way
To forthren the, and wel thy labour quite
Go now thy way, this penaunce is but lite
And when this boke is made, yeue it the Quene
On my behalfe, at Eltham, or at Shene
The God of loue gan smile, and than he said
Wost thou (qd. he) wher this be wife or maid
Or Quene, or countesse, or of what degre
That hath so litell penaunce yeuen the
That hast deserued sore for to smart
But pite renneth sone in gentle hart
That maist thou sene, she kitheth what she is
And I answerd, nay sir so haue I blis
No more, but that I se wel she is good
That is a trewe tale by mine hood
(Qd. Loue) and thou knowest well parde
If it be so that thou auise the
Hast thou nat in a boke in thy chest
The great goodnes of the quene Alceste
That turned was vnto a daisie
She that for her husbond chese to die
And ske to gone to hell, rather than he
And Hercules relcued her parde
And brought her out of hel againe to blis
And I answerd againe, and said yes
Now know I her, and is this good Alcest
The Daisy, and mine owne harts rest
Now scie I wel the goodnesse of this wife
That both after her death, and in her life
Her great bounte doubleth her renoun
Wel hath she quit me mine affection
That I haue to her floure the daisie
No wonder is, though Ioue her stellifie
As telleth Agaton, for her great goodnesse
Her white corowne beareth of it witnesse
For also many vertues had she
As smal florouns in her corowne be
In remembraunce of her, and in honour
Cibilla made the daisie and the flour
Icrowned all with white, as men may se
And Mars yaue to her a corown reed parde
In stede of Rubies set among the white
Therwith this quene wore reed for shame alite
Whan she was praised so in her presence
Than said Loue, a ful great negligence
Was it to the, that ilke time thou made
(Hide Absolon thy tresses) in balade
That thou forgette her in thy song to sette
Sith that thou art so greatly in her dette
And wost wel that kalender is she
To any woman, that wol louer be
For she taught all the craft of trew louing
And namely of wifehood the liuing
And all the bounds that she ought kepe
Thy litel witte was thilke time aslepe
But now I charge the vpon thy life
That in thy legend thou make of this wife
Whan thou hast other smale ymade before

And fare now wel I charge thee no more
But er I go, thus much I wol the tell
Ne shal no trew louer come in hell
These other ladies sitting here a row
Ben in my balade, if thou const hem know
And in my bokes, all thou shalt hem find
Haue hem now in thy legend all in mind
I meane of hem that ben in thy knowing
For here ben twenty thousand mo sitting
Than thou knowest, good women all
And trew of loue, for ought that may befall
Make the metres of hem as the lest
I mote gone home, the sunne draweth west
To paradis, with all this company
And serue alway the fresh Daisy
At Cleopatras I wol that thou begynne
And so forth, and my loue so shalt thou winne
For let se now what man that louer be
Wol done so strong a paine for loue as she
I wote wel that thou mayst nat all it ryme
That such louers did in her tyme
It were to long to reden and to here
Suffiseth me thou make in this mancre
That thou reherce of all her life the greate
After these old authours listen for to treat
For who so shal so many a story tel
Sey shortly or he shal to long dwel
And with that word my bokes gan I take
And right thus on my legend gan I make

¶ Thus endeth the Prologue.

¶ Here beginneth the legend of Cleopatras Quene of Egipt.

After the deth of Ptholome the king
That all Egipt had in his governing
Reigned his Quene Cleopatras
Til on a time befel there such a caas
That out of Rome was sent a senatour
For to conquren realms and honour
Unto the toune of Rome, as was usaunce
To haue the world at her obeisaunce
And soth to say, Antonius was his name
So fil it, as fortune him ought a shame
Whan he was fallen in prosperite
Rebel unto the toun of Rome is he
And ouer all this, the suster of Cesare
He left her faitly, er that she was ware
And would algates han another wife
For which he toke with Rome, and Cesar strife
Natheless, for soth this ilke Senatour
Was a ful worthy gentil werriour
And of his deth it was ful great damage
But loue had brought this man in such a rage
And him so narow bounden in his laas
And all for the loue of Cleopatras
That all the world he set at no value
Him thought there was nothing to him so due
As Cleopatras, for to loue and serue
Him thought that in armes for to sterue
In the defence of her, and of her right
This noble queue, eke loued so this knight
Through his desert, and for his chevalrie
As certainly, but if that bokes lie
He was of person, and of gentilnesse
And of discretion, and of hardinesse
Worthy to any wight that liuen may
And she was faire, as is the rose in May
And for to maken short is the best
She wor his wife, and had him as her lest
The wedding and the feest to deuise
To me that haue ytake such empryse
And so many a story for to make
It were to long, lest that I should slake
Of thing that beareth more effect and charge
For men may ouer lade a shippe or barge
And forthy, to effect than wol I skippe
And al the remnaunt, I wol let it slippe
Octauian, that wood was of this dede
Shope him an hoost on Antony to lede
All utterly, for his distruction
With stout Romaines, cruel as Lion
To ship they went, and thus I let hem saile
Antonius was ware, and wol nat faile
To meten with these Romeines, if he may
Take eke his rede, and both upon a day
His wife and he, and all his host forth went
To ship anone, no lenger they ne stent
And in the see it happed them to mete
Up goeth the trumpe, and for to shout and shete
And painem hem to set on with the timme
With grisly soune out goeth the great gumme
And hertely they hurtlen in all at ones
And fro the top, doun cometh the great stones
In goth the grapenel so ful of crokes
Among the ropes ran the shering hokes
In with the polaxe preasseth he and he
Behind the mast, beginneth he to fle
And out againe, and driueth him ouer the borde
He sticketh him upon his speares orde
He rent the saile with hokes like a sith
He bringeth the ruppe, & biddeth hem be blith
He poureth pecsen upon the hatches slider
With pottes ful of lime, they gone together

And thus the long day in fight they spend
Til at the last, as euery thing hath end
Antony is shent, and put him to the flight
And all his folke to go, that best go might
Fleeth eke the Queene, with all her purple sayle
For strokes, which that went as thick as hayle
No wonder was, he might it nat endure
And whan that Antony saw that auenture
Alas (qd. he) the day that I was borne
My worship in this day thus haue I lorne
And for dispaire, out of his witte he start
And rose himselfe anon through out the hart
Er that he ferther went out of the place
His wife, that could of Cesar haue no grace
To Egypt is fled, for drede and for distresse
But herkeneth ye that speken of kindnesse
Ye men that falsly swearen many an oth
That ye wol die, if that your loue be wroth
Here may ye sene of women such a trouth
This woful Cleopatre hath made such routh
That there nis tong none that may it tell
But on the morow she wol no lenger dwell
But made her subtel werkmen make a shrine
Of all the rubies and the stones fine
In all Egypt, that she could espy
And put ful the shrine of spicery
And lette the corse enbaume, and forth she fette
This deed corse, and in the shrine it shette
And next the shrine a pit than doth she graue
And all the serpents that she might haue
She put hem in that graue, and thus she seid
Now loue, to whom my sorowful hart obeid
So ferforthly, that fro that blisful hour
That I you swore, to ben all freely your
I meane you, Antonius my knight
That neuer waking in the day or night
Ye nere out of mine harts remembraunce
For wele or wo, for caroll, or for daunce
And in my selfe, this couenant made I tho
That right such as ye felten wele or wo
As ferforth as it in my power lay
Unreprouable vnto my wifehood aie
The same would I felen, life or death
And thilke couenaunt, while me lasteth breath
I wol fulfil, and that shal well be sene
Was neuer vnto her lone a trewer quene
And with that word, naked with ful good hart
Among the serpents in the pitte she start
And there she chese to haue her burying
Anon the neders gonne her for to sting
And she her death receiueth with good chere
For loue of Antony that was her so dere
And this is storial, soth it is no fable
Nowher I find a man thus trew and stable
And wol for loue his death so freely take
I pray God let our heeds neuer ake.

¶ Here endeth the Legend of Cleopatras, and here foloweth the legend of Thisbe of Babilon.

AT Babilon whilom as it thus
The which toun the quene Semiramus
Let dichen all about, and walles make
Ful hie, of hard tiles well ybake
There were dwelling in this noble toun
Two lords, which that were of great renoun
And woneden so nigh vpon a grene
That there nas but a stone wal hem bitwene
As oft in great tounes is the wonne
And soth to saine, that one man had a sonne
Of al that lond, one of the lustiest,
That other had a doughter, the fairest
That eastward in the world was tho dwelling
The name of euerich, gan to other spring
By women that were neighbours about
For in that countre yet withouten dout
Maidens ben ykept for iealousy
Ful straut, lest they diden some foly
This yong man was cleped Piramus
Thisbe hight the maid (Naso saith thus)
And thus by report, was her name ybone
That as they wox in age, so wox her loue
And certain, as by reason of her age
Ther might haue ben betwixt hem mariage
But that her fathers nold it nat assent
And both in loue ylike sore they brent
That none of all her frends might it lette
But priuely somtime yet they mette
By sleight, and spaken some of her desire
As wry the glede, and hotter is the fire
Forbid a loue, and it is ten times so wood
This wal, which that bitwixt hem both stood
Was clouen a two, right fro the top adoun
Of old time, of his foundation
But yet this clift was so narow and lite
It was nat sene, dere inough a mite
But what is that, that loue can not espie
Ye louers two, if that I shal nat lie
Ye founden first this litle narow clift
And with a sound, as soft as any shrift
They let her words through the clift pace
And tolden, while that they stoden in the place
All her complaint of loue, and all her wo
At euery time whan they durst so
On that ons side of the wal stode he

And

And on that other side stode Thisbe
The ſwete ſoune of other to receiue
And thus her wardeins would they diſceiue
And euery day this wal they would threte
And wiſh to God, that it were doun ybete
Thus would they ſaine, alas thou wicked wall
Through thine enuy, thou vs letteſt all
Why nilt thou cleaue, or fallen all a two
Or at the leſt, but thou wouldeſt ſo
Yet wouldeſt thou but ones let vs mete
Or ones that we might kiſſen ſwete
Than were we cured of our cares cold
But natheleſſe, yet be we to the hold
In as muth as thou ſuffreſt for to gone
Our wordes through thy lime and eke thy ſtone
Yet ought we with the ben wel apaid
And whan theſe idel wordes weren ſaid
The cold wal they wolden kiſſe of ſtone
And take her leaue, and forth they wolden gone
And this was gladly in the euentide
Or wonder erly, leſt men it eſpide
And long time, they wrought in this manere
Til on a day, whan Phebus gan to clere
Aurora with the ſtremes of her hete
Had dried vp the dew of herbes wete
Unto this cliff, as it was wont to be
Come Piramus, and after come Thisbe
And plighten trouth, fully in her fay
That like ſame night to ſteale away
And to begile her wardeins euerichone
And forth out of the Cite for to gone
And for the fields ben ſo brode and wide
For to mete in o place at o tide
They ſet marks, her metings ſhould be
There king Ninus was grauen, vnder a tre
For old paiems, that idols heried
Uſeden tho in fields to ben buried
And faſt by this graue was a wel
And ſhortly of this tale for to tel
This couenaunt was affirmed wonder faſt
And long hem thought that the ſonne laſt
That it nere gone vnder the ſee adoun
This Thisbe hath ſo great affection
And ſo great liking Piramus to ſe
That whan ſhe ſaw her time might be
At night ſhe ſtale away ful priuely
With her face ywimpled ſubtelly
For all her frends (for to ſaue her trouth)
She hath forſake alas, and that is routh
That euer woman would be ſo trew
To truſten man, but ſhe the bet him knew
And to the tre ſhe goeth a ful good pace
For loue made her ſo hardy in this caſe
And by the welle, adoun ſhe gan her dreſſe
Alas, than cometh a wild Lioneſſe
Out of the wode, withouten more areſt
With blody mouth, of ſtraungling of a beeſt
To drinken of the wel there as ſhe ſat
And whan that Thisbe had eſpied that
She rift her vp, with a ful drery hart
And in a caue, with dredful foot ſhe ſtart
For by the moone ſhe ſaw it wel withall
And as ſhe ran, her wimple let ſhe fall
And toke none hede, ſo ſore ſhe was awhaped
And eke ſo glad that ſhe was eſcaped
And thus ſhe ſat, and lurketh wonder ſtill
Whan that this Lioneſſe hath dronke her fill
About the wel gan ſhe for to wond
And right anon the wimple gan ſhe find
And with her blody mouth it all to rent
Whan this was done, no lenger ſhe ne ſtent
But to the wood her way than hath ſhe nome
And at the laſt this Piramus is come
But all to long (alas) at home was he
The moone ſhone, men might wel yſe
And in his way, as that he come ful faſt
His eyen to the ground adoun he caſt
And in the ſond, as he beheld adoun
He ſaw the ſteppes brode of a Lioun
And in his hart he ſodainly agroſe
And pale he wext, therwith his hart aroſe
And nere he came, and found the wimple torne
Alas (qd. he) the day that I was borne
This o night wol both vs louers ſle
How ſhould I aſken mercy of Thisbe
Whan I am he that haue you ſlain, alas
My biding hath you ſlain in this caas
Alas, to bidde a woman gone by night
In place there as peril fallen might
And I ſo ſlow, alas I ne had be
Here in this place, a furlong way er ye
Now what Lioun that is in this foreſt
My body mote he rent, or what beſt
That wild is, gnawen mote he mine hart
And with that word, he to the wimple ſtart
And kiſt it oft, and wept on it ful ſore
And ſaid wimple alas, there nis no more
But thou ſhalt kele as wel the blode of me
As thou haſt kelt the bleding of Thisbe
And with that word, he ſmote him to the hart
The blode out of the wound as brode ſtart
As water, whan the conduit broken is.
Now Thisbe, which that wiſt nat this
But ſitting in her drede, ſhe thought thus
If it ſo fal that my Piramus
Be comen hither, and may me nat ſpind
He may me holden falſe, and eke vnkind
And out ſhe cometh, and after him gan eſpien
Both with her hart, and with her eien
And thought, I wol him tellen of my drede

Both of the lioneſſe and of my dede
And at the laſt her loue than hath ſhe found
Beating with his heeles on the ground
Al blody, and therwithal abacke ſhe ſtart
And like the wawes, quappe gan her hart
And pale as box ſhe wox, and in a throw
Auiſed her, and gan him wel to know
That it was Piramus her hart dere
Who could write which a deedly chere
Hath Thiſbe now, and how her heere ſhe rent
And how ſhe gan her ſelfe to turment
And how ſhe lieth and ſwoumeth on the ground
And how ſhe wept of teers ful his wound
How medleth ſhe his blod, with her complaint
How with her blood, her ſeluen gan ſhe paint
How clippeth ſhe the deed coꝛſe, alas
How doth this woful Thiſbe in this caas
How kiſſeth ſhe his froſty mouth ſo cold
Who hath don this, and who hath ben ſo bolde
To ſleen my leſe, o ſpeke Piramus
I am thy Thiſbe, that the calleth thus
And therwithall ſhe lifteth vp his heed
This woful man that was nat fully deed
Whan that he herd the name of Thiſbe crien
On her he caſt his heuy deedly eyen
And doun again, and yeldeth vp the ghoſt
Thiſbe riſt vp, without noiſe oꝛ boſt
And ſaw her wimple and his empty ſheth
And eke his ſwoꝛd, that him hath don to deth
Than ſpake ſhe thus, thy woful hand (qd. ſhe)
Is ſtrong inough in ſuch a werke to me
Foꝛ loue ſhal yeue me ſtrength and hardineſſe
To make my wound large inough I geſſe
I wol the folowen deed, and I wol be
Felaw, and cauſe eke of thy deth (qd. ſhe)
And though that nothing ſaue the deth only
Might the fro me depart trewly
Thou ſhalt no moꝛe depart now fro me
Than fro the death, foꝛ I wol go with the
And now ye wꝛetched iclous fathers our
We that weren whilom childꝛen your
We pꝛaien you, withouten moꝛe enuy
That in o graue we moten lie
Sens loue hath bꝛought vs this pitous end
And ꝛightwiſe God, to euery louer ſend
That loueth trewly moꝛe pꝛoſperite
Than euer had Piramus and Thiſbe
And let no gentil woman her aſſure
To putten her in ſuch an auenture
But God foꝛbid but a woman can
Ben as true and louing as a man
And foꝛ my part, I ſhal anon it kith
And with that woꝛd, his ſwoꝛd ſhe toke ſwith
That warm was of her loues blood, and hote,
And to the hart ſhe her ſeluen ſmote

And thus are Thiſbe and Piramus ago
Of trew men I find but few mo
In all my bokes, ſaue this Piramus
And therfoꝛe haue I ſpoken of him thus
Foꝛ it is deunty to vs men to find
A man that can in loue be trew and kind
Here may ye ſeen, what louer ſo he be
A woman dare, and can as wel as he.

¶ Here endeth the Legend of Thiſbe of Babilon, and here folowеth the Legend of Dido Queene of Carthage.

Loꝛy and honour Virgile Mantuan
Be to thy name, and I ſhal as I can
Folow thy lanterne, as thou goeſt bifoꝛne
How Eneas to Dido was foꝛſwoꝛne
In thine Eneide, and Naſo wol I take
The tenour and the great effects make
Whan Troy bꝛought was to diſtruction
By Grekes ſleight, and namely by Sinon
Faining the hoꝛſe offred vnto Minerue
Thꝛugh which that many a Troian muſt ſterue
And Hectoꝛ had after his death apered
And fire ſo wood, it might nat ben ſtered
In all the noble tour of Ilion
That of the cite was the cheſe dongeon
And all the countre was ſo low ybꝛought
And Priamus the king foꝛdone and nought
And Eneas was charged by Venus
To flien away, he toke Aſcanius
That was his ſon, in his right hand and fledde
And on his back he bare, and with him ledde
His old father, cleped Anchiſes
And by the way his wife Creuſa he leeſe
And mokel ſoꝛow had he in his mind
Er that he could his felawſhip find
But at the laſt, whan he had hem found
He made him redy in a certain ſtound
And to the ſee ful faſt he gan him hie
And ſaileth foꝛth, with all his company
Toward Italie, as wold deſtenee
But of his auentures in the ſee
Nis nat to purpoſe foꝛ to ſpeke of here
Foꝛ it accoꝛdeth nat to my matere
But as I ſaid of him and of Dido
Shal be my tale, til that I haue do
So long he ſailed in the ſalt ſee
Til in Liby vnneth arriued he
So was he with the tempeſt all to ſhake

And

And whan that he the hauen had ytake
He had a knight was called Achatees
And him of all his felowship he chees
To gone with him, the countrey for tespie
He toke with him no more companie
But forth they gon, and left his shippes ride
His feere and he, withouten any gude.
So long he walketh in this wildernesse
Till at the last he met an huntresse
A bowe in honde, and arowes had she
Her clothes cutted were vnto the knee
But she was yet the faireſt creature
That euer was yformed by nature
And Eneas and Achates she gret
And thus she to hem spake, whā she hem met
Sawe ye (qd she) as ye han walked wide,
Any of my sustren walke you beside
With any wilde Bore, or other beast
That they haue hunted to in this forest
Iclucked vp, with arowes in her caas
Nay sothly Lady (qd this Eneas)
But by thy beautie, as it thinketh me
Thou mightest neuer earthly woman be
But Phebus sister art thou, as I gesse
And if so be that thou be a goddesse
Haue mercie on our labour and our wo.
I nam no Goddesse sothly (qd she) tho
For maidens walken in this countre here
With arowes and with bow, in this manere
This is the realme of Libie, there ye been
Of which that Dido ladie is and Queene
And shortly tolde all the occasion
Why Dido came into that region
Of which as now me listeth nat to rime
It needeth nat, it were but losse of time
For this is all and some, it was Venus
His own mother, that spake with him thus
And to Carthage she bad he should him dight
And vanished anon out of his sight
I could folowe word for word Vergile
But it would lasten all to long while
This noble Queene, that cleped was Dido
That whilom was the wife of Sitheo
That fairer was than the bright sonne
This noble toune of Carthage hath begonne
In which she reigneth in so great honour
That she was holde of all Queenes flour
Of gentillesse, of fredome, and of beautie
That well was him, that might ones see
Of kings and lordes so desired
That all the world her beautie had yfired
She stode so well in euery wightes grace.
Whan Eneas was come vnto the place
Vnto the maister temple of all the toun
There Dido was in her deuocioun
Full priuely his way than hath he nome
Whan he was in the large temple come
I cannot saine, if that it be possible
But Venus had him maked inuisible
Thus saieth the booke, withouten any lees
And whan this Eneas and Achates
Hadden in this temple been ouer all
Than found they depainted on a wall
How Troie and all the land destroyed was
Alas that I was borne (qd Eneas)
Through the world our shame is kid so wide
Now it is painted vpon euery side
We that weren in prosperitie
Been now disclaundred, and in such degree
No lenger for to liuen I ne kepe
And with that word, he brast out for to wepe
So tenderly, that routh it was to seen
This fresh ladie, of the citie Queene
Stode in the temple, in her estate royall
So richely, and eke so faire withall
So yong, so lustie, with her eyen glade
That if that God, that heauen & earth made
Would haue a loue, for beautie and goodnes
And womenhede, trouth, and semelinesse
Whom should he louen, but this ladie swete,
There nis no woman to him halfe so mete
Fortune, that hath the world in gouernaunce
Hath sodainly brought in so newe a chaunce
That neuer was there yet so frened a caas
For all the company of Eneas
Which that we wende haue lorne in the see
Ariued is nought ferre fro that citie
For which the greatest of his lordes, some
By auenture been to the citie come
Vnto that same temple for to seke
The Queene, and of her socour her beseke
Such renome was ther sprōg of her goodnes.
And whan they had told all her distresse
And all her tempest and all her hard caas
Vnto the Queene appeared Eneas
And openly beknewe that it was he
Who had ioy than, but his meine
That hadden found her lord, her gouernour.
The queene saw they did him such honour
And had heard oft of Eneas, er tho
And in her harte had routh and wo
That euer such a noble man as he
Shall been disherited in such degree
And saw the man that he was like a knight
And sufficaunt of person and of might
And like to been a verie gentilman
And well his words he beset can
And had a noble visage for the nones
And formed well of brawne and of bones
And after Venus had such faireselle

That no man might be halfe so faire I gesse
And well a lord him semed for to be
And for he was a straunger, somwhat she
Liked him the bet, as God doe bote
To some folke, often newe thing is sote
Anon her harte hath pitie of his wo
And with pitie, Loue came also
And thus for pitie and for gentilnesse
Refreshed must he been of his distresse

She saied: certes, that she sorie was
That he hath had such peril and such caas
And in her frendly speach, in this manere
She to him spake, and saied as ye may here.

Be ye nat Venus sonne and Anchises
In good faith, all the worship and encrees
That I may goodly doen you, ye shall haue
Your shippes and your meine shall I saue
And many a gentill worde she spake him to
And commaunded her messangers to go
The same daie withouten any faile
His shippes for to seke, and hem vitaile
Full many a beast she to the shippes sent
And with the wine she gan hem to present
And to her roiall paleis she her spedde
And Eneas alway with her she ledde

What nedeth you the feastes to discriue
He neuer better at ease was in his liue
Full was the feast of deintics and richesse
Of instruments, of song, and of gladnesse
And many an amorous loking and deuise.

This Eneas is come to Paradise
Out of the swolowe of hell, and thus in ioy
Remembreth him of his estate in Troy
To daunsing chambres full of paraments
Of riche beddes, and of pauements
This Eneas is ledde after the meate
And with the quene whan that he had seate
And spices parted, and the wine agon
Unto his chamber was he lad anon
To take his ease, and for to haue his rest
With all his folke, to doen what so hem lest.

There nas courser well ybridled none
Ne stede for the Justing well to gone
Ne large paulfrey, easie for the nones
Ne iowell fret full of rich stones
Ne sackes full of gold, of large wight
Ne Rubie none that shineth by night
Ne gentill hauten faukon heronere
Ne hounde for harte, wilde bore, or Dere
Ne cuppe of gold, with florens newe yshette
That in the londe of Libie may been gette
That Dido ne hath Eneas it sent
And all is paied, what that he hath spent
Thus cã this honorable quene her gestes call
As she that can in fredome passen all

Eneas lothely eke, without lets
Hath sent to his shippes by Achates
After his sonne, and after rithe things
Both ceptre, clothes, broches, and eke ringes
Some for to weare, and some to present
To her, that all these noble things him sent
And bad his sonne how that he should make
The presenting, and to the quene it take

Repaired is this Achates again
And Eneas full blisfull is and fain
To seen his yong sonne Ascanius
For to him it was reported thus
That Cupido, that is the God of Loue
At prayer of his mother hie aboue
Had the liknesse of the childe ytake
This noble Queene enamoured for to make
On Eneas, but of that scripture
Be as be may, I make of it no cure
but soth is this, ỹ queen hath made such chere
Unto this child, that wonder to here
And of the present that his father sent
She thanked him oft in good entent.

Thus is this quene in plesaunce and ioy
With all these newe lustie folke of Troy
And of the deedes hath she more enquired
Of Eneas, and all the storie lered
Of Troie, and all the long day they twaine
Entenden for to speake and for to plaie
Of which there gan to breden such a fire
That selie Dido hath now such desire
With Eneas her newe gest to deale
That she lost her hewe and eke her heale

Now to the effect, now to the fruite of all
Why I haue told this storie, and tellen shall.

Thus I beginne, it fell vpon a night
Whan that the Mone vpreised had her light
This noble Quene vnto her rest went
She sighed sore, and gon her selfe tourment
she worketh, waloweth, & made many braied
As doen these louers, as I haue heard saied
And at the last, vnto her suster Anne
she made her mone, & tizt thus spake she than

Now dere suster mine, what may it be
That me agasteth in my dreame (qd she)
This ilke newe Troian is so in my thought
For that me thinketh he is so well ywrought
And eke so likely to been a man
And therwith so mikell good he can
That all my loue and life lyeth in his cure
Haue ye nat heard him tell his auenture

Now certes Anne, if that ye rede me
I woll fain to him ywedded be
This is the effect, what should I more feine
In him lyeth all, to doe me liue or deine.

Her suster Anne, as she that could her good

Saied

Said as her thought, & somdele it withstode
But hereof was so long a sermoning
It were to long to make rehearsing
But finally, it may not be withstond
Loue woll loue, for no wight woll it wond
The dawning vp rist, out of the see
This amorous Quene chargeth her meine
The nettes dresse, and speres brode and kene
In hunting woll this lustie fresh Queene
So pricketh her this newe tolie wo
To hoyse is all her lustie folke ygo
Unto the court the hounds been ybrought
And vp on courser swift as any thought
Her yong knightes heuen all about
And of her women eke an huge rout
Upon a thicke palfray, paper white
With sadell redde, enbrouded with delite
Of golde the barres, vp enbosted high
Sate Dido, all in golde and perrey wrigh
And she is faire, as is the bright morow
That healeth sick folkes of nightes sorowe
Upon a courser, startling as the fire
Wen might tourne him with a little wire
But Eneas, like Phebus to deuise
So was he fresh araied in his wise
The fomie bridell, with the bitte of gold
Gouerneth he right as himselfe hath would
And forth this noble Queene, this lady ride
On hunting, with this Troian by her side
The herde of Hartes, founden is anon
With hey gobet, prick thou, let gon, let gon
Why nill the Lion comen or the Beare
ỳ I might him ones meten with this speare
Thus saien this yong folke, and vp they kill
The wilde Hartes, and haue hem at her will
Emong all this, to romblen gan the heuen
The Thonder rored with a grisly steuen
Doun come the rain, with haile & slet so fast
With heauens fire, that made so sore agast
This noble Quene, and also her meine
That eche of hem was glad away to flie
And shortly fro the tempest her to saue
She fled her selfe, into a little caue
And with her went this Eneas also
I not with hem if there went any mo
The author maketh of it no mencion
And here began the depe affection
Bitwixt hem two this was the first morowe
Of her gladnesse, and ginning of her sorowe
For there hath Eneas ykneled so
And told her all his hurt and all his wo
And swore so depe to her to be true
For well or wo, and change for no newe
And as a false louer, so well can plain
That selie Dido rewed on his pain
And toke him for husbond, & became his wife
For euermore, while that hem last like
And after this, whan that the tempest stent
With mirth out as they came, home they wet
The wicked fame vp rose, and that anon
How Eneas hath with the Queene ygon
Into the caue, and demed as hem lift
And whan ỳ king (that Yarbas hight) it wist
As he that had her loued euer his life
And wowed her to haue to his wife
Such sorow as he hath maked, & such chere
It is a routhe and pitie for to here
But as in loue, alsale it happeth so
That one shall laughen at an others wo
Now laugheth Eneas, and is in toy
And more richesse, than euer was in Troie.
O selie woman, full of innocencie
Full of pitie, of trueth, and continencie
What maked you to men to trusten so
Haue ye such routh vpon her fained wo
And haue such olde ensamples you before
Se ye nat all how they been forsworne
Where se ye one, that he ne hath laste his lefe
Or been vnkind, or done her some mischefe
Or pilled her, or bosted of his dede
Ye may as well it seen, as ye may rede
Take hede now of this great gentilman
This Troian, that so well her please can
That saueth him so true and obeising
So gentill, and so prime of his doing
And can so well doen all his obeisaunce
To her, at feastes and at daunce
And whan she goeth to temple, & home again
And fasten till he hath his ladie sein
And bearen in his deuises for her sake
Not I nat what, and songs would he make
Justen, and doen of armes many things
Send her letters, tokens, broches, & rings.
Now herkeneth how he shal his lady serue
There as he was in peril for to sterue
For hunger, and for mischefe in the see
And desolate, and fledde fro his countree
And all his folke with tempest all to driuen
She hath her body and eke her realme yeuen
Into his hand, there she might haue been
Of other land than of Carthage a Queene
And liued in ioy inough, what wold ye more.
This Eneas, that hath thus depe ywore
Is werie of his craft within a throwe
The hote earnest is all ouer blowe
And priuely he doeth his shippes dight
And shapeth him to steale away by night.
This Dido hath suspection of this
And thought well that it was all amis
For in his bed he lyeth a night and siketh

She

She asketh him anon, what him misliketh
My dere hart, which that I loue moste
Certes (qd he) this night my fathers ghost
Hath in my slepe, me so sore tormented
And eke Mercurie his message hath pretēted
That nede to the conquest of Itaile
My destenie is sone for to saile
For which me thinketh, brosten is mine hart
Ther with his false teares out they start
And taketh her within his armes two.
Is that in earnest (qd she) woll ye so
Haue ye nat swore, to wife me to take
Alas, what woman woll ye of me make,
I am a gentill woman, and a Quene
Ye woll not fro your wife thus foule flene
That I was borne alas, what shall I do,
To tellen in short, this noble Quene Dido
She seketh halowes, and doeth Sacrifice
She kneleth, crieth, that routh is to deuise
Coniureth him, and profereth him to be
His thrall, his seruaunt, in the best degre
She falleth him to fote, and swouneth there
Discheuele with her bright gilt heere
And saith, haue mercy, let me with you ride
These lordes, which that wommen me beside
Woll me distroien onely for your sake
And ye woll me now to wife take
As ye haue sworn, than woll I yeue you leue
To slaen me with your sword, now sone at eue
For than yet shall I dien as your wife
I am with childe, and yeue my childe his life
Mercie lord, haue pitie in your thought
But all this thing auaileth her right nought
And as a traitour forth gan to saile
Toward the large countre of Itaile
And thus hath he left Dido in wo and pine
And wedded there a lady hight Rauine
A clothe he left, and eke his sword standing
Whan he fro Dido stale in her sleping
Right at her beddes hedde, so gan he hie
Whan that he stale away to his nauie.
Which cloth, whan sele Dido gan awake
She hath it kist full oft for his sake
And said, O swete cloth, while Iupiter it lest
Take my soule, vnbind me of this vnrest
I haue fulfilled of fortune all the course
And thus alas, withouten his socourse
Twentie times yswouned hath she than
And whan that she vnto her suster Anne
Complained had, of which I may not write
So great routh I haue it for to endite
And bad her nourice and her sustren gon
To fetchen fire, and other things anon
And sated that she would Sacrifice
And whan she might her time well aspie
Upon the fire of Sacrifice she start
And with his sword she rofe her to the hart
But as mine author saith, yet this she seid
Or she was hurte, before or she deid
She wrote a letter anon, and thus began.
Right so (qd she) as the white Swan
Ayenst his death begynneth for to sing
Right so to you I make my complayning
Not that I trowe to getten you again
For well I wote it is all in vain
Sens that ỳ goddes been contrarious to me
But sin my name is lost through you (qd she)
I may well lese a worde on you or letter
All be it, I shall be neuer the better
For thilke wind that blewe your ship away
The same winde hath blowe away your fay
But who so wol al this letter haue in mind
Rede Ouide, and in him he shall it find.

Here endeth the Legend of Dido quene of Cartage: And here foloweth the Legend of Hipsiphile and Medea.

Thou root of false louers, Duke Jason
Thou fleer, deuourer, and confusion
Of gentill women, gentill creatures
Thou madest thy reclaiming and thy lures
To Ladies of thy scathlich apparaunce
And of thy wordes farsed with pleasaunce
And of thy fained trouth, and thy manere
With thine obeisaunce and humble chere
And with thine counterfeited pain and wo
There other falsen one, thou falsed two
O oft sworne thou, that thou wouldest die
For loue, whan thou ne feltest maladie
Saue foule delite, which thou callest loue
If that I liue, thy name shall be shoue
In English, that thy deceipt shall be know
Haue at thee Jason, now thin honor is blow
But certes, it is bothe routh and wo
That Loue with false louers werketh so
For they shal haue well better loue and cheer
Than he that hath bought loue full dere
Or had in armes many a bloodie bore
For euer as tender a capon eateth the fore
Though he be fals, & hath the foule betraied
As shal the good man that therfore paied
Although he haue to the capon skill & right
The false Fore woll haue his part at night
On Jason this ensample is well yseen

By

By Hipsiphile, and Medea the Queene.
In Thessalie, as Ouide telleth vs
There was a knight that hight Pelleus
That had a brother, which that hight Eson
And whan for age he might vnnethes gon
He yaue to Pelleus the gouerning
Of al his reigne, and made him lord & king
Of which Eson, this Jason getten was
That in his time, in all that land there nas
Nat such a famous knight of gentillesse
Of fredome, of strength, and of lustinesse
After his fathers death he bare him so
That there nas none that list been his foe
But did him all honour and companie
Of which this Pelleus hath great enuie
Imagining, that Jason might be
Enhaunsed so, and put in such degre
With loue of lordes of his regioun
That from his reigne, he may be put adoun
And in his wit a night compassed he
How Jason might best destroyed be
Withouten slaunder of his compasment
And at the last he toke auisement
That to senden him into some ferre countre
There as this Jason may destroyed be
This was his wit, all made he to Jason
Great chere of loke, and of affection
For drede lest his lordes it espide
So fill it, as fame renneth wide
Ther was such tiding ouer all, & such loos
That in an Isle, that called was Colcos
Beyond Troie Eastward in the see
That there was a Ram, that men might se
That had a Flees of gold, that shone so brist
That no where was there such an other sight
But it was kept alway with a Dragoun
And many other maruailes vp and doun
And with two Bulles, maked all of Bras
That spitten fire, and much thing there was
But this was eke the tale nathelees
That who so would winnen thilke Flees
He must bothe, or he it winnen might
With the Bulles and the Dragon fight.
And king Otes, lord was of that Ile
This Pelleus bethought vpon this wile
That he his neuew Jason would exhort
To sailen to that londe, him to disport
And saied, neuew if it might be
That such worship might fall thee
That thou this famous treasure might win
And bring it my region within
It were to me great pleasaunce and honour
Than were I holde to quite thy labour
And all thy costes I woll my selfe make
& chose what folke thou wolt with thee take
Let se now, darst thou taken this voiage.
Jason was yong, and lustie of corage
And vndertoke to doen this like empryse
Anon Argus his shippes gan deuise.
With Jason went the strong Hercules
And many an other, that he with him ches
But who so asketh, who is with him gon
Let him rede Argonauticon
For he woll tell a tale long ynough
Philoctetes anon they saile vp drough
Whan the wind was good, and gan him hie
Out of his countre, called Thessalie
So long they sailed in the salt see
Till in the Ile of Lemnon ariued he
All be this nat rehearsed of Guido
Yet saieth Ouide in his Epistles so
And of this Ile ladie was and Queene
The faire yong Hipsiphile the shene
That whilō Thoas doughter was the king.
Hipsiphile was gon in her playing
And roming on the cleuis by the see
Under a banke anone espied shee
Where lay the ship, that Jason gan ariue
Of her goodnesse adoune she sendeth bliue
To weten, if that any straunge wight
With tempest thider were yblowe anight
To doen him socour, as was her vsaunce
To furtheren euery wight, & don pleasaunce
Of very bountie, and of curtesie.
This messenger adoune him gan to hie
And found Jason and Hercules also
That in a cogge to londe were ygo
Hem to refresben, and to take the aire
The morning attempre was and faire
And in her way this messenger hem mette
Full conningly these lordes two he grette
And did his message, asking hem anon
If that they were broken, or ought wo begon
Or had nede of lodesmen, or vitaile
For succour they should nothing faile
For it was vtterly the Queenes will.
Jason answerde meekely and still
My ladie (qd he) thanke I hartely
Of her goodnesse, vs nedeth truely
Nothing as now, but that we werie be
And come for to plaie out of the see
Till that the winde be better in our waie.
This ladie rometh by the cliffe to plaie
With her meine, endlong the stronde
And findeth this Jason, & this other stonde
In speaking of this thing, as I you told.
This Hercules and Jason gan behold
How that the quene it was, & faire her grete
Anon right as they with this ladie mete
And she toke hede, and knew by her manere

By

By her araie, by wordes, and by chere
That it were gentilmen of great degree
And to the caſtle with her leadeth ſhe
Theſe ſtrange folk, & doeth hem great honor
And aſketh hem of trauaile and of labor
That they haue ſuffred in the ſalt ſee
So that with hm a day, two or three
She knew by the folke that in his ſhippes be
That it was Jaſon full of renomee
And Hercules, that had the great loos
That ſoughten the auentures of Colcos
And did hem honour, more than before
And with hem dealed euer longer the more
For they been worthy folke withouten lees
And namely moſt ſhe ſpake with Hercules
To him her harte barc, he ſhould be
Sadde, wiſe, and true, of wordes auiſee
Withouten any other affection
Of loue, or any other imagination.

This Hercules hath this Jaſon praiſed
That to the Sunne he hath it vp reiſed
That halfe ſo true a man there nas of loue
Under the cope of heauen, that is aboue
And he was wiſe, hardie, ſecrete, and riche
Of theſe iii. points, ther nas non him liche
Of fredome paſſed he, and luſtic hedde
All tho that liuen, or been dedde
Thereto ſo great a gentill man was he
And of Theſſalie likely king to be
There nas no lacke, but that he was agaſt
To loue, and for to ſpeake ſhamefaſt
Him had leauer himſelfe to murder and die
Than that men ſhould a louer him eſpie
As would God that I had ty eue
My blood and fleſh, ſo that I might liue
With the nones, ỳ he had aught wher a wife
For his eſtate, for ſuch a luſtie life
She ſhoulden lede, with this luſtie knight
And all this was compaſſed on the night
Betwixe him Jaſon, and this Hercules
Of theſe two here was a ſhrewde lees
To come to houſe, vpon an innocent
For to be dote this Quene was her entent
And Jaſon is as coie as is a maide
He loketh pitouſly, but naught he ſaied
But frely yaue he to her counſailers
Yeftes great, and to her officers
As would God that I leaſer had and time
By proceſſe, all his woing for to rime
But in this houſe, if any falſe louer be
Right as himſelfe now doeth, right ſo did he
With fayning, and with euery ſubtell dede
Ye get no more of me, but ye woll rede
Thorigmail, that telleth all the caas.

The ſothe is this, that Jaſon wedded was
Unto this quene, and toke of her ſubſtaunce
What ſo him liſt, vnto his purueiaunce
And vpon her begate children two
And drough his faile, and ſaw her neuer mo
A letter ſent ſhe him certain
Which were to long to writen and to ſain
And him reproueth of his great vntrouth
And praieth him on her to haue ſome routh
And on his children two, ſhe ſaied him this
That they be like of all thing ywis
To Jaſon, ſaue they couth nat begile
And prayed God, or it were long while
That ſhe that had his hart yreft her fro
Muſt finden him vntrue alſo
And that ſhe muſt both her children ſpill
And all tho that ſuffreth him his will
And true to Jaſon was ſhe all her life
And euer kept her chaſte, as for his wife
Ne neuer had ſhe ioy at her harte
But died for his loue of ſorowes ſmarte.

To Colcos come is this duke Jaſon
That is of loue deuourer and dragon
As Natire appeteth ſome alwaie
And from ſome to ſome it paſſen may
Or as a well that were botomles
Right ſa can Jaſon haue no pees
For to deſiren through his appetite
To doen with gentil women his delite
This is his luſte, and his felicitie
Jaſon is romed forth to the citie
That whilom cleped was Jaſonicos
That was the maiſter toune of all Colcos
And hath ytold the cauſe of his comming
Unto Otes, of that countrey king
Praying him that he muſt doen his aſſaie
To gette the Fleſe of golde, if that he may
Of which the king aſſenteth to his booen
And doeth him honour, as it is to dooen
So fer forth, that his doughter & his heire
Medea, which that was ſo wiſe and faire
That fairer ſawe there neuer man with eye
He made her doen to Jaſon companye
At meate, and ſitte by him in the hall.

Now was Jaſon a ſemely man withall
And like a Lorde, and had a great renoun
And of his loke as royall as a Lioun
And Godly of his ſpeache, and familiere
And coud of loue all the craft and art plenere
Withouten boke, with cuerich obſeruaunce
And as fortune her ought a foule miſchaunce
She wexe enamored vpon this man.

Jaſon (qd ſhe) for ought I ſee or can
As of this thing, the which ye been about
Ye and your ſelfe I put in much doubt
For who ſo woll this aueuture atcheue

He

He may nat wele asterten, as I leue
Withouten death, but I his helpe be
But natheles it is my will (qd. she)
To forthyen you. so that ye shal nat die
But turnen sound home to your Thessalie
My right lady (qd. this Iason) tho
That ye haue of my death or my wo
Any regard, and doen me this honour
I wot wel that my might, ne my labour
May nat deserue it in my liues day
God thanke you, there I ne can ne may
Your man am I, and lowly you beseech
To ben my helpe, withouten more speech
But certes for my death shal I not spare
Tho gan this Medea to him declare
The peril of this case, fro point to point
Of his bataile, and in what disioint
He mote stond, of which no creature
Saue only she, ne might his life assure
And shortly, right to the point for to go
They ben accorded fully betwixe hem two
That Iason shal her wedde, as true knight
And terme yet to come soone at night
Unto her chamber, and make there his oth
Upon the Goddes, that he for leue or loth
Ne shuld her neuer falsen night ne day
To ben her husbond while he liue may.
As she that from his death him saued here
And hereupon at night they mett yfere
And doth his oth, and goeth with her to bedde
And on the morow vpward he him spedde
For she hath taught him how he shal nat faile
The fees to winne, and stinten his bataile
And saued him his life, and his honour
And gate him a name, as a conquerour
Right through the sleight of her enchantment
Now hath Iason the fees, and home is went
With Medea, and treasours ful great wonne
But vnwist of her father she is gonne
To Thessaly, with duke Iason her lefe
That afterward hath wrought her to mischefe
For as a traitour he is from her go
And with her left yong children two
And falsly hath betrated her, alas
And euer in loue a chefe traitour he was
And wedded yet the third wife anon
That was the doughter of king Creon
This is the meed of louing and guerdon
That Medea receiued of Duke Iason
Right for her trouth, and for her kindnesse
That loued him better than her selfe I gesse
And left her father, and her heritage
And of Iason this is the vassalage
That in his daies nas neuer none yfound
So false a louer, going on the ground
And therfore in her letter thus she said
First when she of his falsenesse him vpbraid
Why liked me thy yelow heere to se
More than the bounds of mine honestee
Why liked me thy youth and thy fairnesse
And of thy tongue, the infinite graciousnesse
O haddest thou in thy conquest deed yee
Ful mikel vntrouth had there died with thee
Wel can Ouid her letter in verse endite
Which were as now to long for to write.

Here endeth the Legend of Hypsiphile and Medea: And here foloweth the Legend of Lucrece of Rome.

NOw mote I fain the exiling of kings
Of Rome, for her horrible doings
Of the last kyng Tarquinius
As saith Ouid, and Titus Liuius
But for that cause tel I nat this story
But for to praisen, and drawen in memory
The very wife, the very Lucrelle
That for her wifehood, and her stedfastnesse
Nat only that these panymes her commend
But that cleped is in our legend
The great Austyn, that hath compassioun
Of this Lucrece that starfe in Rome toun
And in what wise, I wol but shortly treat
And of this thing I touch but the great
Whan Ardea besiege was about
With Romaines, that ful sterne were & stout
Ful long lay the siege and itell wroughten
So ỹ they were halfe ydel, as hem thoughten
And in his play Tarquinius the yeng
Gan for to iape, for he was light of tong
And sayd, that it was an idle life
No man did there more than his wife
And let vs speke of wiues, that is best
Praise euery man his own as him lest
And with our speach let vs ease our hert
A knight (that hight Colatin) vp stert
And said thus, nay sir it is nonde
To trowen on the word, but on the dede
I haue a wife (qd. he) that as I trow
Is holden good of all that euer her knew
Go we to Rome to night, and we shul se
Tarquinius answerd, that liketh me
To Rome be they come, and fait hem dight
To Colatins house, and doune they light
Tarquinius, and eke this Colatine
The husbond knew the esters wel and fine

And ful prively into the house they gone
Nor at the gate, porter was there none
And at the chambre dore they abide
This noble wife fate by her beddes side
Discheueled, for no malice she ne thought
And soft wol saith Liui that she wrought
To kepen her from slouth and ydelnesse
And bad her seruaunts done her besinesse
And asketh hem, what tidings heren ye?
How saith men of the siege, how shal it be?
God wold the walles were fallen a downe
Mine husbond is to long out of this towne
For which drede doth me sore to smert
Right as a sword, it stingeth to mine hert
Whan I thinke on this or of that place
God saue my lord, I pray him for his grace
And therwithal so tenderly she gan wepe
And of her werke she toke no more kepe
But meekely she let her eien fall
And thilke semblant sate her wel withall
And eke her teares ful of hevinesse
Embelessed her wifely chastitesse
Her countenaunce is to hert digne
For they accorded eden indeed and signe
And with that word her husband Tolatin
Or she of hun was ware, came sterling in
And said, drede the nat for I am here
And she anon vp rose, with blisful chere
And kissed him, as of wines is the wonne
Tarquinius, this proud kings sonne
Conceiued hath her beauty and her chere
Her yelow heere, her bounty, & her manere
Her hew, her words, that she hath complained
And by no craft her beauty was nat fained
And caught to this lady soch desire
That in his hert he brent as any fire
So woodly, that his witte was al forgotten
For wel thought he she shuld nat be gotten
And aye the more he was in dispaire
The more coueiteth, and thought her faire
His blind lust was all his coueiting
On morow, whan the bird began to sing
Unto the siege he cometh ful prively
And by himselfe he walketh soberly
The ymage of her recording alway new
Thus lay her heere, & thus fresh was her hew
Thus sate, thus span, this was her chere
Thus fair she was, and this was her manere
All this conceit his hart hath new ytake
And as the see, with tempest all to shake
That after whan the storme is all ago
Yet wol the water quappe a day or two
Right so, though that her forme were absent
The pleasaunce of her forme was present
But natheless nat pleasaunce, but delite
Or an vnrightful talent with dispite
For maugre her, she shal my lemman be.
Hap helpeth hardy man ai way (qd. he)
What end that I make, it shal be so
And girt him with his sword, and gan to go
And he forth right, til to Rome he come
And all alone his way that he hath nome
Unto the house of Tolatin ful right
Down was ỳ son, & day hath lost his light
And in he come, vnto a privy halke
And in the night ful theefely gan he stalke
Whan euery wight was to his rest brought
Ne no wight had of treson soch a thought
Whether by windowe, or by other gin
With sword ydrawn, shortly he cometh in
There as she lay, this noble wife Lucrece
And as she woke, her bedde she felt presse
What best is that (qd. she) that wayeth thus
I am the kings sonne Tarquinius
(Qd. he) but and thou cry, or any noise make
Or if thou any creature awake
By thilke God, that formed man of liue
This sword throught thin hart shal I riue
And therwithall, vnto her throte he sterte
And set the sword all sharpe on her herte
No word she speak, she hath no might therto
What shall she sain, her witte is all ago
Right as a wolfe that fainteth a lamme alone
To whom shal she complain or make mone
What, shal she fight with an hardy knight
Wel wotte men a woman hath no might
What shal she cry, or how shal she astert?
ỳ hath her by the throte with sword at hert
She asketh grace, and said all that she can
No wolt thou nat (qd. this cruel man)
As wisely Jupiter my soule saue
I shal in thy stable slee thy knaue
And lay him in thy bedde and loud cry
That I the find in soch auoutry
And thus thou shalt be deed and also leese
Thy name, for thou shalt nat chese.
This Romains wives loueden so her name
At thilke time and dreden so the shame
That what for fear of slaunder, & dred of deth
She lost both at ones wit and breth
And in a swough she lay, and wor so deed
Men mighten smite of her arme or heed
She feleth nothing, neither foule ne faire.
Tarquinius, that art a kings heire
And shuldest, as by linage and by right
Done as a lord, and a very knight
Why hast thou done dispite to chiualry?
Why hast thou done thy lady vilany?
Alas, of thee this was a vilainous dede
But now to the purpose, in the story I rede

whan

when he was gonne, & this mischaūce is fall
This lady sent after her frends all
Father, mother, and husbond, all yfere
And discheueled with her heere clere
In habit soch as women vsed tho
Unto the burying of her frends go
She sate in hal, with a sorowful sighte
Her frends asken what her ailen might
And who was deed, and she sate aye weping
A word for shame ne may she forth out bring
Ne vpon hem she durst nat behold
But at the last of Tarquiny she hem told
This ruful case, and all this thing horrible
The woo to tell, were impossible
That she and all her frends make at ones
All had folkes herts ben of stones
It might haue maked hem vpon her rew
Her hert was so wifely and so trew
She said, that for her gilt ne for her blame
Her husbond should nat haue the foule name
That would she nat suffren by no way
And they answerd all vnto her fay
That they forgaue it her, for it was right
It was no gilt, it lay nat in her might
And saiden her ensamples many one
But all for naught, for thus she said anone
Be as be may qd. she, of forgiuing
I wil nat haue no forgift for nothing
But prively she cought forth a knife
And therwithall she raft her selfe her life
And as she fel a doune she cast her loke
And of her clothes, yet hede she toke
For in her falling, yet she had a care
Lest that her feet, or such things lay bare
So wel she loued clennesse, and eke trouth
Of her had all the toune of Rome routh
And Brutus hath by her chast blood swore
That Tarquin should ybanished be therfore
And all his kinne, and let the people call
And openly the tale he told hem all
And openly let cary her on a bere
Through al ỹ towne, that men may see & here
The horrible dede of her oppression
Ne neuer was there king in Rome toun
Sens thilke day, and she was holden there
A saint, and euer her day yhalowed dere
As in her law: and thus endeth Lucresse
The noble wife, Titus beareth witnesse
I tel it for she was of loue so trew
Ne in her wil she chaunged for no new
And in her stable hert, sadde and kind
That in these women men may all day find
There as they cast her hert, there it dwelleth
For wel I wote, that Christ himselfe telleth
That in Israel, as wide as is the lond
That so great faith in all the lond he ne fond
As in a woman, and this is no lie
And as for men, loke ye such tyrannie
They doen all day, assay hem who so lift
The trewest is ful brothel for to trift.

¶ Here endeth the Legend of Lucrece of Rome.

¶ Here folowеth the Legend of Ariadne of Athenes.

Iudge infernall Minos, of Crete king
Now cometh thy lot, thou comest on the ring
Nat for thy sake onely writen is this story
But for to clepe ayen vnto memory
Of Theseus the great untrouth of loue
For which the Goddes of heuen aboue
Ben wroth, & wrath haue take for thy sinne
Be reed for shame, now I thy life beginne
Minos that was the mighty king of Crete
That had an hundred cities strong and grete
To schole hath sent his sonne Androgeus
To Athenes, of the which it happed thus
That he was slaine, lerning philosophy
Right in that cite, nat but for enuy
The great Minos, of the which I speke
His sonnes deth is come for to wreke
Alcathoe he besieged hard and long
But natheles the walles be so strong
And Nisus, that was king of that cite
So chiualrous, that litel dredeth he
Of Minos or his host, toke he no cure
Til on a day befil an auenture
That Nisus doughter stode vpon the wall
And of the siege, saw the maner all
So happed it, that at scarmishing
She cast her hert vpon Minos the king
For his beauty, and his chiualrie
So sore, that she wend for to die
And shortly of this processe for to pace
She made Minos winnen thilke place
So that the cite was all at his will
To sauen whom him list, or els spill
But wickedly he quit her kindnesse
And let her drench in sorow and in distresse
Nere that the Goddes had of her pite
But that tale were to long as now for me
Athenes was this king Minos also
As Alcathoe, and other tounes mo
And this ỹ effect, that Minos hath so driuen

Hem of Athenes, that they mote him yeuen
Fro yere to yere, her owne children dere
For to be slaine, as ye shal after here
This Minos hath a monster, a wicked best
That was so cruel, that without arest
Whan ỳ a man was brought into his presence
He would hym eat, there helpeth no defence
And euery third yere withouten dout
They casten lotte, as it came about
On rich and poore, he must his sonne take
And of his child he must present make
To Minos, to saue him or to spill
Or let his beest deuour him at his will
And this hath Minos don right in dispite
To wreke his sonne was set all his delite
And make hem of Athenes his thrall
Fro yere to yere, while he liuen shall
And whom he saileth whan this toun is won
This wicked custome is so long yron
Til of Athenes King Egeus
Wote fenden his owne sonne Theseus
Seng that the lotte is fallen him vpon
To ben deuoured, for grace is there non
And forth is ladde this woful yong knight
Unto the countre of king Minos ful of might
And in a prison fettred fast is he
Til the time he should yfreten be
Wel maist thou wepe, o woful Theseus
That art a kings sonne, and damned thus
Me thinketh this, that thou art depe yhold
To whom that saued the fro cares cold
And now if any woman helpe the
Wel oughtest thou her seruaunt for to be
And ben her trew louer yere by yere
But now to come ayen to my matere
The toure, there this Theseus is throw
Down in the bottom derke, and wonder low
Was ioining to the wal of a forein
Longing vnto the doughtren tweine
Of Minos, that in her chambres grete
Dwelten aboue the maister strete
Of the towne, in toy and in solas
Not I nat how, it happed percaas
As Theseus complained him by night
The kings doughter, that Ariadne hight
And eke her suster Phedra, herden all
His complaint, as they stode on the wall
And loked vpon the bright moone
Hem list nat to go to bedde so soone
And of his wo they had compassion
A kings sonne to be in soch prison
And ben deuoured, thought hem great pite
Than Ariadne spake to her suster fre
And said: Phedra leue suster dere
This woful lords sonne may ye nat here
How pitously he complaineth his kinne
And eke his poore estate that he is inne?
And giltiesse, certes now it is routh
And if he wol assent by my trouth
He shal ben holpen how so that we do
Phedra answerd, ywis me is as wo
For him, as euer I was for any man
And to his helpe the best rede I can
Is, that we done the gailer pryuely
To come and speke with vs hastely
And done this woful man with him to come
For if he may this monster ouercome
Than were he quite, there is none other bote
Let vs wel tast him at his hert roote
That if so be, that he a weapon haue
Where that he his life dare kepe or saue
Fighten with this fend, and him defend
For in the prison, there as he shal discend
Ye wote wel, that the beest is in a place
That is not derk, and hath roume & eke space
To weld an axe, or sword, staffe, or knife
So that me thinketh he should saue his life
If that he be a man, he shal do so
And we shal make him balles eke also
Of wex and tow, that whan he gapeth fast
Into the beests throte he shal hem cast
To slekе his honger, and encomber his teth
And right anon, whan that Theseus seth
The beest acheked, he shal on him lepe
To sleen him, or they comen more to hepe
This weapen shal the gailer, or that tide
Ful pryuely withyn the prison hide
And for the house is crencled to and fro
And hath so queint waues for to go
For it is shapen as the mase is wrought
Therto haue I a remedy in my thought
That by a clew of twine, as he hath gon
The same way he may returne anon
Folowing alway the threde, as he hath come
And whan this beest is ouercome
Than may he flien away out of this stede
And eke the gailer may he with him lede
And him auaunce at home in his countre
Sens that so great a lords sonne is he
This is my rede, if that ye dare it take
What should I lenger sermon of it make
The gailer cometh, and with him Theseus
Whan these things ben accorded thus
Downe sate Theseus vpon his kne
The right lady of my life (qd. he)
I sorowful man, ydamned to the deth
Fro you, whiles that me lasteth breth
I wol nat twinne, after this auenture
But in your seruice, thus I wol endure
That as a wretch vnknow, I wol you serue

For euermore, tyl that mine hert sterue
Forsake I wol at home mine heritage
And as I said, ben of your court a page
If that ye vouchsafe that in this place
Ye graunt me to haue such a grace
That I may haue nat but my meat and drinke
And for my sustinaunce yet wol I swinke
Right as you list, that Minos ne no wight
Sens that he saw me neuer with eyen sight
Ne no man els shal me espye
So slily, and so wel I shal me gye
And me so wel disfigure, and so low
That in this world there shal no man me know
To haue my lyfe, and to haue presence
Of you, that done to me this excellence
And to my father shal I send here
This worthy man, that is your gayliere
And him so guerdon, that he shal wel be
One of the greatest men of my countre
And if I durst saine, my lady wight
I am a kings sonne and eke a knight
As wold God, if that it might be
Ye weren in my countrey all thre
And I with you, to beare you company
Than shuld ye sene if that I therof lye
And if that I profer you in low mancre
To ben your page, and seruen you right here
But I you serue as lowly in that place
I pray to Mars to yeue me such grace
That shames death on me there mote fall
And death and pouerte to my frends all
And that my spirit by night mote go
After my death, and walke to and fro
That I mote of traitour haue a name
For which my spyt might go, to do me shame
And if I clayme euer other degre
But ye vouchsafe to yeue it me
As I haue said, of shames deth I dey
And mercy lady, I can naught els sey
A semely knight was this Theseus to se
And yong, but of twenty yere and thre
But who so had yseen his countenaunce
He would haue wept, for routh of his penaunce
For which this Ariadne in this manere
Answerd to his profer and to his chere
A kyngs sonne, and eke a knight (qd. she)
To ben my seruaunt in so low degre
God shield it, for the shame of women all
And lene me neuer soch a case befall
And send you grace, and sleight of hert also
You to defend, and knightly to sleen your fo
And lene here after I may you find
To me, and to my suster here so kind
That I ne repent nat to yeue you life
Yet were it better I were your wife
Sith ye ben as gentil borne as I
And haue a realme nat but fast by
Than that I suffred your gentillesse to serue
Or that I let you as a page serue
It is no profite, as vnto your kinrede
But what is that, that mã woll nat do for drede
And to my suster syth that it is so
That she mote gone with me, if that I go
Or els suffer death as wel as I
That ye vnto your sonne as trewly
Done her be wedded, at your home comming
This is the fynal end of all this thing
Ye were it here, vpon all that may befworne
Ye lady mine (qd. he) or els to lorne
Mote I be with the Minotaure or to morow
And haue hereof mine hert blood to borow
If that ye wol, if I had knife or speare
I wold it letten out, and theron sweare
For than at erst, I wot ye would me leue
By Mars, that is chiefe of my beleue
So that I might liuen, and nat faile
To morow for to taken my bataile
I nold neuer fro this place flye
Tyl that ye shuld the very profe see
For now, if that the soth I shal you say
I haue loued you ful many a day
Though ye ne wist nat, in my countre
And aldermost desyred you to se
Of any earthly liuing creature
Vpon my trouth I sweare, and you assure
This seuen yere I haue your seruaunt be
Now haue I you, and also haue ye me
My dere hert, of Athenes duchesse
This lady smileth at his stedfastnesse
And at his hertely wordes, and at his chere
And to her suster sayd in this manere
And sothly suster mine (qd. she)
Now be we duchesses both I and ye
And likerd to the regals of Athenes
And both herafter likely to be Quenes
And saued fro his death a kings sonne
As euer of gentilwomen is the wonne
To saue a gentilman, enforth her might
In honest cause, and namely in his right
Me thinketh no wight ought vs herof blame
Ne bearen vs therfore an yuel name
And shortly of this mater for to make
This Theseus of her hath leaue ytake
And euery point was performed in dede
As ye haue in this couenaunt herd me rede
His wepen, his clew, his thing that I haue said
Was by the gayler in the house ylaid
There as the Minotaure hath his dwelling
Right fast by the doore, at his entring
And Theseus is lad vnto his deth

And forth vnto this Minotaure he geth
And by the teaching of this Adriane
He ouercame this beest, and was his bane
And out he commeth by the clew againe
Ful priuely, whan he this beest hath slaine
And the gailer gotten hath a barge
And of his wiues treasure gan it charge
And toke his wife, and eke her suster fre
And by the gailer, and with hem all thre
Is stole away out of the lond by night
And to the countre of Enupy him dight
There as he had a frend of his knowing
There refresshen they, there daunsen they and sing
And in his armes hath this Adriane
That of the beest hath kept him fro his bane
And get him there a noble barge anone
And of his country folke a ful great wone
And taketh his leaue, and homeward saileth he
And in an ile, amidde the wild see
There as there dwelt creature none
Saue wild beests, and that ful many one
He made his shippe a lond for to sette
And in that ile, halfe a day he lette
And said, that on the lond he must him rest
His mariners haue done right as him lest
And for to tel shortly in this cas
Whan Ariadne his wife a slepe was
For that her suster fairer was than she
He taketh her in hond, and forth goth he
To shippe, and as a traitour stale away
While that this Ariadne a slepe lay
And to his countrey ward he saileth blithe
A twenty duel way, the wind him drithe
And found his father drenched in the see
Me list no more to speke of him parde
These false louers, poyson be her bane
But I wol turne againe to Adriane
That is with slepe for wery nesse ytake
Ful sorowfully her hert may awake
Alas, for the mine hert hath pite
Right in the dawning awaketh she
And gropeth in the bed, and found right nought
Alas (qd. she) that euer I was wrought
I am betrayed, and her heere to rent
And to the strond barefoot fast she went
And cryed: Theseus mine hert swete
Where be ye, that I may nat with you mete
And might thus with beests ben yslaine
The holow rockes answerd her againe
No man she saw, and yet shone the moone
And hye vpon a rocke she went soone
And saw his barge, sailing in the see
Cold wore her hert, and right thus said she
Weker than ye, find I the beests wild
Hath he nat synne, that he her thus begild
She cried, o turne againe for routh and sinne
Thy barge hath nat all his meine inne
Her kerchefe on a pole sticked she
Al scaunce he should it wele yse
And him remembre that she was behind
And turne againe, and on the strond her find
But all for naught, his way he is gone
And doune she fel a swowne on a stone
And vp she rist, and kissed in all her care
The steppes of his fete, there he hath fare
And to her bed right thus she spaketh tho
Thou bed (qd. she) that hast receiued two
Thou shalt answere of two, and not of fine
Where is the greater part, away gone
Alas, wher shal I wretched wight become
For though so be that vote none here come
Home to my countrey dare I nat for drede
I can my selfe in this case nat rede
What should I tel more her complaining
It is so long, it were an heauy thing.
In her epistle, Naso telleth all
But shortly to the end tell I shall
The Goddes haue her holpen for pite
And in the signe of Taurus men may se
The stones of her crowne shine clere
I wil no more speke of this matere
But thus this false louer can begile
His trew loue, the duel quit him his while.

¶ Here endeth the legend of Ariadne,
and here folowety the legend
of Philomene.

Thou peuer of the formes,
that hast wrought
The fayre world, and bare it
in thy thought
Eternally, er thou thy werke
began
Why madest thou vnto the
slaunder of man
Or all be that it was not thy doing
As for that fend, to make such a thing
Why suffredest thou that Tereus was borne
That is in loue so false and so forsworne
That fro this world vp to the first heuen
Corrumpeth, whan that folke his name neuen
And as to me, so grisly was his dede
That whan that I this foule storie rede
Myne eyen weyen foule, and sore also
Yet lasteth the venime of so long ago
That enfecteth him, that wold behold
The story of Tereus, of which I told
Of Thrace was he lord, and kin to Mart
The cruel God that stant with bloody dart

And

And wedded had he with likinli chere
King Pandions faire doughter dere
That hight Progne flowre of her countre
Though Juno lift nat at the feast be
Ne Himeneus, that God of wedding is
But at the feast ready been ywis
The furies three, with all her mortall drynke
The Oule all night aboue the balkes wonde
That Prophet is of wo, and of mischaunce
This reuell, full of long and full of daunce
Laste a fourtenight, or little lasse
But shortly of this story for to passe
(For I am wearie of him for to tell)
Fine yere his wife and he togither dwell
Till on a day she gan so sore long
To seen her suster, that she saw not long
That for desire she nist what to saie
But to her husbond gan she for to praie
For Goddes loue, that she mote ones gone
Her suster for to seen, and come ayen anone
Or els but she mote to her wende
She praied him that he would after her send
And this was day by day all her praiere
With al humblesse of wifhod, word & chere.

This Tereus let make his shippes yare
And into Grece himselfe is forth yfare
Unto his father in lawe gan he praie
To vouchsafe, that for a moneth or twaie
That Philomene his wiues suster might
On Progne his wife, but ones haue a sight
And she shal come to you again anon
My selfe with her, I will both come and gon
And as my hartes life I will her kepe.

This olde Pandion, this king gan wepe
For tendernesse of harte, for to leue
His doughter gon, and for to yeue her leue
Of all this world he loued nothing so
But at the last leaue hath she to go
For Philomene with salte teares eke
Gan of her father grace to beseke
To seen her suster, that her longeth so
And him enbraceth, with her armes two
And there also yong and faire was she
That when that Tereus sawe her beautie
And of arraie, that there was none her liche
And yet of beautie was she to so riche
He cast his fierie hart vpon her so
That he woll haue her, how so that it go
And with his wiles kneled, and so praied
Till at the last Pandion thus saied

Now sonne (qd he) that art to me so dere
I thee betake my yong doughter here
That beareth the keie of all mine harts life
And grete well my doughter, and thy wife
And yeue her leaue somtime for to pleie
That she may fetch me dues or I deie
And sothly he hath made him riche feast
And to his folke that most and eke the least
That with him came, & yaue him yefts great
And him conueyeth throughy maister streat
Of Athenes, and to the sea him brought
And tourneth home, no maleencolie he thought
The Ores pulleth forthy the vessel fast
And in to Thrace arriueth at the last
And vp into a Forest he her led
And to a caue priuely him sped
And in this derke cane, if her lefe
Or list nought, he had her for euer
Of which her hart agrose, and faied thus

Where is my suster, brother Tereus?
And therwithal he wept tendrely
And quoke for feare, pale and pitously
Right as the lambe, that of the Wolfe is bitte
Or as the Culuer that of the Egle is smitten
And is out of his clawes forthe escaped
Yet it is aferde, and awaped
Lest it be hent eft sones: so fare she
But vtterly it may none other be
By force hath this traitour done a deede
That he hath reft her of her maidenhede
Maugre her hed, by strength & by his might.

Lo here a deede of men, and that a right
She crieth suster with full loud steuen
And father dere helpe me God in heauen
All helpeth not, and yet this false theefe
Hath doen this Ladie yet a more mischefe
For feare, lest she should his shame crie
And doen him openly a villanie
And with his sword her tong off kerfe he
And in a Castell made her for to be
Full priuely in prison euermore
And kept her to his vsage and to his store
So that she ne might neuer more astart

O silie Philomene, wo is in thine harte
Huge been thy sorowes, and wonder smarte
God wreke thee, and send thee thy bone
Now is time I make an ende sone.

This Tereus is to his wife ycome
And in his armes hath his wife ynome
And pitously he wept, and shoke his hedde
And swore her, that he found her suster dedde
For which this silie Progne hath such wo
That nigh her sorowfull hart brake atwo
And thus in teares let I Progne dwell
And of her suster forth I woll you tell

This wofull Lady plearned had in youth
So that she worken and enbrauden couth
And weauen in stole the radenore
And it of women hath be woued yore
And sothly for to saine, she hath her till

Of meat and drinke, of clothing at her will
And couthe eke rede wel inough and endite
But with a penne she couthe not write
But letters can she weue, to and fro
So that by the yere was all ago
She had wouen in a straines large
How she was brought fro Athens in a barge
And in a caue how that she was brought
And all the thing that Tereus hath wrought
She waue it wel, and wrote the story aboue
How she was serued for her systers loue
And to a man a ring she gaue anon
And prayed him by signes for to gon
Unto the queene, and bearen her that cloth
And by signe swore many an oth
She should him yeue what she gotten might
This man anon unto the quene him dight
And toke it her, and all the maner told
And whē that Progne hath this thing beheld
No word she spake, for sorow eke for rage
But fained her to gone on pilgrimage
To Bacchus temple, and in a little stound
Her dombe suster sitting hath she found
Weping in the castle her self alone
Alas the wo, constraint, and the mone
That Progne upon her dombe suster maketh
In armes rustick of hem other taketh
And thus I let hem in her sorow dwell
The remnaunt is no charge to tell
For this is all and some, thus was she serued
That neuer agilt, ne deserued
Unto this cruel man, that she of wist
Ye may beware of men if that you list
For all be that he wol not for shame
Doen as Tereus, to lese his name
Ne serue you as a murtherer or a knaue
Ful little while shul ye trew him haue
That wol I sain, al were he now my brother
But it so be that he may haue another.

¶ Here endeth the Legend of Philomene, and here followeth the Legend of Phillis.

BY proue, as wel as by auctorite
That wicked fruit commeth of a wicked tree
That may ye find, if that it liketh you
But for this end, I speke this as now
To tel you of false Demophon
In loue a falser heard I neuer non
But it were his father Theseus
God for his grace fro such one kepe bs
Thus these women praten, that it here
Now to the effect tourne I of my matere.
Destroued is of Troy the Citee
This Demophon came sailing in the see
Toward Athenes, to his paters large
With him came many a ship, and many a barge
Ful of folke, of which ful many one
Is wounded sore, and sicke, and woe be gone
And they henne at the large long plaine
Behind him came a wind, and eke a raine
That shoke so sore, his sayle might not stond
Him were leuer than all the world aond
So hunteth him the tempest to and fro
So darke it was, he couth no whete go
And with his beme hauen was his stere
His ship was rent so low in sorry maniere
That Carpenter could it not amend
Thus fer by night as any Torch brend
For wood, and poureth him vp and doun
Til Neptune hath of him compassioun
And Theris, Thorus, Triton, and they all
And vnder him vp a lond to fall
Whereof that Phillis Lady was and Quene
Lycurgus doughter, fairer vnto sene
Then is the flour again the bright Sonne
Unneth is Demophon to lond ywonne
Weake and eke wery, and his folke forpined
Of wetnesse, and also enfamined
And to the death he was almost ydriuen
His wise folke counsaile haue him yeuen
To seken helpe and socour of the Quene
And loken what his grace might bene
And maken in that land some chenesaunce
And kepen him fro wo, and fro mischaunce
For sicke he was, and almost at the death
Unneth might he speake, or draw breath
And lieth in Rhodopeia him for to rest
When he may walk, him thought it was best
Unto the countrey to seken for succour
Men knew him wele, and did him honour
For at Athenes Duke and Lord was he
As Theseus his father hath ybe
That in his time was great of renoun
No man so great in all his regioun
And like his father of face and of statute
And false of loue, it came him of nature
As doeth the Fox Renard, the Foxes sonne
Of kind he could his old fathers wonne
Without loze, as can a Drake swimme
When it is caught, and caried to the brimme
This honorable quene Phylis doth him chere
Her liketh wel his sport and his manere
But I am agroted here before
To write of hem that in loue been forlore

And

And eke to haste me in my Legend
Which to performe, God me grace sende
Therefore I passe shortly in this wise
Ye haue well heard of Theseus the gise
In the betraying of faire Adriane
That of her pitie kept him fro his bane
At short wordes, right so Demophon
The same waie, and the same path hath gon
That did his false father Theseus
For vnto Phillis hath he sworne thus
To wedden her, and her his trouth plight
And piked of her all the good he might
When he was hole & sound, and had his rest
And doth with Phillis, what so that him lest
As well I could, if that me list so
Tellen all his doing to and fro
He saied to his countrey mote him saile
For there he would her wedding apparaile
As fill to her honour, and his also
And openly he tooke his leaue tho
And to her swore he would not soiorne
But in a moneth againe he would retourne
And in that londe let make his ordinance
As verie Lord, and tooke the obeisance
Well and humbly, and his shippes dight
And home he goeth the next way he might
For vnto Phillis yet came he nought
And that hath she so harde and sore ybought
Alas, as the storie doeth vs recorde
She was her owne death with a corde
When ỳ she sawe that Demophon her trayed
But first wrote she to him, and fast him prayed
He would come and deliuer her of paine
As I rehearse shall a worde or twaine
Me list not vouchsafe on him to swinke
Dispenden on him a penne full of ynke
For false in loue was he, right as his sire
The deuill set her soules both on a fire
But of the letter of Phillis woll I write
A worde or twaine, although it be but lite.
Thine hostesse (qd she) O Demophon
Thy Phillis, which that is so wo begon
Of Rhodopeie, vpon you mote complain
Ouer the terme set betwixt vs twain
That ye ne holden forward, as ye saied
Your ancre, which ye in our hauen laied
Right vs, that ye would comen out of doubt
Or that the Moone ones went about
But times fower, the Mone hath hid her face
Sens thilke day ye went fro this place
And fower times light the world againe
But for all that, yet shall I sothly saine
Yet hath the streme of Scythó not brought
From Athens the ship, yet came it nought
And if that ye the terme reken would
As I for dther true louers doe should
I plaine not (God wot) before my date
But all her letter written I ne may
By order, for it were to me a charge
Her letter was right long, and threto large
But here and there, in time I haue it laied
There as me thought that she hath wel saied
She saied, the saile cometh not again
Ne to thy word, there nis no fey certain
But I wot why ye come not (qd she)
For I was of my loue to you so free
And of the Goddes that ye haue swore
That her vengeaunce fall on you therfore
Ye be not suffisaunt to beare the pain
To much trusted I, well may I plain
Vpon your linage, and your faire tong
And on your teares falsly out wrong
How could ye wepe so by craft, (qd she)
May there such teares fained be.
Now certes, if ye woul haue in memorie
It ought be to you but little glorie
To haue a selie maide thus betraied
To God (qd she) praie I, and oft haue praied
That it be now the greatest price of all
And most honour, that euer you shall befall
And when thine old aunceters painted be
In which men may her worthinesse see
Then praie I God, thou painted be also
That folke may reden, forth by as they go
Lo this is he, that with his flattery
Betrayed hath, and doen her villany
That was his true loue, in thought and dede
But sothly of o point yet may they rede
That ye been like your father, as in this
For he begyled Ariadne ywis
With such an arte, and sueh subteltе
As thou thy seluen hast begyled me
As in that point, although it be not feire
Thou folowest certain, and art his heire
But sens thus sinfully ye me begile
My bodie mote ye seen, within a while
Right in the hauen of Athenes fletyng
Withouten Sepulture and burying
Though ye been harder then is any stone.
And when this letter was forth sent anone
And knewe how hotel and how fals he was
She for dispaire forthid her selfe, alas
Such sorowe hath she, for she beset her so
Beware ye women of your subtilte so
Sens yet this day, men may ensample see
And trusteth now in loue no man but me.

Here endeth the Legende
of Phillis.

Here

Here folowe th the Legende of Hypermestre.

IN Grece whylome were brethren two
Of which that one was called Danao
That many a sonne hath of his bodie wonne
As such false louers ofte conne
Emong his sonnes all there was one
That aldermoste he loued of euerichone
And when this child was borne, this Danao
Shope him a name, and called him Lino
That other brother called was Egiste
That was of loue as false as euer him liste
And many a daughter gate he in his life
Of which he gate vpon his right wife
A doughter dere, and did her for to call
Hypermestra, yongest of hem all
The which childe of her natiuitie
To all good thewes borne was she
As liked to the Goddes or she was borne
That of the lyfe she should be the corne
The werdes that we clepen destine
Hath shapen her, that she must needes be
Vitous, sad, wise, true as stele
And to this woman it accordeth wele
For though that Venus paue her great beutie
With Jupiter compowned so was she
That conscience, trouth, and drede of shame
And of her wifehode for to kepe her name
This thought her was felicitie as here
And reed Mars, was that time of the yere
So feble, that his malice is him raft
Repressed hath Venus his cruell craft
And what with Venus, and other oppression
Of houses, Mars his venime is a don
That Hypermestre dare not handle a knife
In malice, though she should lese her life
But natheless, as heauen gan tho turne
Two bad aspects hath she of Saturne
That made her to die in prison
And I shall after make mencion
Of Danee and Egistes also
And though so be that they were brethē two
For thilke time nas spared no linage
It liked hem to maken mariage
Betwixt Hypermestre, and him Lino
And casten such a day it shall be so
And full accorded was it vtterly
The aray is wrought, the time is fast by
And thus Lino hath of his fathers brother
The doughter wedded, ech of hē hath other
The torches brennen, and the lamps bright
The Sacrifice been full readie dight
Thensence out of the fire reketh sote
The floure, the leefe, is rent vp by the roote
To maken garlands and crounes hie
Full is the place of sound of Minstralcie
Of songs amorous of mariage
As thilke time was the plaine vsage
And this was in the paleis of Egist
That in his hous was lord, right as him list
And thus that day they drimen to an end
The frends taken leue, and home they wend
The night is come, the bride shall go to bed
Egiste to his chamber fast him sped
And priuely let his doughter call
When that the hous voided was of hem all
He looketh on his doughter with glad chere
And to her spake, as ye shall after here.
My right doughter, treasour of mine hart
Sens first that day, þ shapen was my sherte
Or by the fatall suster had my dome
So nye mine hart neuer thing ne come
As thou Hypermestre, doughter dere
Take heede what thy father saieth thee here
And werke after thy wiser euer mo
For alderfirst doughter, I loue thee so
That all the worlde to me nis halfe so leefe
Ne nolde rede thee to thy mischefe
For all the good vnder the colde Mone
And what I meane, it shal be said right sone
With protestacion, as saine these wise
That but thou doe, as I shal thee deuise
Thou shalt be ded, by him þ al hath wrought
At short wordes thou ne scapest nought
Out of my paleis, or that thou be deed
But thou consent, and werke after my reed
Take this to the fearful conclusioun
This Hypermestre cast her eyen doun
And quoke as doeth the leefe of aspe greene
Deed wext her hew, & like as asshen to seene
And saied: Lord and father all your wil
After my might, God wote I shall fulfill
So it be to me no confusion.
I nill ((qd he) haue none exception
And out he caught a knife, as rasour kene
Hide this (qd he) that it be nat sene
And when thine housbond is to bed go
While that he slepeth, cut his throte a two
For in my dreme it is warned me
How that my newewe shall my bane be
But which I not, wherfore I woll be sker
If thou say naie, we two shall haue a biker
As I haue saied, by him that I haue sworne
This Hypermester hath nigh her wit forlorn
And for to passē harmlesse out of that place

She

She granted him, ther was non other grace
And withall a costrell taketh he tho
And saied, hereof a draught or two
Yeue him drinke, when he goeth to reste
As he shall slepe as long as euer thee leste
The narcotikes and apies been so strong
And go thy way, lest that him thinke to long
Out cometh the bride, & with full sobre chere
As is of maidens oft the maniere
To chamber brought, with reuel & with song
And shortly, lest this tale be to long
This Lino and she beth brought to bed
And euery wight out at the doore him sped
The night is wasted, and he fell a slepe
Full tenderly beginneth she to wepe
She rist her up, and dredfully she quaketh
As doeth the branche that zephirus shaketh
And hulst were all in Aragone that citie
As colde as any froste now weyeth she
For pitie by the harte strained her so
And drede of death doth her so much wo
That thrise doune she fill, in such a were
She riste her up, and staggereth here & there
And on her hands fast looketh she
Alas, shall mine hands bloodie be
I am a maide, and as by my nature
And by my semblaunt, and by my vesture
Mine hands been not shapen for a knife
As for to reue no man fro his life
What deuill haue I with the knife to do
And shall I haue my throte corue a two.
Then shall I blede alas, and be shende
And nedes this thing mote haue an ende
Or he or I mote nedes lese our life
Now certes (qd she) sens I am his wife
And hath my faith, yet is it bette for me
For to be dedde, in wifely honestie
Then be a traitour, liuing in my shame
Be as be may, for earnest or for game
He shall awake, and rise and go his waie
Out at this gutter, er that it be daie
And wept full tenderly vpon his face
And in her armes gan him to embrace
And him she iogged, and awaketh soft
And at the windowe lepe he fro the loft
When she hath warned him, & doen him bote
This Lino swift was, and light of foote
And from her ran, a full good paas
This selie woman is so weake, alas
And helpelesse, so that er she ferre went
Her cruell father did her for to hent
Alas Lino, why art thou so vnkinde
Why ne hast thou remembred in thy minde
And taken her, and led her forth with thee
For when she saw that gone away was he
And that she might not so fast go
Ne folowen him, she sate doune right tho
And til she was caught, and fetred in prison
This tale is saied for this conclusion.

Thus endeth the Legendes of good women, and here followeth a Balade of Chaucer.

¶ A goodly Balade of Chaucer.

MOther of nurture, best beloued of all
And freshe flowre, to whom good thrift God sende
Your child, if it lust you me so to call
All be I vnable my selfe so to pretende
To your discrecion I recommende
Mine hart & all, with euery circumstaunce
All wholly to be vnder your gouernaunce.

Moste desire I, and haue, and euer shall
Thing, which might your hartes ease amend
Haue me excused, my power is but small
Nathelesse of right ye ought to commende
My good will, which faine would entende
To do you seruice, for all my sufficiaunce
Is wholly to be vnder your gouernaunce.

Meulx vn: in hart: which neuer shal apall
Aie fresh & new, and right glad to dispende
My time in your seruice, what so befall
Beseching your excellencie to defende
My simpleneſſe, if ignorance offende
In any wise, sith that mine affiaunce
Is wholly to been vnder your gouernaunce.

Daisie of light, verie ground of comfort
The Sunnes doughter (ye hight) as I rede
For when he westreth, farwell your disport
By your nature anone right for pure drede
Of the rude night, ỹ with his boistous wede
Of darkenesse, shadoweth our emispere
Then closen ye, my liues Ladie dere

Dawning the daie, to his kind resort
& Phebus your father, with his stremes rede
Adorneth the morow, consuming the sort
Of mistie cloudes, that woulden ouerlede
True humble hartes, with her mistie hede
Here comfort a daies, when eyen clere
Disclose and spreade my liues Ladie dere.

Ie

Ie vouldray: but great God disposeth
And maketh eschewell by his prouidence
Such thing, as mannes frele wit purposeth
All for the best, if that our conscience
Not grutch it, but in humble pacience
It receiue, for God saieth without fable
A faithfull hart euer is acceptable.

Cautels, who so vseth gladly glosseth
To eschewe such it is right high prudence
What ye saied ones, mine hart oppposeth
That my writing Japes in your absence
Pleased you much better than my presence
Yet can I more, ye be not excusable
A faithfull harte euer is acceptable.

Quaketh my penne, my spirite suppoketh
That in my writing ye find woll some offence
Min hart welkneth thus sone, anon it riseth
Now hotte, now cold, and eft in feruence
That mille is, is caused of negligence
And not of malice, therefore beth merciable
A faithfull hart euer is acceptable.

¶ Lenuoye.

Forth complaint, forth lacking eloquence
Forth little letter of endyting lame
I haue besought my ladies Sapience
Of thy behalfe, to accept in game
Thine inabilitie, doe thou the same
Abide, haue more yet: Ie serue Jouesse
Now forth, I close thee in holy Venus name
Thee shall vnclose my hartes gouernerelle.

Thus endeth this Ballade: And here followeth the Booke of Boecius De consolatione Philosophie.

BOECIVS
De Consolatione Philosophie.

Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi
Flebilis heu mestos cogor inire modos.

ALas, I weping am constrained to begin verse of sorowfull matter, that whilome in florishing studie made delitable ditees. For lo, rending Muses of Poetes, enditen to me things to be written, and dreriе teares. At last no drede ne might ouercome tho muses, that they ne werren fellowes, and folowden my waie, that is to saie: when I was exiled, they that weren of my youth, whilom weelfull and greene, comforten nowe forowfull wierdes, of me old man: for elde is comen vnwarely vpon me, hasted by the harmes that I haue, and sorowe hath commaunded his age to be in me. Heres hore aren shad ouertimeliche vpon my head: and the slack skinne trembleth of mine empted body. Thilk death of men is welefull, that ne commeth not in yeres that be swet, but cometh to wretches often ycleped: Alas, alas, with how deafe an eare death cruell turneth away fro wretches, and nayeth for to close weping eyen. While fortune vnfaithfull, fauoured me with light goods, that sorowfull houre, that is to saie, the death, had almost drent mine hedde: but now for fortune cloudie, hath chaunged her deceiuable chere to mewarde, mine vnpitous life draweth along vnagreeable dwellings. O my frendes, what, or wherto auaunted ye me to been welfull? For he that hath fallen, stode in no stedfast degree.

Hec dum mecum tacitus ipse reputarem, queremoniāq; lacrimabilem stili officio delignarem: astitisse mihi supra verticem visa est mulier reuerendi admodum vultus, oculis ardentibus, & vltra communem &c.

IN the meane while, that I still recorded these thinges with my selfe, and marked my wepely complaint, with office of pointel: I saugh standing aboue ꝑ hight of mine hed a woman of ful great reuerence, by semblant. Her eyen brenning & clere, seing ouer

ouer the common might of men, with a lucly colour, and with such vigour and strength that it ne might not been nempned, all were it so, that she were ful of so great age, that men wouldon not trowen in no manere, that she were of our eld.

The stature of her, was of doutous iudgemente, for sometyme shee constrained and shronke her selven, like to the common measure of menne: And sometyme it seemed, that she touched the heauen, with the hight of her hedde: And when she houe her hedde higher, she perced the selfe heauen, so that the sight of menne lookyng was in idel: her clothes were maked of right dely thredes, and subtell craft of perdurable mattier. The which clothes, she had wouen with her owne hands, as I knew well after, by her selfe declaring, & shewing to me the beauty: The which clothes a darkenesse of a forleten and dispised eld, had dusked and darked, as it is wont to darke by smoked Images.

In the netherest hemme or border of these clothes, menne redde ywouen therein, a Grekish A. that signifieth the life Actiue, and aboue that letter, in the hiest bordure, a Grekish Θ. that signifieth the life Contemplatife. And betwene these twoo letters, there were seen degrees nobly wrought, in manner of ladders, by which degrees, menne might climben from the netherest letter, to the vpperest: natheless hands of some men, hadden kerue that cloth, by violence or by strength and eucrich manne of hem, had borne away soch peces as he might getten. And forsoth this forsaied woman, bare smale bookes in her right hand, and in her left hand she bare a sceptre. And when she saw these Poeticall muses, approchyng about my bed, and enditing words to my weppings, she was a litle annoued, and glowed with cruell yen. Who (qd. she) hath suffered approchen to this sicke manne, these commen strompettes, of which is the place, that menne callen Theatre, the which onely ne allwagen not his sorrowes with remedies, but they would feeden and norish hym with swete venime: Forsoth, that been tho that with thornes, and prickings of talentes of affections, which that been nothyng fructuous nor profitable, distroien the Corne, plentuous of fruicts of reason. For they holden harts of men in vsage, but they ne deliuer no folke fro malady. But if the muses had withdrawen fro me with your flatteries, any an vnconnyng and vnprofita-

ble manne, as been wont to find commonly emong the people, I would well suffer the lasse greuously. For why, in soch an vnprofitable man, myne entents were nothing endamaged. But ye withdrowen fro me thig man, that he hath been nourished in my studies or scholes of Elcaticis, and of Achademicis in Greee. But goeth now rather away ye Mermaidens, which that been swete, till it be at the last, and suffreth this man to be cured and healed by my muses, that is to say, by my notefull sciences. And thus this company of muses yblamed, casten wrothly ỳ chere, dounward to the yearth, and shewing by tednesse her shame, they passeden sorowfully the threshold. And I of whom the sight plonged in teares was darked, so that I ne might not know, what that woman was, of so imperiall authority, I wore all abashed and stonied, and cast my sight doune to the yerth, and began still for to abide, what she would done afterward. Then came she nere, and set her doune vpon the vtterest corner of my bed, and she beholdyng my chere, that was cast to the yearth, heauy and greuous of weping, complained with these words (that I shall saine) the purturbacion of my thought.

Heu quam precipiti merſa profundo. Mens habet, & propria luce relicta. Tendit ad externas ire tenebras. Terenis quoties flatibus acta. Creſcit in immentum noxia cura. Hic quondam cœlo liber aperto.

ALas, how the thought of this man, dreint in ouerthrowyng depenesse, dulleth and forleteth his proper clarenesse, minting to gone into forsaine darkenesse, as oft as his annoious besinesse weyeth without measure, that is driuen with worldly Winds. This man that whilome was free, to whom the heauen was open and knowen, and was wont to gone in heauenly pathes, and saw the lightnesse of the redde Sunne, and beheld the Sterres of the cold Moone, and which Sterre in heauen, vseth wanderyng recourses yslit by diuers spheres. This manne ouercommer had comprehended all this thyng, by number of accomptyng in Astronomy. And ouer this, he was wont to seeken the causes, whens the sowning winds mouen, and bisien the smoth water of the Sea. And what spirit tourneth the stable heauen. And why the sterre riseth out of the red East, to fallen in the Westeren waues. And what attempreth the lusty houres of the

first Sommer season, and highteth and apparaileth the yearth with rosie floures. And who maketh the plentuous Autumpne, in full yeares fleeten with heauy Grapes. And eke this manne was wont to tell the diuers causes of nature that were hidde. Alas, how lightly is empted the light of his thought, and his necke is pressed with heauy chaines, and beareth his chere enclined adowne for the great weight, and is constrained to looken on the foule yearth.

Sed magis medicine (inquit) tẽpus est quã querele. Boe. Tum vero totis in me intenta luminibus. Philo. Tu ne ille es (ait) qui nostro quondam lacte nutritus, nostris educatus alimentis, in virilis animi robur euaseras, &c.

But time is now of Medicine (qd she) more thẽ complaint. Forsoth then shee entendyng to me ward, with all the looking of her eyen said. Art not thou he (qd. she) that whilome I nourished with my Milke, and fostred with my meats, til thou were escaped ẽ commen to ỹ courage of a parfait manecertes, I yaue thee soch armours, that if thou thy selfe, ne haddest first cast hem away, they shoulden haue defended thee in sikernesse, that may not be ouercomen. Knowest thou not me. Why art thou stil? Is it for shame, or for astonyng? It were me leuer it were for shame, but it seemeth me that astonyng hath oppressed thee. And whẽ she saw me not only still, but rather without office of tongue, and all dombe, she laied her hand softly vpon my brest, and said: Here is no perill (qd. she) he is fallen into a litarge, which that is a common sickenesse, to harts that been deceiued. He hath a little forgeten himselfe. But certes he shall lightly remembren himselfe, if so bee that he hath knowen me er now. And that he may doen so, I will wipe his eyen a little, that be darked by the cloud of mortall things. These words said she, and with the lappe of her garment, yplited in a krounce, she dried mine eyen that weren ful of the wawes of my wepings.

Tunc me discussa liquerunt nocte tenebre,
Luminibusq; prior redit vigor. Vt cum precipiti glomerantur sidera choro. Nimbosisq; polus stetit imbribus. Sol latet, ac non dum cœlo venientibus astris, &c.

Thus when that Night was discussed away, Darkenesse forlete mee, and to my eyen repaired againe her first strength. And right as by ensample, as the Sunne is hidde when the Sterres been couered with Cloudes, by a swift wind that hight Chorus, and the Firmamẽt stant derked by wet plungy clouds, And that the Sterres not appearen vpon the heauen, so that the Night semed spread vpon the yearth: If then the wind that hight Boreas, ysent out of the Caue of the Countrey of Thrace, beateth this night, that is to saun, chaseth it away, and discouereth the closed day: Than shineth Phebus, ybaken with sodaine light, and smiteth with his beames in marueiling eyen.

Haud alter tristicie nebulis dissolutis, hausi cœlum, & ad cognoscendam medicantis, faciem, mentem recepi. Itaq; vbi in eam deduxi oculos, intuitumq; defixi, reipicio nutricem meam, in cuius ab adolescentia, &c.

Right so and none otherwise, the Cloudes of sorow dissolued, and doen away, I tooke heauen, and receiued mind to knowen the face of my Physicien: so that I sette mine eyen vpon her, and fastened my looking. I beheld my Nourice Philosophy, in whose house I had conuersed fro my youth, and I saied thus. O thou Maistresse of all vertues, discended from the souerane seat, why art thou commen into this solitary place of myne exile? Art thou commen, for thou art made culpable with me of false blames. O (qd. she) my nource, should I forsake thee now, and should I not parten with thee by commen trauaile, the charge that thou hast suffered for emy of my name? Certes, it were not lefull ne sitting to Philosophy, to letten without company, the way of hym that is innocent: Should I then redout my blame, and agrise as though there were befallen a new thing? For trowest thou that Philosophy, be now alderfirst assailed in perilles, by soike of wicked manner? Haue I not striuen with full great strife, in old tyme, before the age of my Plato, ayenst the foolehardinesse of folye? And eke the same Plato liuing, his Maister Socrates, deserued victory of vnrightfull death in my presence. The heritage of the which Socrates, the heritage, is to saine the Doctrine, of the which Socrates, in his opinion

of

of felicitie, that I cleape welefulneſſe: when that the people of Epicuriens and Stoiciens, and many other, enforced theim to go rauiſh, euery man for his part, that is to ſaine: that euerich of hem would drawen, to the defence of his opinion, the wordes of Socrates. They as in party of their pray, to drowne me, criyng and debatyng there ayenſt, and corueu and renten my clothes, that I had wouen with myne owne hands. And with the clothes that they had araced out of my clothes, they wenten away, wenyng that I had gone with hem euery dele. In which Epicuriens and Stoiciens, for as moch as there ſemed ſome traces and ſteppes of my habite, the foly of wening the Epicuriens and Stoiciens, my familiers, peruerted ſome, through the errour of the wicked multitude of hem: This is to ſain, for they ſemed Philoſophers, they weren purſued to the death and ſlaine. So if thou haſt not knowen the exilyng of Anaxagoras, ne the enpoyſoning of Socrates, ne the tourments of Zeno, for they weren ſtraungers, yet mightеſt thou haue knowen the Senecas, the Canios, and the Soranos: Of which folke, the renoume is neither ouer old ne vnſolempne. The which menne nothyng elſ ne brought to the death, but onely for they were enformed of my maners, and ſemeden moost vnlike to the ſtudies of wicked folke. And for thy thou oughteſt not to wondren, though that I in the bitter ſea, be driuen with tempeſts blowing about. In the which this is my moſt purpoſe, that is to ſain, to diſpleaſen wicked men. Of which shrewes, all be the hooſt neuer ſo great, it is to diſpiſe, for it is not gouerned with no leader of reaſon, but it is rauiſhed onely by fletyng errour, folily and lightly. And if they ſometime, make an hooſt ayenſt vs, aſſaile vs as ſtrenger: our leader draweth togither, his richeſſes into his tour, and they been ententife, about ſarpleris or ſachelles, vnprofitable for to taken. But we then been high abouen, ſiker from all tumult and wood noiſe, warneſtored and encloſed in ſoch a paleis, whither as that clatteryng or annoying foly, may not attaine, we ſtorne ſoch raueners, and henters of foulеſt things.

Quiſquis compoſito ſerenus euo, Fatum ſub pedibus egit ſuperbum: Fortunamq; tuens vtramque rectus, Inuictum potuit tenere vultum, &c.

Who ſo it bee that cleare of vertue, ſadde, and well ordinate of liuyng, that hath putte vnder foot the proud wierdes, and looketh vpright vppon either Fortune, he may holden his chere vndiſcomfited.

The rages ne the manaces of the ſea, commouyng and chaſyng vnware, heat from the bottome, ne ſhall not moue that manne, ne the vnſtable Mountaigne that hight Vlefenus, that wytheth out through his broken Chimeneis, ſmokyng Fires, ne the way of Thonder leite, that is wont to ſmiten high Toures, ne ſhall nat moue that man. Whereto then wretches drede ye Tyrants, that ben wood, and felonous with any ſtrength? Hope after nothyng, ne drede thou not: and ſo ſhalt thou diſarmen the ire of thilke vnmighty tyraunt. But who that quakyng dredeth, or deſireth thing that is not ſtable of his right, that manne that ſo doeth, hath caſt away the ſhild, and is remoued fro his place, & enlaceth him in the chaine, with the which he may bee drawen.

Sentis ne (inquit) hec? Atq; animo illabuntur tuo? Expers ne es lyre? Quid fles? Quid lachrimis manas? Si operam medicantis expectas, oportet vt vulnus detegas tuum, &c.

Feleſt thou (qd. ſhe) theſe things? And entren they aught in thy courage? Art thou like an Aſſe to the harpe? Why wepeſt thou? Why ſpilleſt thou teares? If thou abideſt after helpe of ỳ Lech, thee behoueth diſcouer thy wound? Tho I had gathered ſtrength in my courage, and anſwerd & ſaid. And nedeth it (qd. I) of rehearſing, or of admonicion, & ſheweth it not inough by himſelf, the ſharpnes ỳ wereth wood againſt mee. Me moueth it not thee to ſe the face, or ỳ manner of this place. is this ỳ library that thou haddeſt choſen for a right certain ſiege, to thee in mine hous there as thou diſputeſt oft with mee, of ỳ ſcience of things, touching diuinite, & touching mankind? was then mine habite ſoch as it is now, was my face or chere, ſoch as is now, whē I ſought with the ſecrets of nature, when thou enformedeſt my maners, & ỳ reaſon of all my life, to the enſample of thorder of heauen? Is not this the guerdon that I refer to thee, to whom I haue be obeiſant? Certes, thou enformedeſt by ỳ mouth of Plato this ſentence, ỳ is

to saine: that common things or communalities weren blissull, if they that had studied all fully to wisdome, gouernedon thilke thinges: or eis if it so befel, that the gouernours of communaltis, studien to gette wisedome. Thou saidest eke by the mouth of the sated Plato, that it was a necessary cause, wise menne to taken and desiren the gouernaunce of comen thyngs, for that the gouernaunce of citees, yleft in the hands of felonous tourmentours, citizeins ne shoulden not bringen in pestilence and distruccion to good folke. And therefore I following thilke auctbours, desired to put forth in execucion and in act, of commen administracion thilke thyngs, that I had learned of thee, emong my secret resting whiles, thou and God, that put in the thoughts of wise folke, been knowen with me. that nothyng ne brought me to maistry or dignity, but the common study of all goodnesse. And therfore cometh it, that betwene wicked folke and me, haue been greuous discords, that ne mighten not be released by prayers: for this liberty hath the fredome of conscience, that the wrath of more mighty folke, hath alway ben dispised of me, for sauacion of right. How oft haue I resisted and withstand, that man that hight Canigast, that made alway thassaut, ayenst the prosper fortunes of poor feeble folke? How oft eke haue I put of or cast out hym Triguill, Prouost of the kyngs hous, both of the wrongs that he had begonne to doen, and eke fully performed? How often haue I couered and defended by the auctbority of me, put ayenst perilles, that is to saine: put myne auctbority in peril, for the wretched poore folke, that the couetise of straungers vnpunished, turmenteden alway with mischaces, and greuaunces out of nomber? Neuer manne yet drow me fro right to wrong. When I saw the fortunes and the richesses of the people of the Prouinces, been harmed and amenused, either by priuy rauines, or by comen tributes or cariages, as sory was I as they that suffreden the harm. Elose. Whē Theodorike king of Gothes in a dedde yeare had his garners full of corne, and commaunded that no man should buy no corne, till his corne were sold, and at a greuous dere pris: Boece withstood that ordinaunce, and ouercame it, knowyng all this the king Theodoricke himselfe. Coempcion is to say, comen achate or buying togither, that were establisshed vpan the people, by soch a manner imposition, as who so bought a bushell of Corne, he muste yeuen the kyng the sixteth part. Textus. When it was in the sore hongry tyme, there was establisshed greuous and vnprofitable coempcion, that men seen well, it should greatly tormenten and endomagen all the Prouince of Campaine. I tooke strife ayenst the Prouost of the Prouince, for the common profite. And the knowing of it, I ouercame it, so that the coempcion was not asked, ne tooke effect.

Pauline a Counsailour of Roome, the richesses of the whych Pauline, the houndes of the Paleis, that is to say, the officers, wouldden haue deuoured by hope and couetise: yet drow I out of the iowes, of hem that gapeden. And for as moch as the paine of the accusacion a iudged before, ne should not sodainly henten, ne punnisben wrongfully Albine a Counsailour of Roome, I putte me ayenst the hates and indignacions of the accusour Cipzian. Is it not then inough, seng that I haue purchased great discords ayenst my selfe? But I ought be more assured ayenst other folke, that for the loue of rightwisnesse I neuer reserued nothyng to my selfe, to hemward of the kyngs halle, by which I were the more siker. But thzough tho same accusours accusyng, I am condempned. Of the number of which accusours, one Basilius that whilome was chased out of the kyngs seruice, is now compelled in accusyng of my name, for nede of forsame mony.

Also, Opilion and Gaudencius, haue accused me: All be it, so that the Justice Regall had whilome demed theim both, to gone into exile, for her tretcheries and frauds without number. To which iudgement they nolden not obey, but defended hem by the sikernesse of holy houses, that is to saine, fledden into Seintuary: And then when this was apperceiued by the kyng, he commaunded, but if they auoided the Citie of Rauenne, by certayne day assigned, that menne should marken hem on the forhedde, with an hotte yron, and chasen hem out of the toune. Now what thyng semeth might be likened to this cruelty, for certes, this saine day was reteined the accusing of my name, by thilke same accusours. What may be saied hereto? Hath my studye and my conning deserued thus, or eis the forsaied dampnacion of me, made theim rightful accusours or no? Was not fortune ashamed of this? Certes, all had not fortune ben ashamed, that innocence was accused, yet ought she haue had shame of the

filth

filth of myne accusours. But aske thou in some, of what gilt I am accused. Men sain that I would sauen the company of the Senatours. And desirest thou to heren, in what maner I am accused, that I should haue disstourbed the accusour to bearen Letters, by which he should haue made the Senatours gilty, ayenst the kyngs roiall Maiesty. O Maistresse, what demest thou of this? Shal I forsake this blame, that I ne be no shame to thee? Certes, I haue would it (that is to say) the sauacion of the Senate, ne I shall neuer let to wilne it, and that I confesse and am a knowe, but the entent of the accusour to been disstourbed, shall cease. Shall I clepe that a felony or a sinne, that I haue desired the sauacion of the ordre of the Senate. And certes, had thilke same Senate, doen throughe her decretes and her iudgements, as though it were a sinne and a felony, that is to wilne the sauacion of them. But holy that lieth alway to himselfe, may not chaunge the merit of things, ne I trowe not by the iudgement of Socrates, that it were lefull to me, to hide the soth, ne assent to leasings: but certes, how so euer it be of this, I putte it to gessen or prisen, of the iudgement of thee, and of wise folke, of which thing all the ordinaunce and the soth (for as much as folke that been to comen after our daies, shall knowen it) I haue putte it in Scripture, and in remembraunce. For touchyng the Letters falsely made, by which Letters I am accused, to haue hoped the freedome of Rome, what apertaineth me to speaken thereof. Of whych Letters, the fraud had been shewed apertly, if I had had liberty for to haue vsed and been at confession of mine accusours, the whych thyng in all needs hath great strength For what other fredome may menne hopen? Certes, I would that some other fredome might be hoped, I would then haue aunswered, by the woordes of a man, that hight Camus: For when he was accused of Canius, Cesar Germanes soonne, that he was knowyng and consentyng, of a conuiracion made ayenst hym. This Canius answered thus: if I had wist it, thou haddest not wist it. In whych thyng, sorow hath not so dulled my witte, that I plain only, that shrewd folke apparailen felonies against vertue, but I wonder greatly, how that they may performe things that they haue hoped for to doen, for why ne will ne shrewdnesse that cometh paraventure of our defaut. But it is like a Monster and a marueile, how that in the present sight of GOD, may ben achieued and performed such thynges, as euery felonous manne, hath conceiued in his thought against innocents. For whych thyng, one of thy familers not vnskilfull, asked thus. If GOD is: whens commen wicked things. But all had it been lefull that felonous folke, that now desiren the blood, and the death of all good menne. And eke of the Senate, haue wilned to gone distroyen me, whom they haue seen alway batailen and defenden good men and eke all the Senate, that had not deserued of the fathers (that is to saine of the Senatours) that they shoulden wil my destruccion. Thou remembrest well as I gesse, that when I would doen or saine any thing, thou thy selfe alway present ruledest me.

At the citee of Verone, when that the king gredy of common slaughter, cast hym to transporten vpon all thorder of the senate, the gilt of his royall Maiesty, of the which gilt, that Albin was accused, with how great sikernesse of perill to me, defended I al the Senate: Thou wotest well that I say soth, ne I ne auaunted me neuer in praysyng of my selfe. For alway, when any wight receiueth precious renome, in auaunting of himselfe, or his werkes, he amenuseth the secree of his conscience.

But now thou maiest well seen, to what end I am commen for myne innocency. I receiue paine of false felony, for gwerdone of very vertue. And what open confessioun of felony had euer Judges, so accordaunt in crucite, that is to saine, as mine accusing hath. that either errour of mans witte, or els condicion of Fortune, that is vncertaine to all mortall folke, ne submitted some of hem, that is to say, that it ne enclined some Judge to haue pite or compassion. For although I had been accused, that I would brenne holy houses, and strangle Priests with wicked swoard, or that I had greithed death to all good men, algates the sentence should haue punished me present confessed ad conuict.

But now I am remoued from the Citee of Rome, almost fiue hundred thousand paas, I am without defence dampned, to proscripcion and to death, for the studies and bounties that I haue doen to the Senate. But o well been they worthy of merite, as who saieth nay, there might yet neuer none of hem be conuict of soch a blame as mine is. Of whiche trespace mine accusours seen ful well the

dignity, for they would darken it with medling of some felony. They baren me on hond and saied, that I had pointe and defouled my conscience with Sacrilege, for couetise of dignitie: and certes, thou thy selfe that art planted in me, chasedest out of the siege of my courage, all couetise of mortall thynges, ne Sacrilege, ne had no leaue to haue a place in me before thine eyen. For thou dreppedest euery day in mine eares, and in my thought thilke commaundement of Pythagoras, that is to say: Wenne shall seruen to God, and not to Goddes. Ne it was not conuenient ne none need, to taken helpe of the foulest spirits, I that thou hast ordeined, and set in soch excellence, that thou madest me like to God, and ouer this, the right cleane secret chamber of mine hous, that is to say, my wife, and the company of mine honest frends, & my wines father, as well holy as worthy to bee reuerensed for his deedes, defenden me from all suspecion of soch blame. But oh malice. For they that accusen me, taken of the Philosophy faith of so great blame, for they trowen that I haue had affinite to malifice or enchauntment, bicause that I am replenished, and fulfilled with thy teachings, and enformed of thy manners. And thus it sufficeth not onely, that thy reuerence ne auaile me naught, but if thou of thy free will, rather be blemished with mine offencion. But certes, to the harmes that I haue, there betideth yet this encrease of harme, that the gelling and the iudgement of much folke, ne looken no thing to the deserts of things, but onely to the auenture of fortune, and iudgen that only soch things been purueied of God, which that temporall wilfulnesse commaundeth.

Glosa. As thus, that if a wight haue prosperite, he is a good manne, and worthy to haue that prosperity, and who so hath aduersity, he is a wicked manne, and God hath forsake him, and he is worthy to haue that aduersity. This is the opinion of some folke, and therof cometh that good gelling, first of all thing forsaked wretches. Certes, it greeueth me to thinke right now, in diuers sentences that the people saith of me: and thus much I say, that the last charge of contrarious Fortune is this, that when any blame is laied vpon a caitife, men wenen, that he hath deserued that he suffereth. And I that am put away from good men, and dispoiled of dignities, and defouled of my name by gelling, haue suffred turmentes for my good deeds. Certes, me seemeth that I see the felonous couines of wicked men habounden in ioy and in gladnesse, & I see that euery lozell, shapeth him to find new fraudes, for to accuse good folke, and I see that good folke be ouerthrowen, for dreede of my peril, and euery luxurious tormentour, dare doen all felony vnpunished, and be excited therto by yelding, and innocents bee not onely dispoiled of sikernesse, but of defence, and therto me list to crien to God in this maner.

O Itelliferi conditor orbis, Qui perpetuo nixus solio, Rapido cœlum turbine verlas, Legemq; pati sidera cogis. Vt nunc pleno lucida coron. Totis fratris obuia flammis. Concordat stellas luna minores: Nunc obscuro pallida cornu Phebo proprior lumina perdat, &c.

Thou maker of the wheele, that bearest the sterres, which that art fastened to thy purdurable chaire, and turnest the heauen with a rauesshyng sweigh, and constrainest the sterres to suffer thy Law: so that the Moone some time shining with her full hornes, meeting with all the beames of the Sunne her brother, hideth the sterres that been lesse. And sometime when the Moone pale, with her darke hornes approcheth the Sunne, leseth her lightes: and that the cuyn sterre Hesperus, which that in the first tyme of the night, bringeth first her cold arising, commeth eft ayen her vsed course and is pale by the Morrow at rising of the Sunne, and is then yeleped Lucifer. Thou restraineste the day by shorter dwelling, in the tyme of the cold Winter, that maketh the leaues fall. Thou deudest the swift tides of the night, when the hote Sommer is comen. Thy might attempreth the variaunt seasons of the yeare, so that Zepherus the debonaire wind, bringeth ayen in the first Summer season, the leaues that the wind that hight Boreas, hath reft away in Autumpne, that is to say, the last end of Sommer, & the seedes that the sterre that hight Arcitures sew, ber woxen high cornes, when the sterre Sirins enchaseth hem. There is nothing vnbounden from this old Law, ne forgetteth the werke of his proper estate.

O thou gouernour, gouerning all thinges by certaine ende, why refuseste thou onely to gouerne the werkes of menne by due maner? Why suffreste thou, that slidyng fortune tourneth so greate enterchaunges of thynges, so that annoyous payne that should duely punnish Felones, punnsheth Innocents; And folke of wicked manners, sitten in high

chaires,

chaires, and annoyeng folke treden (and that wrightfully) on the neckes of holy men. And vertue clere and shining naturally, is hid in derke derkenesses, and the rightful man bareth the paine & the blame of the felons. Ne the forswearing, ne the fraude couerde and kempt with a false colour, ne annoyeth not to shrewednesse, the which shrewednesse, whan hem list vsen her strength, they reioysen hem to put vnder hem ỹ soueraigne kings, which that the people without nombre dreden. O thou what so euer thou be that knittest all bondes of things, looke on these wretches, earthes, we men that been not a foule partie, but a faire part of so great a werke: we been tormented in this sea of fortune. Thou gouernour, withdrawe, and restraine the rauishing flodes, and fasten and ferme these earthes stable, with thilke bonde, with which thou gouernest heauen that is so large.

Hec vbi continuato dolore delatraui, illa vultu placido nihilq; meis questibus mota. Phi. Cum te (inquit) mestum, lacrimantemq; vidissem: illico miserum exulemq; cognoui. Sed quam id longinquum esset exilium.

WHan I had with a continuall sorowe sobbed, or broken out these chinges, thee with her chere pesible and nothing amoued with my complaints, said thus. When I say thee (qd she) sorowfull and weeping, I wist anon that thou were a wretch and exiled: But I wist neuer how ferre thine exile was, if the tale ne had yshewed it mee. But certes al be thou ferre fro thy countrey, thou nart not put out of it, but thou hast failed of thy way & gone amisse. And if thou hast leuer for to wene that thou be put out of thy countrey, than hast thou put out thy selfe, rather than any other wight hath, for no wight (but thou thy selfe) ne might neuer haue done that to thee: For if thou remember thee of what countrey thou art borne, it nis nat gouerned by Emperours ne by gouernement of multitude, as weren ỹ countreis of hem of Athens, but one lorde and one king, and that is God, that is lorde of thy countrey, which that reioyseth him of the dwelling of his citizens & not for to put hem in exile. Of the which lord it is a freedome to be gouerned by the bryde of him, and obey to his iustice. Hast thou forgotten thilke old law of thy citie, in the which citie it is ordeined and established, that what wight hath leuer founde therein his seate or his house than els where, he may not be exiled by no right from that place. For who so that is conteined within the palais of thilke cite, there is no dreade that he may deserue to be exiled. But who that letteth the will tenhabite there, he forfetteth also to deserue to be a citizen of thilke citie. So that I saye, that the face of this place ne moueth me not so mickell, as thine owne face. Ne I ne aske not rather the walles of thy librarie, apparailed and wrought with yuorie & with glasse, than after the seate of thy thought, in which I put not whilom bookes, but I put that, that maketh bookes worthie of price or precious: that is to saye, sentence of my bookes. And certainly of thy deserres bestowed in comen good, thou hast said sothe, but after the multitude of thy good deedes, thou hast said fewe. And of the honestie or of the falsenesse of things that been opposed against thee, thou hast remembred things that be knowen to al folke. And of the felonies and fraudes of thine accusours, it seemeth thee to haue touched it, forsooth rightfully and shortly: all mighten the same thinges better & more plentuously been couthe in the mouth of the people, that knoweth all this. Thou hast eke blamed greatly & complayned of the wrongfull decde of the Senate. And thou hast sorawed for my blame, and thou hast wopen for the dommage of thy renoun that is apeired, and thy last sorowe enchased ayen fortune, complaynest the guerdons ne be not euenly yolden to the deserres of folke. And in thy latter ende of thy woode Muse, thou prayedst that thilke peace that gouerneth the heauen, shoulde gouerne the earth. But for that many tribulactions of affections haue assailed the, and sorow and yre and weping to drawen thee diuerslly, as thou art now feeble of thought, mightier remedies ne shullen not yet touchen thee, for which we willen somedele vsen lighter medicines, so that thilke passions that be waxen hard in swelling by perturbactions flowing into thy thought, mowen wexe esie & softe, to receiue the strength of a more mighty and more egre medicine by an easier touching.

Cum phebi radijs graue Cancri sidus inestuat, Tum qui larga negantibus, Sulcis semina credidit, Elusus Cereris fide, Quernas pergat ad arbores. Nunquam purpureum nemus Lecturus violas petas &c.

WHan that the heauie sterre of the Cancre enchaseth by the beames of Phebus: that is to sain. Wha that Phebus the sunne is in the signe of Cancre, who so yeueth then largely his seedes to the feldes that refusen to receiue hem, let him gon begiled of trust that he had to his cozne, to akoznes of okes. If thou wilt gather violets, ne go thou not to the purple woode, whan the feld chitking agriseth of cold, by the feinesse of ỳ wind that hight Aquilone. If thou destrest oz wilt blen grapes, ne seke thou nat a glotons hond to strame and pzelle the stalkes of the vyne in the sirste Sommer ceason. Foz Bacus the God of Wine, hath rather yeuen his yeftes to Autumpne the latter ende of the sommer. God tokeneth and assigneth the times abling hem to her pzoper offices, ne he suffereth not the stoundes, which that him selfe hath deuided & contained to been ymedled togither: and foz thy he that fozietteth certaine ordinaunce of doing by ouerthzowing way, he ne hath no glad issue oz ende of his werkes.

Primum igitur, pateris ne me pauculis rogationibus statum tue mentis attingere, atq; tentare? vt quis modus sit tue curationis intelligam &c.

FIrst wouldest thou suffer me to touche and assaye, the estate of thought by a fewe demaunds, so that I may vnderstand by, the maner of thy curatiõe Aske me (qd I) at thy will, that thou wolt, and I shal answere. Tho said she thus: Whether weneste thou (qd she) that this wozld be gouerned folibly by happes and foztunes, oz els weneste thou that there be in it any gouernement of reasone B. Certes qd I) I ne trow nat in no maner that so certaine things should be moued by Foztunous foztune, But I wote well that God, maker and maister is gouernour of his werke, ne was neuer yet day that might put me out of the sothnesse of that sentence. Ꝑ. So is it (qd she) foz the same thing lange thou a litle here belozne, and bewailedest and wepteste, that onely men were put out of the cure of God, foz of al other thinges thou ne douteste nat, that they nere gouerned by reason. But oughe, I wonder certes gretly why that thou art sicke, sens that thou art put in so holsome a sentence: But let vs seken deeper. I coniect that there lacketh I not what. But say me this. Sens that thou ne douteste not that this wozlde be gouerned by God, with which gouernaile takeste thou hede that it is gouerned. Vnneth (qd I) know I the sentence of thy question, so that I ne may not yet answeren to thy demaundes. I was not discerned (qd she) that there ne failed some what by which the maladie of perturbation is crept into thy thought, so as the strength of thy paleys shining is open: but say me this. Remembzeste thou what is thende of things, and whider thentencion of all kinde tendeth. I haue herde tolde it some time (qd I) but dzerinesse hath dulled my memozy. Certes (qd she) thou wooteste wel whence all things be comen and pzoceden. I wote wel (qd I) and answerde, that God is beginning of all. And how may this be qd she) that sens thou knoweste the beginning of things, ỳ thou ne knoweste not what is the ende of things, but such been the customes of perturbation, and this power they han that they may moue a man from his place. that is to say, from the stablenesse and perfection of his knowing, but certes they may nat al arace him, ne alien him in all: but I would that thou wouldeste answere to this. Remembzeste thou that thou arte a man? B. Why should I not remember that (qd I) Ph. Wayst thou not tel me than (qd she) what thing is a man? Askeste thou not me (qd I) whether that I be a reasonable moztal beast, I wote well and confesse that I am it. Wiste thou neuer yet that thou were any other thing (qd she). No (qd I.) Nowe well know I (qd she) other cause of thy maladie, and that right great: Thou hast lefte foz to knowen thy selfe what thou arte, through which I haue plainly founden the cause of thy maladie, oz els the entre of recouering of heale. Foz why? Foz thou art cõfounded with fozyeting of thy selfe: Foz thou sozowedst that thou art exiled of thy pzoper goods. And foz thou ne wiste what is thende of thinges, foz thy demeste thou that felonous and wicked men, be mighty and welful: and foz thou hast fozyeten by which gouernementes the wozld is gouerned, foz thy weneste thou ỳ these mutations of foztune fleten without gouernour. These ben the causes not only to malady, but certes great causes to deth: But I thank the actour, and the maker of heale, that nature hath not al fozleten the. I haue great nourishing of thin heale, and that is the sothe sentence of gouernaunce of the wozlde, that thou bileueste that the gouerning of it is not subiect ne vnderput to the folie of these happes aucnturous, but to the reason of god, & therefoze

foze doubt thee nothing, foz of this litle spark thine heate of life shall shine. But foz as much as it is not time yet of faster remedies, and the nature is of thoughts thus discened that as oft as they caste away sothe opinions, they clothen hem in false opinions. Of the which false opinions the darkenesse of perturbacion wexeth vp, that confoundeth the very inlight. And that darkenesse shall I somewhat assaye to maken thinne and weake, by light & meanliche remedies, so that after that the darknes of dissetuing thinges be done away, thou may know the shyning of very light.

Nubibus atris condita nullum fundere possunt sydera lumen. Si mare voluens turbidus auster misceat estum: Vitrea dudum, Parq; serenis &c.

THE sterres couered with blacke cloudes ne mowe yeten adoun no light, if the trouble wynde that hight Auster, turning and walowing the sea medeleth the hete, that is to saine the boyling vp from the botome. The wawes that were whylome cleare as glasse, and like to the faire bright dayes, withstant anon the sightes of men, by the filthe and ozdure that is resolued. And the fleting streme that retleth doun diuersly from high mountaines is arrested and resisted ofte time by the encountring of a stone, that is departed and fallen from some roche. And foz thy, if thou wilt loken and deme sothe with clere light, and holden the way with a right path weiue thou ioye, dziue fro dzede, fleme thou hope, ne let no sozowe appzoche, that is to sayne: Let none of these four passions ouercome oz blende thee. Foz cloudie and derk is thilk thought & bound with bzidels where as these thinges reigne.

Explicit liber primus.

Post hec pauliſper obticuit, atq; vbi attentionem meam modeſta taciturnitate collegit, ſic exorſa eſt. Si penitus egritudinis tue cauſas, habitumq;. &c.

AFter this shee stinte a litle, and after that she had gathered by a temper stilnesse myne attencion, as who so might saine thus. After these thinges shee stinte a little, and whan shee apperceiued by a temper stilnesse, that I was ententike to heren her, she began to speak in this wise. If I (qd she) haue vnderstonden & knowen vtterly, the causes & the habite of thy maladye, thou languishest & art defeited foz desire and talent of thy rather foztune. Shee that yike Foztune only that is chaunged as thou sayest to the ward, hath peruerted the clerenes & the estate of thy courage. I vnderstanding the felle oz manyfolde colours & discentes of thilke meruailous monster foztune, & how she vseth full flatering familiaritie with hem that shee enfozceth to begyle, so long, til that she confound with vnsuffrable sozowe, hem that she hath left in dispaire vnpuruyed. And if thou remembrest well the kinde, the maners, & the deserte of thilk foztune, thou shalt wel know that as in her thou neuer ne hadest, ne hast ylost any faire thing: But (as I trow) I shal not gretly trauailen to done thee remembren on these thinges. Foz thou were woont to hurtelen and dispisen her with many wozds, whã she was blandishing and present, and pursudest her with sentences that were drawen out of mine entre, that is to say, of mine enfozmation: but no sodaine mutation ne betydeth not without a maner chaunging of cozages. And so it is befal, that thou art a litle departed from the peace of thy thought, but nowe is tyme that thou drinke and taraste some softe and delitable thinges, so that whan they bee entred within thee, it mowen make way to stronger drinkes of medecins. Come now fozth therefoze the suasion of swetnes rethozien, which that goeth onely the right waye, while shee forsaketh not myne estatutes. And with Rhetozike come fozth musike a damosell of our house, that singeth nowe lighter modes oz pzolacions and now heauier. What eileth the man? what is it that hath cast thee into mourning

mourning and into weping? I trowe that thou hast seen some new thing and vncouthe? Thou wenest that fortune be chaunged ayen me, but thou wenest wrong if that thou wene alway tho bene her maners. She hath rather kept as to thee warde, her propre stablenesse in the chaunging of her selfe: right such was shee whan shee flattered thee and disceiued thee, with vnlefull likings and false welefulnesse. Thou hast now knowen and atteint the doubtous or double visage of thilk blinde goddesse Fortune. She that yet coureth and wympleth her to other folke, hath shewed her selfe euery deale to thee: If thou approuest her and thinkest that shee is good, vse her manners and plaine thee nat, and if thou agriefest her false trecherie, dispise and cast away her that playeth so harmefully, for shee that is now cause of so much sorowe to thee, should be to thee cause of peace & of ioye. She hath forsaken the forsoth, the which that neuer man may be siker, that shee ne shal forsaken him. Glose. But natheless some bookes haue the texte thus. Forsoth she hath forsaken the, ne ther nys no man siker that shee ne hath not forsaken. Holdest thou than thilke welefulnesse precious to thee that shal passen, & is present fortune derewoorth to thee, which that nys not faithfull for to dwell, and whan she goeth away, that she bringeth a wight in sorow. For sens shee may not be with holden at a mannes will, she maketh him a wretche whan she departeth from him. What other thing is fleting fortune, but a maner shewing of wretchednesse that is to come. Ne it sufficeth not only to looken on thing that is present before the eyen of a man, but wisedome looketh and measureth thende of things, and the same chaunging from one to another, that is to saien, from aduersitie into prosperitie, maketh that the manaces of fortune ne been not for to dreden, ne the flattering to be desired. Thus at last it behoueth thee to suffren with euen will in patience, all that is done within the floore of fortune, that is to saie, in this worlde, sithe thou haste ones put thy necke vnder the yoke of her. For if thou wolt writen a lawe of wending and of dwelling to fortune, which that thou hast chosen freely to been thy lady: Arte thou not wrongfull in that, and makest fortune wroth and asper by thine impacience, and yet thou mayst nat chãgen her?

If thou committest and betakest thy sayles to the winde, thou shalt be shouen, nat thider that thou wouldest, but whider that the wind shoueth the. If thou castest thy seedes in the feldes, thou shouldest haue in minde that the yeres been amonges otherwhile plentuous and otherwhile barein. Thou hast betaken thy selfe to the gouernance of fortune, and for thy it behoueth thee to been obeisaunt to the maners of thy lady. Enforcest thou thee to aresten or withholden the swiftnesse & the swoope of her turning whele? O thou foole of al mortall fooles, if Fortune began to dwell stable, she ceassed than to ben Fortune.

Hec cum superba verterit vices dextra, exestuantis more terruit Euripi. Dudum tremendos seua proterit reges, Humilienq; vidit subleuat fallax vultum. Non illa dura miseros audit, haud curat fletus.

When Fortune with a proude righte hand, with tourned her chaunginge stoundes, shee fareth like the maners of the boyling Euripe.

Glosa. Euripe is an arme of the Sea, that ebbeth and floweth, and some tyme the streame is on the o side, and sometime on that other.

Texte. Shee cruell fortune casteth adoun kinges, that whylome weren ydrad, and shee deceiuable enhaunceth vp the humble cheere of him that is discomfited: ne shee neither heareth ne recketh of wretched wepings. And she is so hard, that she laugheth and scorneth the weping of hem, the which she hath maked to wepe with her free will. Thus she playeth, thus she proueth her strengthes, and sheweth a great wonder to all her seruaunts, if that a wight is seen welefull, and ouerthrowe in an houre.

Vellem autem pauca tecum, Fortune ipsius verbis agitare. Tu igitur an ius postules animaduerti. P. Quid tu O homo ream me agis cotidianis querelis, &c.

Certes I would pleden with thee a fewe thinges, vsing the wordes of fortune: take hede now thy selfe, if that she aske right. O thou man, wherfore makest thou me gyltie by thine euery dates plaintings.

What wrong haue I don the? what goods haue I berafte thee that were thine? Striue or plete with me before what iudge that thou wilt, of the possession of richesses, or of dignities, and if thou maist shewen mee, that euer any mortall manne hath receiued any of tho

things

things to ben his in proper, thā will I grant freelye, that thilke thinges were thine, which that thou askest. Whan that nature brought thee forth out of thy mothers womb, I receiued thee naked and nedy of all thinges, and I nourished thee with al my richesses, and was redy and ententife through my fauour to sustaine thee: and that maketh thee now impacient ayenst mee. And I enuironed thee with all haboundaunce and shyning of all goodes, that been in my right: nowe it lyketh mee to withdrawe mine hond. Thou hast had grace as he that hath vsed forayne goodes. Thou hast no right to plaine thee, as though thou haddest vtterly forlorne al thy thinges. Why plainest thou thanne? I haue done thee no wrong. Richesses, honours, and such other thinges ben of my right. Myseruaunts knowen me for her lady: they come with me & departen whan I wend. I dare well affirme hardely, that if tho thinges, of which thou plainest that thou hast forlorn had been thine, thou ne haddest not forlorn hem. Shal I thā be defended only to vse my right? Certes it is leful to the heuen to make clere daies, and after ꝑ to ouercome tho same daies with derke nightes. The yere hath eke leaue to aparaile the visage of the earth, now with floures, and now with fruite, and to confound hem sometime with raines and with cold.

The sea hath eke his right, to ben somtime calme & blandishing, with smothe water, & sometime to be horrible with wawes & with tempestes. But couetise of men, that may not be staunched, shall it binde me to be stedfast, sithen that stedfastnesse is vncouth to my maners. Such is my strength, and such playe I play comenly. I turne the whirling whele with the turning cerkle, I am glad to chaungen the lowest to the hyest, and the highest to the lowest. Worth vp if thou wolt, so it be by this lawe, that thou ne hold nat that I do the wrong though thou discende adowne, whan the reason of my play asketh it. Wost thou not how Cresus king of Lidiens, of which king Cyrus was full sore agaste, a litle before that this Cresus was caught of Cyrus, & led to the fire to be brende, but that a rayne descēded from heauen that relcowed him? And it is out of minde howe that Paulus consull of Rome, whan he had taken the king of Pertiens, wept petously for the captuitie of the self king? What other things bewaylen the cryengs of tragedies, but onely the dedes of fortune, that with an aukwarde stroke ouerturneth the realmes of great nobley.

Glose. Tragedie is to saine, a ditee of a prosperitie for a time, that endeth in wretchednes. Learnedst not thou in Grece when thou wer yong, ꝑ in the entre or in the seler of Iupiter, there ben couched two tonnes, that one is ful of good, that other is full of harme? What right hast thou to plain, if thou hast taken more plentuously of the good side, that is to saine of richesse & prosperitie? And what eke if I be not al departed frō thee? What eke if my mutabilitie yeueth the rightfull cause of hope to haue yet better things? Natheles dismay thee not in thy thought. And thou ꝑ art put in the comune realme of all, ne desire not to lyuen by thine owne proper right.

Si quantas rapidis flatibus incitus Pontus
verſat arenas. Aut quot ſtelliferis edita noctibus Celo ſidera fulgent: Tantas fundat opes,
nec retrahat manum Pleno copia cornu: Humanum miſeras haud ideo genus ceſſet flere querelas, &c.

Though plenty goddesse of riches, hild adown with a ful horne, & withdraw not her hand, as many richesse as the sea turneth vpward sandes, whan it is moued with rauishing blasts, or els as many richesses as there shinen bright sterres in ꝑ heuen on the sterry nights: yet for al that mānkind nold not cesse to wepe wretched plaints. And albeit so that god receiued her praiers, & yeueth hem as foole large moch gold, & apparailleth courtous folke with noble or clere honours: yet semeth him haue gotten nothing. But alway cruel rauine deuouring all ꝑ they haue gottē, sheweth other gapings, that is to say, gapen and desiren yet after mo richesses. What bridels might withholden to any certain end the disordinate couetise of mē, whan euer the rather ꝑ it fleteth in large pectes, the more brēneth in hem the lust of hauing? Certes he that quaking and dredful weneth him selfe nedy, he ne liueth neuermore rich he.

His igitur, ſi pro ſe tecum, verbis fortuna loqueretur, quid profecto contrahiſceres, nō haberes. At ſi quid eſt, quo querelam tuam iure tuearis, proferas oportet.

Therefore if that Fortune speake with thee for her selfe in thus maner, forsoth thou ne haddest nat what thou mightest answere. And if thou hast any thinge, wherewith thou mayest rightfull ydefenden thy complaint, it behoueth the to shewen, and I woll yeuen to thee

space

space to tellen it. Boece. Certainly (qd. I) than, these ben faire ythungs, and annointed with hony swetnesse of rhetorike and musike, and onely while they ben herd and sowne in eeres, they ben delicious. But to wretches it is a deper feelyng of harme, this is to saine, that wretches feelen the harmes that they suffer more greeuously, than the remedies or the delites of these words may gladden or conforten hem. So that whan these things stinten for to sowen in eares, the sorow that is inset greueth the thought. P. Right so it doth (qd. she.) For these ne been yet no remedies of the malady, but they ben a manner nozilbing of thy sorrows, that rebell ayenst thy curacion. For whan time is, I shal moue and anust soch things, that perten hem ful depe. But natheless, that thou shalt not wilne to leten thy selfe a wretch, Hast thou forgeten the number and the maner of thy wilfulnesse, I speak not how that the soueraigne men of the city, tooke the in cure and kepyng, whan thou were orphelyn of father and of mother and were chosen in affynite of princes of the cite. And thou begannerather to be lefe and dere than for to be a neighbour, the which thyng is the most precious kinde of any propinquite or alliaunce that may been. Who is it that ne sayde tho that thou ne were right welefull, with so great nobley as thy fathers in law, and with the chastite of thy wyfe, and with thoportunite and nobilesse of thy masculine children, that is to sain, thy sonnes. And ouer all thys (me lyst to passen of common things) how thou haddest in thy youth dignities, that were warned to old men, but it delyteth me now to common to the singuler vpheaping of thy welefulnesse. If any trute of mortall thinges may haue any wight, or price of welefulnesse, myghtest thou euer forgeten for any charge of harme that might befall, the remembraunce of thilke day, that thou saw thy two sonnes made counsailours, and ladde togyther from thy house, vnder so great assemble of senatours, and vnder the blithnesse of the people? And whan thou saw hem sette in the court in hie chaires of dignities. Thou rethorien or pronouncer of kings prayslings, deseruedest glory of witte and of eloquence, whan thou sitting betwene thy two sonnes counsailours, in the place that hight Circo, and fulfilledest the bydding of the multitude of people that was sprade about thee with so large praysyng and laud, as men syng in victories. Tho gaue thou to fortune as I trowe, that is to say, tho scoffedest thou fortune with glorious wordes, and deceiuedst her, whan she acoyed and nozilled thee as her owne delices. Thou bare away of fortune a yefte. that is to say, such guerdon that she neuer gaue to priuate mã. Wilt thou therefore laye a reckening with fortune? She hath now first twincled vpõ thee with a wicked eye. If thou consider the number and the maner of thy billes and of thy sorowes, thou maist nat forsaken that nart yet bilefull. For if therfore thou wenest thy selfe not welefull, for tho things that semeden ioyful ben passed, ther nis not why thou shouldst seeme thy selfe a wretch, for things that seme now sory, passen also. Art thou now comen a soudaine guest into the shadow or tabernacle of this life? or trowest thou that any stedfastnes be in mans things? Whan oft a swift houre dissolueth the same man, that is to saie, whan the soule departed from the body. For although that selde is there any faith that fortunous things would dwellen, yet natheleesse the last day of a mans life is a maner death to fortune, & also to thilke that hath dwelt. And therfore what wenest thou dare recke, if thou forlet her in dying, or els that shee fortune forlet the in flcyn away.

Cum polo phebus, roseis quadrigis Lucẽ spergere cepent, Pallet albentes hebetata vultus Flammis stella prementibus &c.

When Phebus the sonne beginneth to spreade his clerenesse with rosen Chariottes, than the sterre dymmed paleth her white cheres by the flambs of the sonne that ouercommeth the sterre light: that is to saine, whan the sunne is risen, the daye sterre wexeth pale and leseth her light. For the great lightnesse of the sunne, when the wood wexeth rodie of rosen floures in the first sommer ceason, through the breth of the winde zepherus that wexeth warme, if the cloudie winde Auster blowe fellich, than goeth away fairnesse of thynges. Oft the sea is cleare and calme with mouing floodes, and oft the horrible wonde Aquilon moueth boyling tempests and ouerwhelueth the see. If the forme of this worlde is so slyde stable, and if it turneth by so many enterchaunges: wilt thou than trusten in the tombling fortunes of men? wilt thou trowen on flitting goodes? It is certaine and established by lawe perdurable, that nothing that is engendred is stedfast ne stable.

Tum

Tum ego, vera inquam, commemoras ô virtutum omnium nutrix: nec inficiari possum prosperitatis mee velissimum cursum Sed hoc ipsum est, quid, &c.

Then said I thus: O nourice of all vertues, thou saiest full soth ne I may not forsake the right swift course of my prosperity, that is to saine, that the prosperity, ne be comen to me wonderswiftly and soone. But this is a thyng that greatly smarteth me, when it remembreth me. For in all aduersities of Fortune, the most vnsely kynd of contrarious Fortune, is to haue been welefull. Why. But that thou abiest thus (qd. she) the tourment of thy false opinion, that maiest thou not rightfully blamen, ne aretten to things, as who saith, ꝑ thou hast yet many habondances of things. Certus. For all be it so, that the idle name of auenturous welefulnesse, moueth thee now, it is leful that thou reken with me, of how many thyngs thou hast yet plenty. And therefore, if that thilke thing ꝑ thou haddest for more precious, in all thy richesse of Fortune, be kept to thee, yet by the grace of God, vnwemmed and vndefouled: maist thou then plaine rightfully, vpon the mischief of Fortune, sithen thou hast yet thy best thyngs? Certes, yet liueth in good point thilk precious honour of mankind, Symachus thy wiues father, which that is a mã made of all Sapience and Vertue, the which manne thou wouldest buy, with the price of thyne owne lyfe, he bewaileth the wrongs, that menne doen to thee, and not for himselfe. For he liueth in liuelynesse, of any Sentence put ayenst hym. And yet liueth thy wife, that is attempre of witte, and passing other women, in clennesse of chastity. And for I would closen shortly her bounties, she is like her father: I tell thee, that she liueth loth of this life, and kepeth to thee onely her ghost, and is all mate, and ouercome by weeping and sorow, for desire of thee. In the which thyng only, I mote graunten thee, that thy welefulnesse is amenused. What shall I saine eke of thy two sonnes counsailours, of which as of children of her age, there shineth the likelyhead of the witte of her father, and of her eld father? And sithen the souerayne cure of all mortall folke, is to sauen her owne liues, if thou know thy selfe, thy goodes make thee more welefull. For yet ben there things dwelled to thee ward, that no man doubteth, that they ne been more derewoorth to thee, then thyne owne life. And for thy dey thy teares, for yet is not euery Fortune, hateful to thee ward: ne ouer great tempest, ne hath not yet fallen vpon thee, when thyne eares clemen fast: that neither wolle suffren the comfort of this tyme present, ne the hope of tyme commyng, to passen ne to failen. Bo. And I pray (qd. I) that fast mote they holden: for the whiles ꝑ they holden, how so euer that things been, I shall well fleten forth and cleapen. But thou maiest well seene, how great apparailes and aray, that me lacked, that be passed away from me. Ph. I haue somwhat auanced and furthered thee (qd. she) if that thou annoy not, or forthinke not of all thy Fortune, as who saith, I haue somewhat comforted thee, so that thou tempest not thee thus, with all thy fortune, sithen thou hast yet thy best thyngs. But I may not suffren thy delices, that plainest so weeping and anguishous, for that ther lacketh somwhat to thy welefulnes. For what man is he that is so sad, or of great parfite welefulnesse, that he ne striueth and playneth, on some halfe ayen the quality of his estate? For why, full anguishous thing is the condicion of mannes goods. For either it cometh not al togither to a wight, or els it ne lasteth not perpetuell. For some man hath great richesse, but he is ashamed of his vngentill linage. And some man is renomed of noblesse of kinrede, but he is enclosed, in so great anguish of need of thyngs, that hym were leauer that he were vnknow. And some man habondeth both in richesse and noblesse, but yet he bewaileth his chast life, for he ne hath no wife. And some man is, and selily maried, but he hath no children, and nourisheth his richesses to straunge folke. And some man is gladed with children, but he wepeth full sore, for the trespace of his sonne, or of his doughter. And for this there ne accordeth no wight lightly, to the cõdicion of his fortune. For alway to euery man, there is in somwhat that vnsaiseth, he ne wotte nought, or els he dredeth that he hath assaied. And adde this also, that euery welefull man, hath a full delicate feling: so that but if all thyngs befallen at his own wil, he is impacient, or is not vsed to haue anone aduersity, anon he is throwen adoune for euery little thyng. And full little thyngs been tho, that withdrawen the summe or the perfection of blisfulnesse, fro hem that been most fortunate. How many men trowest thou, would demen hem selfe, to been almost in heauen, if they mighten attain to the

leaſt party, of the remnaunt of thy fortune: This ſame place that thou cleapeſt exile, is countrey to them that enhabiten here. And for thy nothyng wretched, but when thou weneſt it, as who ſaith: thou thy ſelf ne no wight elſ nis a wretch, but when he weneth himſelf he is a wretch, by reputacion of his courage. And ayenward: all fortune is bliſſful to a man, by the agreability, or by the egality of hym that ſuffereth it. What man is that, that is ſo welefull, that wold chaungen his eſtate whē he hath loſt his pacience? The ſweteneſſe of mannes welefulneſs, is ſprant with many bitterneſſes. The which welefulneſſe, although it ſeme ſwete and joyfull, to him that vſeth it, yet may it not been withholden, that it ne goeth away when it wol. Then it is well ſeen, how wretched is the bliſſfulneſſe of mortall things that neither it dureth perpetuell with hem, that euery fortune receiuen agreeably or egally, ne it deliteth not in all to hem that ben anguiſhous. O ye mortall folke, what ſeeke ye then bliſſfulneſſe out of your own ſelfe: which is put in your ſelfe? Errour and foly confoundeth you. I ſhall ſhew thee ſhortly the point of ſouerain bliſſfulneſſe.

Is there any thyng to thee, more precious then thy life? Thou wilt anſwere nay. Then, if it ſo be that thou art mighty ouer thy ſelfe, that is to ſaine, by tranquility of thy ſoule, then haſt thou thyng in thy power, that thou woldeſt neuer leſen: Ne Fortune may not bynemme it thee. And that thou maieſt know that bliſſfulneſſe, ne may not ſtand in thyngs, that ben fortunous and tempoꝛel, now vnderſtand, and gather it together thus. If bliſſfulneſs be the ſouerain good of nature, that lucth by reaſon: ne thilke thyng is not ſouerane good, that may be taken away in any wiſe.

For more worthy thing is, and more digne thilke thyng, that may not be taken away. Then ſheweth it well, that the vnſtabileneſſe of Fortune, may not attaine to receiue very bliſſfulneſſe. And yet moreouer, what manne that this tombling welefulneſſe leadeth, either he wote that it is chaungeable, or elſ he wote it not? And if ye wote it not, what bliſſfull fortune may there been in the blindneſſe of ignoraunce? And if he wot, that it is changeable, he mote alway been a dradde, that he ne leſe that thing, that he ne doubteth not, but that he may leſen it. As who ſaith, he mote alway be agaſt, leaſt he leſe that, that he woteth right well he may leſe. For which the continuell drede that he hath, ne ſuffereth him not to be welefull. Or elſ if he leſe it, he weneth to be diſpiſed and forlieten. Certes, eke that is a full litle good, that is borne with euen hart, when it is loſt, that is to ſain, that men doe no more force of the loſſe, then of the hauing. And for as moch as thou thy ſelfe art he, to whom it hath be ſhewed, and preued by ful many demonſtracions, as I wotte well, that the ſoules of men, ne mowen not dien in no wiſe. And eke ſens it is cleare and certain, that fortunous welefulneſſe, endeth by the death of the body: it may not be doubted, that if death may take away bliſſfulneſſe, that all the kind of mortall thyng ne diſcendeth into wretchedneſſe, by the end of death. And ſithen we know well, that many a manne hath ſought the fruict of bliſſfulneſſe, not only with ſufferyng of death, but eke with ſufferyng of paynes and tourments: how might then this preſent life make men bliſſful, ſens that thilke ſelfe life ended, it ne maketh folk no wretches.

Quiſquis volet perennem
Cautus ponere ſedem.
Stabiliſq; nec ſonori
Sterni flatibus Euri,
Et fluctibus minantem.
Curat ſpernere pontum
Montis cacumen alti,
Bibulas vitet arenas, &c.

What manner of folke, ware and ſtable, that will founden hem a pardurable ſeat, and ne will not be caſt doune with the loud blaſtes of the wynd Eurus, and will diſpiſe the Sea, menalyng with floods: Let hym eſchue to builden on the coppe of the Mountaigne, or in the moiſt Sands. For if the fell Wind Auſter, tormenteth the coppe of the Mountaignes, with all his ſtrengths, and the loſe ſands, refuſen to beare the heauy weights. And for thy if thou wolt flien the perilous aucnture, that is to ſay, of the world: haue mynd certainly. to ſet thyne houſe of a mery ſeat, in a low ſtone. For although the wynd troubling the Sea, Thunder with ouerthrowing, thou that art putte in quiete and welefull, by ſtrength of thy Palies, ſhalt lead a cleare age, ſcornyng the woodneſſe, and the ires of the aire.

Sed

Sed quoniam racionum iam in te mearum fométa discendunt, paulo validioribus vtendum puto. Age enim. Si iam caduca ac momentaria fortune, &c.

But for as much, as the nourishings of my reason, discenden now into thee, I trow it were time to vsen a littell strenger Medicens. Now vnderstand here, all were it so that the yefts of Fortune, ne were not brittle ne transitory, what is there in hem, that may be thine in any time? Or elsthat it ne is foule, if that it be looked, aand considered perfitly. Richesses, been they precious by the nature of them self, or els by the nature of thee? What is most worth of richesse? Is it not gold, or might of money assembled? Certes, that gold and that money shineth, and yeueth better renome to them that dispenden it, then to thilke folke that mockeren it: for auarice maketh alway muckerers to been hated, and largesse maketh folke clere of renome. For sith that soch things as been transfered, from one man to another: ne may not dwell with no manne: Certes, then is that money precious, when it is translated into other folke, and stinten to be had by vsage of large yeuing, of hym that hath yeuen it. And also if all the money that is ouer all, in all the world, were gadered toward one man, it should make all other men to be nedy as of that. And certes, a voice all hole, that is to saine, without amenusing, fulfilleth together the hearing of moch folk. And when they ben apalled, needs they make hem poore, that forgone tho richesses.

O, strait and needy chepe? these richesses, seus that many folke ne may not haue it all, ne al ne may it not commen to one man, without pouerty of all other folke. And the shining of gemmes, that I call precious stones, draweth it not the eyen of folke to hemward, that is to saine, for the beauty. But certes, if there were beauty, or bounty in shinyng of stones, thilke clearenesse is of the stones hem selfe, and not of menne. For which I wonder greatly, that men marucilen on soch thyngs. For why, what thing is it, that if it wanteth mouing, and toyncture of soule and body, that by right might seemen a faire creature, to hym that hath a soule of reason. For al be it so, that gemmes drawen to hem self, a little of the last beauty of the world, through the entent of her creatour, and the distincion of hem selfe, yet for as mikel, as they been put vnder your excellence, they ne haue not deserued by no way, that ye should marucilen on hem. And the beauty of fields, deliteth it not mikel vnto you?

B. Why should it not deliten vs, sith that it is a right faire porcion, of the right faire werke, that is to saine, of this world? And right so ben we gladded sometime, of the face of the sea, when it is clear: And also marucilen we on the heauen, and on the Starres, and on the Sunne, and on the Moone. Pht. Appertaineth (qd. she) any of thilke thyngs to thee? Why darest thou glorify thee, in the shinyng of any such thyngs? Art thou distingued and embelised, by the springing flowres of the first Sommer season? Or sweeteth thy plenty in fruits of Sommer. Why art thou rauished with idle ioies? why embracest thou straunge goods, as they were thine? Fortune ne shall neuer make, that soch thyngs been thyne, that nature of things, hath maked foraine fro thee? Soth it is, that without doubt, the fruits of the yearth, owen to be to the norishyng of beasts. And if thou wolt fulfill thy need, after that it sufficeth to nature, then is it no need, that thou seeke after the superfluity of Fortune. For with full few thyngs, and with full little thyngs, nature hath her apaied. And if thou wolt achoken the fulfylling of nature with superfluities: certes, thilke thyngs that thou wolt thresten or pouren into nature, shullen been vnioyfull to thee, or els anoious. Wenest thou eke, that it be a faire thyng, to shine with diuers clothings? Of which clothing, if the beaute be agreable to loken vpon, I wol marucilen on the nature, of the matter of thilke clothes, or els on the werk man that wrought hem. Doth also a long rout of meny, make thee a blissful man? The which seruaunts if they ben vicious of condicions, it is a great charge, and distruccion to the hous, and a great enemy to the lord himselfe. And if they ben good men, how shall straunge and forain goodnesse, be put in the number of thy richesses? So that by all these forclayed thyngs, it is clearely shewed, that neuer one of thilke thyngs, that thou accomptedest for thy goods, nas not thy good. In which thyngs, if there be no beauty to be desired, why shouldest thou be sory to lese them? Or why shouldest thou reioice thee to hold hem? For if they been faire of their owne kind, what appertaineth that to thee? For also wel shoulden they haue ben faire by themselfe, though they were

departed from all the richelles. For why, faire ne precious were they not, for þ they commen among the richelles. But for they semed fair and precious, therfore thou haddest leuer reken hem emongs the richelles. But what desirest thou of Fortune, with so great afare? I trow thou sekest to driue away ned, with haboundaunce of thyngs, but certes, it tourneth you all into the contrary. For why, certes it nedeth of full many helpyngs, to kepen the diuersite of precious hostilements. And soth it is, that of many thyngs they haue need, that many thyngs haue. And ayen ward, of little thyng nedeth hym, that measureth his fill, after the nede of kynd, and not after outrage of couetise. It is so then, that ye menne haue no proper good set in you, for soch ye moten seeke outward, in forain and subiect thyngs. So is then the condicion of thyngs tourned vp so doun, that a man that is a diuine beast, by merit of his reason, thinketh that hymselk nis neither fayre ne noble, but if it be through possession of hostiliments, that ne han no soules: and certes, all other thyngs been apayed of her owne beauties: but ye men, that be semblable to God, by your reasonable thought, desiren to aparailen your excellent kind of the lowest thyngs. Ne ye vnderstanden not how great a wrong is dooen to your creatour. For he would that mankind were most worthy and noble, of any yearthly thyng: and ye threllen doun your dignities binethen the lowest thyngs. For if that all the good of euery thyng be more precious, than is thilke thyng, whose that the good is, sith ye demen that the foulest thyngs, been your goodesse: then submitten ye, and put your seluen vnder the foulest thyngs, by your estimacion. And certes, this betideth not, without your desert. For certes, soch is the condicion of all mankind, that only when it hath knowyng of it selk, then passeth it in noblesse, all other thyngs. And when it forletteth, the knowyng of it selke, then it is brought benethen all beasts. For why, all other liuyng beasts, han of kind to knowen not himselk. But when that men leten the knowyng of hem selk, it cometh hem of vice. But how brode sheweth the errour, and the foly of you men, that wenen that any thyng, may been appareled, with straunge apparelments? But forsoth that may not be doen. For if a wight shineth with thyngs that been put to him: as thus. If thilke thyngs shinen, with whych a man is apparelled: Certes, thilke thyngs ben commended and praised, with whych he is apparelled: but natheleslle, thyng that is coucred, and wrapped vnder that, dwelleth in his filth. And I deny that thilke thyng be good, that annoyeth hym that hath it. Gabbe I of this? Thou wolt say nay. Certes, richelle haue annoyed full oft hem, that han had tho richelle. Sith that euery wicked shrew, is for his wickednelle, the more greedy after other folkes richelles, where so euer it be in any place, be it gold or precious stones, and weneth him only most worthy that hath hem. Thou then that so busie, dredest now þ swerd and the speare, if thou haddest entred in the path of this life, auoid waifaring man, then wouldst thou sing before þ theke, as who saith, a poor man that beareth no richelle on him by the way, may boldly sing before Theues, for he hath not wherof to be robbed. O precious? right clear, is the blisfulnes of mortal richelle, that when thou hast gotten it, then hast thou lorn thy liketnelle.

Felix nimium prior etas, Contenta fidelibus aruis. Nec inerti perdita luxu. Faciliq; sera solebat Ieiunia soluere glande. Nec bacchia munera norat, Liquido confundere melle, Nec lucida vellera serum, &c.

BLissull was the first age of men, they helden hem apaied with the meats that þ true feldes broughten forth, they ne destroied, nor deceiued not hem selke without rage, they weren wont lightly to slaken her hunger at euin, with Akehornes of Okes, they ne coud not medle the yeft of Bacchus, to the cleare Hony, þ is to sain, they could make ne piement or clarre: Ne they could not medle the bright fleeces of the country of Seriens, with the venime of Tiry, this is to sain, they coud not dien white fleces of Sirien colstry, with the blood of a maner Shelfish, that men finden in Tiry, with which blood menne dien Purple.

They slepten holsome slepes vpon the gras, and dronken of the rennyng waters, and lien vnder the shaddows of the hie Pine trees. Ne no gest or straunger, ne carke yet the hie sea, with ores or with shippes, ne they ne hadden sein yet no new strondes, to leden Marchaundise, into diuers Countreis. Tho weren the cruell clarions full hust, and full still. Ne blood ybad by egre hate, ne had deied yet armures. For whereto, or which woodnelle of enemies would

would first mouen armes, where they sawen
cruell wounds, ne none needes be of blood y-
shad. I would that our tymes should tourne
ayen to the old manners. But the anguishous
loue of hauyng in folke, burneth more cruel-
ly, then the mountain of Ethna, that ay brenn-
eth. Alas, what was he that first dalfe vp,
the gobbettes or the weights of gold, conce-
red vnder yerth, and the precious stones, that
woulden haue be hidde? He dalfe vp precious
perilles, that is to saine, that he that hem first
vp dalfe, he dalfe vp a precious peril, for why
for the preciousnesse of such thing, hath many
man been in peril.

Quid autem de dignitatibus, potentiaque
dicam quas vos, veræ dignitatis, ac potesta-
tis insciæ, cœlo exequatis? Quem in improbis-
simum quemque ceciderint, decidimus sic

But what shall I say of dignities and powers, the which ye men that neither knowen very dignity, ne very power, areisen hem as high as the hevene? The which dignities and powers, if they comen to any wicked manne, they doen as great damages and destructions, as doeth the flambe of the mountaigne Ethna, whē ỹ flambe walweth vp, ne none envy ne doth so cruel harms. Certes, ne remēber wel (as I trow) ỹ thilke dignity, that men clepe the Impery of counsaillours the which whilome was, beginning of fredome, your elders conceited to haue doen away that dignity, for the pride of the counsaillours. And right for that same, your elders before ỹ time, had doen away out of the Citee of Rome, ỹ kings name, that is to saine, they nold haue no lenger no king. But now, if so be that dignities & powers, been yeuen to good men, the which thing is full seide, what agreeable things is there, in tho dignities and powers: but only ỹ goodnesse of folke that vsen hem? And therefore is it thus, that honour cometh not to vertue, bicause of dignity: and ay inward, honour commeth to dignity, for cause of vertue. But which is thilke your derewoorthy power, that is so clere, and so requirable? O ye yearthly beasts, consider ye not ouer which thing, that it semeth that ye haue power? Now, if thou saw a Mouse, emong other Mise, that challenged to himselfe ward, right and power ouer all other Mise, how great scorne wouldest thou haue of it? Gloss. So fareth it by men, the body hath power ouer the body: for if thou looke well vpon the body of a wight, what thing shalt thou find more fraile, then is mankinde? Or be which ne trone full oft tre flaine, by bityng of Flies, or els with entring of crepyng wormes, into the pryuitees of mans body. But where shall men finden any man, that may exercen or haunten any right vpon an other man, but onely on his body, or els vppon thynges, that ben lower than the body, the which is etcape fortunes possessions? Mayest thou haue ouer any commandement, ouer a free corage? Mayest thou remeue fro the estate of his propre will, a thought that is clenging togither in himselfe, by stedfast reason? As whilome a tyraunt wened, to confounde a free man of corage, he wend to constreine him by tourments, to maken him ouercomen and accusen folke, i that was sign of a conjuracion, which I drepe a conspiracy, that was cast ayenst this tyraunt: but this freeman bot off his owne tongue, and cast it in the visage of this bestiall wood Tyraunt. So that the tourments, that this wood Tyraunt wende to haue made matter of cruelty: This noble man made it matter of vertue. But what thing is it, that a man may doon to another man, that he ne may receiuen the same thing of other folke in himselfe? Or thus: what may a man doen to folke, that folke ne may doen to him the same? I haue heard told of Busiriden, that was wont to sleen his gestes, that herbroden in his hous: and he was slain himselfe, by Hercules that was his gest.

Regulus had taken in battaile, many men of Affrike, and cast hem into fetters: but soone after, he must yeuen his handes to be bound, with the cheines of hem, that he had whilom ouercommen. Wenest thou then, that he bee mighty, that hath power to doon a thyng, that other ne may doen in him, that he hath in other? And yet more ouer, if so were, that these dignetees or powers, hadden any proper or naturell goodnesse in hem, neuer nold they commen to shrewes. For contrarious things, ne ben wont to ben yeke wlybipped togithers. Nature refuseth that contrarious things been ioyned. And so as I am in certaine, that wicked folke haue dignitees oft time, then sheweth it wel that dignitees and powers, ne been not good of her owne kind. sens that they sufferen hem selfe to cleauen, or ioynen hem selfe to shrewes. And certaine the same thing may I most dignely iudgen, and saine of all the yefts of Fortune, that most plentuously comen to shrewes, of which yefts I trow, it ought be considred, that no man

doubteth that he is strong, in whom he seeth strength: and in whom swiftnesse is, forby it is that he is swift.

Also Musike maketh Musiciens, & Philike maketh Philiciens, and Rhetorike eke Rhetoriciens. For why, the nature of euery thing maketh his property, ne it is not entermedled, with the effect of contrarious thyngs. But certes, richesses may not restraine auarice vnstanched. Ne power ne maketh not a man mighty ouer himselfe, which that vicious lusts holden destrained with chaynes, that ne mowen not be vnbounden. And dignitees, that be yeuen to shrewd folke, not onely ne maketh hem not digne, but sheweth rather all openly, that they been vnworthy and indigne. And it is thus. For certes, ye haue ioy to cleape thyngs with false names, that bearen hem in all the Countrey, the which names been full oft repproued, by the effect of the same thyngs. So that these like richesses, ne ought en not by right, to be cleped richesses, ne soch power, ne ought not to be cleped power, ne soch dignitee, ne ought not to be cleped dignite. And at last I may conclude, the same thyng of all the pests of Fortune: In whych there nis nothyng to be desired, ne that hath in himselfe naturell bounty, as it is well yseene, for neither they ne mowen hem not alway to good men, ne maken hem alway good, to whom they ben ioyned.

Nouimus, quantas dederit ruinas. Vrbe flammata, patribusq; cesis. Fratre qui quondam ferus interempto matris effuso maduit cruore. Corpus & visu gelidum peretrans. Ora non tinxit lachrimis: sed esse. Censor extincti potuit decoris, &c.

WE haue well knowen, how many great harmes and distinections, were doen by the Emperour Nero. He let brennen the Citee of Roome, and made slea the Senatours, and he cruell whilome slough his brother. And he was made moist with the blood of his mother, that is to say, he lette sleen and slitten the wombe of his mother, to seen where he was conceiued, and he loked on euery halue of her dedde cold body, ne no teare wette his face, but he was so hard harted, that he might be domes manne, or Judge of her dedde beauty. And natheless, yet gouerned this Nero by scepter, all the people that Phebus may seene commyng, from his vtereest arisyng, till he hid his beames vnder the wawes, that is to saine, he gouerned all the peoples, by cepter Imperiall, that the Sunne goeth about fro East to West. And eke this Nero gouerned by cepter, all the peoples that be vnder the cold sterres, that highten the Septentrions, that is to sain, he gouerned al the peoples, that be vnder the party of the North. And eke Nero gouerned all the peoples, that the violent wind Nothus stoureth, and baketh the brenning sands, by his dry heat, that is to say, all the peoples in the South. But yet ne might not all his power, tourne the woodnesse of this wicked Nero. Alas, it is a greeuous fortune, as oft as a wicked swerd, is ioyned to cruell venime, that is to say, venemous cruelty, to Lordship.

Tunc ego. Sis (inquam) ipsa, minimum nobis ambitionem mortalium rerum tuisse dominatam. Sed materiam gerendis rebus optauimus, quo ne virtus cacita conlene sceret.

P. Et ila. Atqui hoc vnum est, &c.

THen said I thus. Thou wotest well thy selfe, that the couetise of mortall things, ne hadden neuer lordshippe in me. But I haue well desired matter of things to doen, as who saith, I desire to haue matter of gouernaunces, ouer cominaltes, for vertue still should not elden: that is to saine, that lest er that he wexe old, his vertue that lay now still, ne should not perish vnexercised, in gouernaunce of commune: for which men might speaken or writen, of his good gouernment. Phi. Forsoth (qd. she) and that is a thing that may drawen to gouernaunce, soch harts as been worthy and noble of her nature: but nathelesse it may not drawen, or tellen such harts, as been ybrought to the full perfeccion of vertue, that is to saine, couetise of glory and renome, to haue well administred the common thyngs, or dooen good deserts. to profite of the common. For see now and consider, how little and how void of all price is thilke glory, certaine thyng is as thou hast learned, by the demonstracion of Astronomy, that all the enuironning of the yearth about, ne hath but the reason of a pricke, at the regard of the greatnesse of the heauē, that is to sain, that if there were maked comparison of the earth, to the greatnes of heauē, men would iudgen in al that ne held no space. Of the which little region of this world. the iiii. part of ỳ yerth is inhabited with liuing beastes ỳ we knowen, as thou hast thy self ylerned by Ptolome that prouch it,

it. And if thou haddest withdrawen & abated in thy thought for thilk fourth party, as much space as the sea and the marcis conteynen & ouergone: as much space as the region of brought ouerstretcheth, that is to sain sandes and deserties, well vneth should there dwellen a right straite place to the habitation of men. And yet that be enuironned and closed with the lesse pricke of thilke pricke, thinken ye manifesten or published your renome and done your name for to been borne foorth. But your glorie that is so narowe and so strayte thorgoen into so little boundes, howe mykell contenueth it in large & in great doynge. And also sette therto, that many a nacion dyuers of tongue and of maners, and eke of reason of her liuing, been inhabited in the close of thilke habitacle, the which nacions what for difficultie of wayes, and what for diuersitie of language, and what for defaulte of vsusage, and entercomuning of marchandise: not onely the names of singuler men ne may not stretchen, but eke the fame of cities may not stretchen. At the last, certes in the time of Marcus Tullius as him self wrote in his booke that the renome of ỹ cõmon welth of Rome, had not yet passed ne clomben ouer the mountaine that hight Caucasus, & yet was Rome well waxen and redoubted of the Parthes, and eke of other folke enhabyting aboute. Seest thou not than howe straite and howe compressed is thilke glory that ye trauailen about to shewen and to moulteplye? Maye than the glory of a singuler Romaine stretchen thider as the fame of the name of Rome may not clymben ne passen? And eke seest thou not that the maners of diuers folke and her lawes ben discordant amonges hemselfe, so that thilke thing that som men iudge worthy of praising, other folke iudgen that, that is worthie of tourment. And hercof cometh it that though a man deliteth him in praysing of his renome, he may not in no wise bringen forthe ne spreden his name to many maner peoples, and therefore euery man ought to be apaide of his glory, that is published among his owne neighbours, and thilke noble renome shall be restrained within the boundes of tho maner folke. But how many a man that was full noble in his time, hath ỹ wretches and nedye forgeting of writers put out of minde and don away, al be it so that certes thilke things profiten litell, the which things and writinges long and derke elde doe away both hem and eke her auctours. But ye men semen to getten you a perdurabilitie whan ye thinken in time comming your fame shall lasten. But natheless, if thou wilt make comparison to the endlesse spaces of eternitie. What thing hast thou, by which thou mayest reioycen thee of longe lastinge of thy name? For if there were made comparison of the abyding of a momente to tenne thousand winter, for as much as bothe tho spaces been ended, for yet hath the moment some portion of it, although it be little. But natheless thilke selfe nomber of yeres, and eke as many yeres as therto may be multiplyed, ne may not certes be cõparisoned to the perdurabilitie that is endlesse. For of thinges which that haue ende may be made comparison, but of things which that been withouten ende, to thinges that haue ende, may be maked no comparison. And for thy is it that although renome as of long time, as euer thee liste to thinken, were thought, to the regarde of the eternitie, that is vnstanchcable & infinite, it ne shoulde not only seme little, but plainly right nought. But ye semen certes ye can do nothing aright but if it be for the audience of the people, and for yll rumours. And ye forsaken the great worthynesse of conscience and of vertue, and ye seken your guerdons of the small wordes of straunge folke. Haue nowe here and vnderstande in the lightnesse of such pride and vaine glorye, howe a man shrouned, festiually and merily such vanitie. Whylome there was a man that had assayed with striuinge wordes an other man, the which not for vsage of very vertue, but for proude vayne glorye, had taken vpon him falsely ỹ name of a Philosopher: This rather man that I speake of, thought he woulde assay, whether he thilke wer a Philosopher or no, that is to say: if that he would haue suffred lightly, in pacience the wrongs that were done to him. This fained Philosopher tooke pacience a litle while: and whan he had receiued wordes of outrage, he as in striuing ayen and reioysing of him selfe, saied at laste thus. Understandest thou not, that I am a Philosopher? That other man answered again bytingly and said: I had wel vnderstand it, if thou hadst holden thy tongue stil. But what is it to thi se noble worthynesse, for certes of such folke spoke I that seken glorie with vertue? What is it (qd she) what attaineth fame to such folke, whan the body is resolued by the deth at the last? for if so be that men dien in al, that is to say body and soule, the which thing our reason defendeth vs to

brieue: than is there no glorie in no wise. For what should thilke glory be, whan he of whom thilke glorie is saide to be, wys right naught in no wise, And if the soule which that hath in it selfe science of good werkes, vnboñden from the prison of the earth, wendeth freely to the heauen, dispiseth it not than al erthly occupacion, & being in heauen reioyseth that it is exempt from all earthly thinges as who saith, than recketh the soule neuer of no glory of renoume of this world.

Quicunq; solam mente præcipiti petit, fũmumq; credit gloriam, Late patentes etheris cernat plagas, Artumq; terrarum situm, Breue replere non valentis ambitum, &c.

Who so that with ouerthrowing thought onely seeketh glorie of fame, and weneth that it be soueraine good, let him loken vpon the broade shewing countreis of the heauen, and vpon the strayte seate of this earth, and he shall be ashamed of thencreace of his name, that may not fulfill the litel compas of the earth. O what coueyten proude folke to liften vp her neckes in ydle, in the dedly yoke of this worlde? For although that renome yspradd passing tofore ne peoples, goeth by diuers tongues, and although great houses of kinredes shynen by clere titles of honours, yet nathelesse death despiseth all high glorie of fame, and deth wrappeth togethers the high heddes and the lowe, and maketh equall and euen the hyest with the lowest.

Where wonnen nowe the bones of trewe Fabricius? What is nowe Brutus, or sterne Caton? The thinne fame yet lasting of her ydle names, is marked with a fewe letters. But although that we haue knowen the fair wordes of the fame of hem, it is not yeuen to know hem that ben dead and consumpt. Liggeth than stil al vtterly vnknowable, ne fame ne maketh you not knowe. And if ye wene to liue the lenger for wind of your mortal name, whan one cruel date shall rauish you: than is the seconde dwelling to you close. The first death he clepeth here the departing of the bodie, and the seconde death here the stinting of the renome of fame.

Sed ne me inexorabile contra fortunam gerere bellum putes, est aliquando, cum de hominibus fallax illa non nihil bene mercatur: tum scilicet cum se aperit, &c.

But for as much as thou shalt not wenen (qd she) that I beare an vntretable batayle ayenst Fortune, yet sometimes it befalleth that shee (disceiuable) deserueth to haue right good thanks of men: and that is when shee her selfe openeth, and whan shee discouereth her front, & sheweth her maners. Peraduenture yet vnderstandest thou not thad I shall say. It is a wonder that I desire to tell, and therefore vneth may I vnpitten my sentence with wordes. For I deeme that contrarious Fortune profiteth more to men than Fortune debonayre. For alway whan fortune seemeth debonayre, than shee lyeth falsely, byreuing the hope of welefulnesse. But forsoth contrarious fortune is alway soothfast, whan shee sheweth her selfe instable through her chaunging. The amiable fortune disceiueth folke: The contrary fortune teacheth. The amiable fortune blindeth with the beautie of her false goodes, the hartes of folkes that vsen hem. The contrary fortune vnbindeth hem with the knowing of freele welefulnesse. The amiable fortune maiste thou seene alway wondy and flowing, and euer misknowing of her self. The contrary fortune is attempre and restrained and wise, thorowe exercise of her aduersitie. At the last amiable fortune with her flatteringes draweth miswandring men fro the soueraigne good: the contrarious fortune leadeth ofte folke ayen to sothfast goodes, and haleth hem ayen as with an hooke. Wenest thou than that thou ought'st to leten this a little thing, that this asper and horrible fortune hath discouered to thee, the thoughtes of thy true frendes: For why, this fine fortune hath departed and vncouered to thee both the certaine visages, and eke the doutous visages of thy felawes. Whan shee departed away fro thee, shee tooke away her frendes and laft thee thy frendes. Nowe whan thou were riche and welefull, as thee seemed, with how mykell wouldest thou haue bought the full knowing of this, that is to sayne, the knowing of thy verie frendes? Nowe plaine thee not than of richesse lorne, sith thou hast found the moste precious kinde of richesse, that is to saine, thy very frendes.

Quod mundus stabili fide, Concordes varias vices, Quod pugnacia semina, Fœdus perpetuum tenent, &c.

That

That the worlde with stable faith varieth accordable changings, that ỹ contrarions qualities of elemẽts holden among hem selfe aliance perdurable, ỹ Phebus the Sunne with his golden chariot bringeth forth the rosie day, ỹ the Moone hath commaundement ouer the nightes: which nightes Eſperus the euen sterre hath, that the sea gredie to flowen constraineth with a certaine ende his floodes, so that it is not leful to stretch his brode termes or boundes vpon the earth: all this ordinance of things is bounden with loue, that gouerneth earth and sea, and also hath commaundment to the heauen. And if this loue slacked the bridels, al things that now louen hem togithers woulden make batail continually, & striuen to fordone the fashion of this worlde, the which they now ledẽ in accordable faith, by faire mouings. This loue holdeth togider people toyned with an holy bond, & knitteth sacrament of mariage of chaste loues. And loue endeth lawes to true felawes. O weleful were mankind if thilke loue that gouerneth the heuen, gouerned your corages.

Here endeth the second booke: and here foloweth the thirde.

Iam cantum illa finierat, cum me audiendi auidum, ſtupentemq; arrectis adhuc auribus carminis mulcedo defixerat: Itaq; paulo poſt, O inquam ſummum laſſorũ ſolamen animorum, quantum me, &c.

By this shee had ended her song: whan ỹ swetnes of her ditie had thorough perced mee, that was desirous of herkening. And I astonyed had yet streight mine cares, that is to sain, to herkẽ the bet what she should say, so that a litel here after I said thus. O thou that art souerain comfort of corages anguishous, so thou hast remounted & nourished me with ỹ weight of thy sentences, and with delite of singing, so that I trow not that I be vnperegall to the strokes of fortune: as who saith, I dare well now suffren al thassaultes of fortune, and wel defend me from her. And tho remedies, which that thou saidest here before, ỹ weren right sharpe, not only that I am not agrisen of hem now, but I desirous of hearing, aske greatly to hearen the remedies. Than saied she thus. That feled I well (qd she) whan that thou ententife and still, rauisshedest my wordes: and I abode till thou haddest such habite of thy thought, as thou hast now, or els till that I my self had maked it to the same habit, which that is a more verie thinge. And certes the remenant of things that been yet to saye been such, that first whan men taste hem, they been byting: But whan they ben receiued within a wight, than ben they swete. But for thou saist that thou art so desirous to hearken hem, with how great brenning wouldest thou glowen, if thou wistes whider I would ledẽ thee? B. Whider is that (qd I.) P. To thilke verie blisfulnesse (qd she) of which thine heart dremeth. But forasmuch as thy sight is occupied and disturbed of earthly thinges, thou maiest not yet sene thilke selfe welefulnesse. B. Doe (qd I) and shewe me what thilke very welefulnes is, I pray thee without tarying. P. That wol I gladly done (qd she) for cause of thee. But I wol first marken by words, and I will enforcen me to enforme thee thilke false cause of blisfulnesse, which that thou more knowest: so that whan thou hast beholden thilke false goods, and turned thine eyen so to that other side, thou may knowen the cleernesse of very blisfulnesse.

Qui ſerere ingenuum volet agrum, Liberet arua prius fruticibus, Falce rubos, ſilicemq; reſecat, &c.

Who so woll sow a feld plenteous, let him first deliueren it of thornes, and kerue a sonder with his hoke the bussches and the ferne, so that the corne may commen heuy of eres & of greines. Hony is the more swete if mouths haue first tasted sauours that be wicke. The sterres shinen more agreably whan the wind Nothus letteth his plungy blasts. And after that Lucifer the day sterre hath chaled away ỹ dark night, the day the fairer ledeth the rosen horse of the sonne. And right so thou, beholding first the false goods begin to withdraw thy necke fro the yearthly affections, and afterwards the very goods shullen entren into thy corage.

Tum defixo paululum viſu, & velut in anguſtam ſue mẽtis ſedem recepta: ſic cepit. P. Omnis mortalium cura quam multiplicium ſtudiorum labor exercet, &c.

Tho

THo fastened she a little the sight of her eyen, and she withdrew her, right as it were into the strait secte of her thought, and began to speak right, thus. All the cures (qd she) of mortall folke, which that trauailen hem in many maner studies, gon certes by diuers waies: but natheles they enforcen hem al to comen onely to thend of blisfulnes. And blisfulnes is such a good, ꝑ who so hath gotten it, he ne may o-ner that thing more desire. And this thing forsoth is so soueraine good, that it cõteineth in him self al maner of goods, to ꝑ which good if there failed any thing, it might not been soue-rain good, for than were som good out of this soueraine good, that might be desired. Now is it clere & certain, ꝑ blisfulnes is a perfit state by the congregation of all goodes, the which blisfulnesse (as I haue said) al mortal folk en-forcen hem to get by diuers waies. For why, the couetise of euery good is naturally plãted in the harts of men: but the miswandring er-rour, misledeth hem into false goodes. Of the which men, some of hem wenen that souerain good be to liuen without neede of any thinge. And other men demen, that souerain good be right digne of reuerence, & enforcen hem to be reuerenced among her neighbours, by the ho nours that they haue goten. And some folke ther ben that holden that right hye power be souerain good, & enforcen hem for to reignen, or els ro ioynen hem to hem that raignen. And it seemeth to other folke, that noblesse of renome be the souerain good, and hasten hem to getten hem glorious name by the artes of werre or of peace. And many folke mesuren and gessen, that souerayne good be ioye and gladnesse, and wenen that it be right blisfull thing to plungen in voluptuous delites. And there ben some folke, that entere haungen the causes and the endes of these forsaid goods: As they that desiren richesses to haue power and delites, or elles they desire power for to haue money, or for cause of renome. In these thinges and such other is turned all the en-tencion of desirynges and werkes of men, as thus: Noblesse and fauour of people, which that yeueth to all men, as it seemeth hem, a maner clerenesse of renome, and wife and chil-dren, that men desyren, for cause of delyte and merynesse. But forsooth frendes ne shullen not be rekened among the goodes of fortune, but of vertue, for it is a full holy ma-ner thing. All these other thinges, forsothe be taken for cause of power, or elles for cause of delite. Certes now am I redy to referren the goodes of the bodie, to these forsaide thinges aboue: For it seemeth that strength & great-nesse of bodye yeuen power and worthinesse, and that beautie and swiftnesse yeuen glorie and renome: and helth of body seemeth to ye-uen delite. In al these things it seemeth onely that blisfulnesse is desyred: for why, thilke thing that euery man desireth moste ouer all thinges, he demeth that it be souereine good. But I haue defined, that blisfulnesse is soue-rain good, for which euery wight demeth that thilke estate that he desyreth ouer all thinges that it be blisfulnesse. Nowe hast thou than before thine eyen almost al the purposed form of the welefulnesse of mankynde, that is to saine, richesse, honours, power, glory and de-lites, the which delite onely conforted he Epi-curus, and iudged and established that delite is the souereine good: for as much as all o-ther thinges: as him thought, byreft awaye ioy and murthe from the hart. But I returne againe to the studies of men, of which men the courage alway rehearseth and seeketh the so-ueraine good, al be it so, that it be with a dyr-ked memorie, but he note by whiche pathe, right as a dronken man not nought by which pathe he may returne home to his house. Se-meth it than that folke forleyen and erren to enforcen hem to haue nede of nothing. Certes there is none other thing, that may so much performen blisfulnesse, as an estate plenteous of all goods, that ne hath neede of none other thing, but that is sufficient of him selfe vnto him self. And folien such folke than that we-nen, that thilk thing that is right good, that it is eke right worthy of honor & of reuerence: certes nay. For that thing nys neyther foule ne worthy to be dispised, that wel nigh all the entencion of mortall folke trauailen to get it. And power eke ought not to bee rekened a-monges goods. What els? for it nis not to wene, that thilke thing that is moste worthy of all things, be feble & without strength. And clerenesse of renome, ought that to been dispi-sed? Certes ther may no man forsake, that all thinge that is right excellent and noble, that it ne semeth be right clere & renomed. For cer-tes it nedeth not to say, that blisfulnesse be an-guisbous ne drerye, ne subiect to greuaunces ne sorowes, sens that in right littel thinges folke seken to haue and to vsen that may de-lyten hem. Certes these ben the thinges that

men

men willen & desiren to getten: and for this cause desiren they richesse, dignities, reignes, glorie and delites. For therby wenen they to haue sufficance, honour, power, renoume, and gladnesse. Than is it good, that men seeken thus by so many diuers studies, in which desire, it may not lightly be shewed, how great is the strength of nature. For howe so men haue diuers sentences & discordings, algates men accorden al in louing the end of good.

Quantas rerum flectit habenas Natura potens, quibus immensum, Legibus orbē prouida seruet, Stringatq; ligans irresoluto, Singula nexu, placet arguto, fidelibus lentis promere cantu, &c.

IT liketh me to shewe by subtil song, with slack and delitable sowne of strings, how that nature mightily enclyneth & flitteth by the gouernement of things, & by such law she pursueth & kepeth the great world, and how she binding restraineth al things by a bond that may not be vnbounden. Al be it so that the lions of the countrey of Pene, beren the faire chaines, and taken meates of the hands of folke, that yenē it hem, & dreden her sturdie maisters, of which they be wont to suffer beatinges, if that her horrible mouthes ben bledde, that is to sain, of beastes deuoured: her corage of time passed that hath ben ydle & rested, repaireth ayen, & they rozen greuously, and remembren on her nature, & slaken her neckes from her chaines vnbound, and her maister first to torne with blody teeth, assaieth ỳ wood wrathes of hem, that is to saine, they fretten her maister. And the iangling bird that singeth on the hye brāches, that is to saine, in the wood, and after is enclosed in a straite cage, although the plying delinesse of men yeue hem honied drinkes and large meates with swete study: yet natheles if thilke birde skipping out of her straite cage, seeth the agreable shadowes of the woodes, she defouleth with her feete her meat yshad, & seketh on morning only the wood, & twiteth desiring the wood with her swete voise. The yerde of a tree that is haled adowne by mighty strength bowth redily the crop adowne: but if that the hand that is bent let it gone againe, anon the crop loketh vpright to ỳ heauen. The sunne Phebus that falleth at euen in the westren wawes, returneth ayen eftsones his carte by a priuie pathe there as it is wont arise. All things seken ayen to her proper course, and all thinges reioysen on her returning againe to her nature: ne none ordinance is betaken to things, but that hath ioined the ende to the beginning, and hath made the course it selfe stable, that it change not fro his proper kinde.

Vos quoq; O terrena animalia, tenui licet imagine, vestrum tamen principium somniatis. Verumq; illum beatitudinis finem, licet minime perspicaci, &c.

CErtes also ye men ỳ ben erthly beasts dreamē alway your beginninge, although it bee with a thin imagination, & by a maner thought, al be it nat clercly ne perfectly, ye loken from a ferre to thilke verye fine of blisfulnes. And therfore naturel entencio leadeth you to thilke very good, but many maner errours misturneth you therfro. Consider now if ỳ be thilke things, by which a man weneth to get him blisfulnesse if that he may comen to thilke end that he weneth to come to by nature. For if that many honours, or these other forsaide things bringen men to such a thing ỳ no good ne faile them ne semeth to faile: Certes than would I grant that they be maked blisful by things that they haue gottē. But if so be that thilke things ne mowen not performe ỳ they beheten, & that ther be defaut of many goods, sheweth it not than clerely the false beautie of blisfulnesse is knowen and attaint in thilke things: First and forward thou thy selfe, that haddest haboundaunce of richesse not long agone, I aske ther that in thaboundance of all thilk riches, if thou were neuer angulhous or sorie in thy courage of any wrong or grcuāce that betide thee in any syde. B. Certes (qd I) it ne remembreth me not, that euer I was so free of my thought, that I ne was alwaye in anguish of somwhat. P. And was that not (qd she) for that thee lacked somewhat ỳ thou noldest not haue lacked. Or els thou haddest that thou noldest haue had. B. Right so it is (qd I.) P. Than desirest thou the presence of the one, & the absence of ỳ other? B. I graunte well (qd I). Phi. Forsoth (qd she) than nedeth there somwhat that euery man desireth. B. Yea there needeth (qd I). P. Certes (qd she) & he that hath lack or neede of aught, wis not in euery way sufficant to himselfe. B. No (qd I) P. And thou (qd she) inal the plentie of thy richesse haddest thilke lache of sufficaunce? B. What els (qd I). P. Than may not riches

maken

make that a man nis nedy, ne that he be sufficient to himselfe: and yet that was it ꝑ they beheten as it semed. And ellis certes I trowe that this be greatly to consider, that money hath not in his owne kynde, that it ne make been binomed of hem, that haue it maugre hem. Boecius. I knowe it well (qd I.) Philo. Why shouldest thou not beknowen it, qd she) when euery daye the strenger folke, benomen it from the feebler maugre hem? Fro whens come elis, all these forayne complaintes, quarels or pleadings, but for that men aske her money, that hath beene benomed hem, by strength or by gile, and alway maugre hem? Boecius. Right so it is (qd I.) Philosophie. Then hath a man nede (qd she) to seken him forayne helpe, by which he maye defende his money. Boecius. Who may saie naie (qd I.) Philosophie. Certes (qd she) and him needed none helpe, if hee ne had no money, that he might lese. Boecius. That is doubles (qd I.) Philosophie. Then is this thing tourned into the contrary (qd she) for richesse, that men, wenen, should maken sufficiaunce, they maken a man rather haue neede of forain helpe. Which is the maner or the gise (qd she) that richesse may driuen away nede? Riche folke may they neither haue honger ne thurste? These riche men, may they fele no colde on their limes in Winter? But thou wilte answere, that riche men haue ynough, wherewith they may staunchen her hunger, and slaken her thurst, and doen away colde.

In this wise, may neede been comforted by richesse, but certes: nede ne may not all vtterly be done away. For if this neede, that alway is gaping and greedy, be fulfilled with richesse, and any other thing, yet dwelleth then a nede, that mote be fulfilled, I hold mee still, and tell not howe that little thinge, sufficeth to nature: but certes, to auarice sufficeth not ynough of nothing. For sens that riches ne may not all done away need, and they maken their owne nede: what may it then ber, that ye wenen that richesses, mowen yeuen you sufficiaunce?

Quamuis fluente dines auri gurgite. Non explerras cogat auarus opes, &c.

ALL were it so, that a noble couetous man had a Riuer or a Gutter fleeting all of golde, yet shoulde it neuer staunche his couetise: and although he had his necke charged with precious stones of the redde Sea: And though he doe ere his fieldes plenteous, with an hundred Oxen, neuer ne shal his byting busines forleten him, whyle he liueth, ne the light richesses, ne shal not bearen him company when he is ded

Sed dignitatis honorabilem, reuerendúq; cui prouenerint, reddunt. Num vis ea est magistratibus, vt virtutum mentibus virtutes inserant, vicia depellant, &c.

WIt dignities to whome they be comen, make they him honorable and reuerente? Haue they not so great strẽgth that they may putten vertue in hertes of folkes that ben the lordship of hem, or elis may they don away ꝑ vices. Certes they be not wont to don away wickednes, but they be wont rather to shewe wickednesse. And thereof commeth it that I haue right great disdain, that dignities been yeuen to wicked men. For which thing Catullus cleped a cõsul of Rome (that highte Nonius) postume of bothe, as who saieth, he cleped him a congregation of vices in his brest, as a postume is full of corruption: All were Nonius set in a chare of dignitie. Seest thou not than, how great vilonies dignities done to wiked men? certes vnworthinesse of wicked men should be the lasse sene, if they were remoued of non honour. Certes thou thy selfe ne mightest not be brought with as many perules as thou mightest suffre, that thou wouldest beare the magistrate with decorate, that is to saine, that for peril that might befall thee by offence of the king. Theodoride, thou noldest not be felowe in gouernaunce with Decorate, whan thou sawe that he had wicked corage of a lycorous shrewe and of an accusour. Ne I maye not for such honours iudgen hem worthy of reuerence, that I deme and holde vnworthy to haue thilke same honours. Now if thou sawe a man, that were fulfilled of wisedome, certes, thou ne mightest not deeme, that he were vnworthie to that honour, or elles to the wisdome of whiche, he is fulfilled. Boecius. No (qd I.) Philosophie. Certes qd she) dignities appertainen proprelie to vertue, and vertue transporteth dignitie anon to thilke man, to which ther selfe is conioyned. And for as muche as honours of people, ne may not make folke digne of honour, it is well seen clerely, that they ne haue no proper beautie of dignitie. And yet men oughten take more heed in this: for if a wight be in so much the more outcast, that he is dispised

spised of most folke, so as dignity ne may not maken shrewes worthy of no reuerence, than maketh dignite shrewes rather dispised then praised, the which shrewes dignite shweth to much folk. And forsoth not vnpunished, that is to sain, that shrewes reuengen hem ayenward vpon dignities. For they yelden ayen to dignities as great guerdons, whan they dispotten and defoulen dignities with her vilony. And for as much as thou now knowest, that thilke very reuerence ne may nat commen by these shadowy transitory dignities, vnderstond now thus: that if a man had vsed & had many manner dignities of consuls and were paraventure commen among straunge nations, should thilke honour maken him wourshipfull and redouted of straunge folke? Certes if that honour of people were a naturel yeft to dignities, it ne might neuer cessen no where among no manner folke to done his office. Right as a fyre in euery countrey ne stinteth not to enchaufen and maken hote. But for as much as for to ben honorable or reuerent, ne cometh not to folke of her proper strength of nature, but onely of the false opinion of folke, that is to sayne, that wenen that dignities maken folke digne of honours: anon therefore whan they comen there as folke ne knowen not thilke dignities, her honours vanishen away and that anone. But that is among straunge folke maist thou sain. Ne amongs hem there they were borne, ne dured not thilke dignities alway. Certes the dignite of the prouostry of Rome was whilom a great power: now is it nothyng but an ydle name, and the rent of the senatory a great charge. And if a wight whilom had the office to taken hede of the vitailes of the people, as of corne and of other thyngs, he was holden amongs hem great. But what thyng is more now outcast than thilke prouostry. As I haue laid a little here beforne, that thilke thyng that hath no proper beaute of it self, receiueth sometime price and shining, and sometime leseth it by the opinion of blaunces. Now if that dignities than ne mowen not make folke digne of reuerence, and if that dignities were foule of her will, by the filth of shrewes. And if dignities lesen her shining by changing of tymes, and if they weren foule by estimacion of people, what is it that they han in hemselfe of beaute, that ought to bee desired? as who saith none: than ne mowen they yeue no beauty of dignity to none other.

Quamuis se tyrio superbus ostro Comeret ei nuncis lapillis, &c.

Al be it so, that the proud Nero with al his wood luxure, kembe him and aparelled him with fair purpure of Tiry, and with white peerles. Algates yet therof he hatefull to all folke, that is to say that all was he behated of all folkes, yet this wicked Nero had great lordship. And yaf whilome to the reuerent Senatours the vnworshipfull seats of dignities. Vnworshipful seats he clepeth here, for that Nero that was so wicked yaf the dignities.

Who would than reasonably wenen, that blisfulnesse were in such honours, as ben yeuen by vicious shrewes.

An vero regna, regnumq; familiaritas efficere potentem valent? Quidni, &c.

But reignes and familiarities of kings, may they maken a man to ben mighty? How elswhen his blisfulnesse durethe perpetually. But certes, the old age of time passed, & eke of present time now, is ful of ensaples, how ỳ kings haue chaunged into wretchednesse, out of her welefulnes. O, a noble thing & a clere thyng is power, ỳ nis not foundē mighty to kepe it self. And if power of realms be authour & maker of blisfulnes, if thilk power lacketh on any side, amenuseth it not thilk blisfulnesse, & bringeth in wretchednes. But yet al be it so, ỳ ỳ realms of mākind stretchē brode, yet mote there nede ben much folk, ouer which that euery king ne hath no lordship ne commandement. And certes vpon thilk side ỳ power falleth, which ỳ maketh folke blisful. Right on that same side no power entreth vndernēath ỳ maketh hem wretches. In this manner than moten kings haue more portion of wretchednesse than of welefulnesse.

A tirant that was king of Cecile, that had affaied the peril of his estate, shewed by similitude the dredes of realmes by grafnesse of a swerd that hong ouer the hed of his familier. What thyng is than this power, that may not done away the bitings of besinesse, ne eschewe the pricks of drede?

And certes yet woulden they liuen in sykernesse, but they may not. And yet they glorifyen hem in her power. Holdest thou than that thilke man be mighty, ỳ thou seest that he

would done that he maye not done? And holdest thou than him a mighty man, that hath enuyronned hys sydes with men of armes or sergeaunts, and dredeth more hem that he maketh agast, than they dreden hym, and that is putte in the handes of his seruaunts for he should seeme mighty. But of familiers or seruaunts of kyngs, why should I tell thee any thyng, sith that I my selfe haue shewed thee that realmes hem selfe ben ful of great feblesse? The which familiers, certes the royall power of kyngs in hole estate, and in estate abated, ful oft throweth adown.

Nero constrayned Senecke hys famylyer and his mayster, to chesen on what death he would dye. Antonius commaunded that knyghts slowen wyth her swerdes Papinian his famylyer, which Papinian hadde ben long time ful mighty amongs hem of the court. And yet certes, they woulden both haue renounced her power. Of which two Senecke enforced him to yeuen to Nero his richesse, and also to haue gone into solitary exile. But whan the great weight, that is to sain, of lords power, or of Fortune, draweth hem that shullen fall, neither of hem ne might doe that he would. What thing is than thilk power, that though men haue it, yet they ben agast, and whan thou wouldest haue it, thou nart not syker? And yf thou wouldest forleten it, thou maiest nat eschewen it. But whether soch men been frendes at need as been counsayled by fortune, and nat by vertue? Certes such folke as welefull fortune maketh frendes, contrarious fortune maketh hem enemies. And what pestilẽce is more mighty for to annoy a wight, than a familier enemye.

Qui se volet esse potentem, Animos domet ille feroces, Nec victa libidine colla, &c.

Who so woll be mighty, he mote daunten his cruell courages, ne put nat his necke ouercommen, vnder the foule raynes of lechery. For all be it so, that thy lordshippe stretch so ferre that the countreyes of Inde quaketh at thy commaundements, or at thy lawes. And that the last yle in the see, that hight Tyle, be thrall to thee: yet yf thou maist nat putten away thy foule derke desires, and driuen out fro the wretched complaints: certes, it nis no power that thou hast.

Gloria vero quam fallax sepe, quam turpis est? Vnde non inuita tragicus exclamat. O gloria gloria millibus mortalium nihil aliud Facta, nisi aurium inflatio magna, &c.

But glory, how deceiuable and how foule is it oft? For whych thyng, not skilfully a Tragedien, that is to sayne maker of dities that hight Tragedies, cried and said: O glory glory (qd. he) thou nart nothing els to thousands of folkes but a sweller of eares. For many haue full great renoume by the false opinion of the people.

And what thyng may been thought fouler then such praising? For thilke folke that been praised falsly, they moten nedes haue shame of her praising. And if that folke haue getten hem thanke or praising by her deserts: What thing hath thilke praise eched or encreased to the cõscience of wise folke, that measuren her good, nat by the rumour of the people, but by the sothfastnesse of a conscience? And if it seeme a fayre thyng, a man to haue encreased & spradd his name, than followeth it, that it is demed to ben a foule thing, if it ne be yspradde and encreased. But as I said a litel here before, that sith ther mote needs ben many folks, to which folk the renoume of a man ne may nat comen, it befalleth, that he that thou wenest be glorious and renoumed, semeth in the next part of the yearths to ben without glory and without renoume. And certes amongs these things I ne trow nat that the prise and the grace of the people, nis neither worthy to been remembred, ne cometh of wise iudgemẽt, ne is ferm perdurably. But now of this name of gentilesse: what man is it that ne may wel sene how vaine and how litting it is? For if that name of gentilesse be referred to renoume and clerenesse of linage, than is gentil name but a forain thing, that is to say, to hem that glorifien hem of her linage. For it seemeth that Gentiles be a maner praysing that commeth of the deserts of auncestres. And if praising maketh gentilnesse, than moten they needes ben gentill, that been praysed. For whych thyng it followeth, that if thou ne haue no gentilnesse of thy selfe, that is to saine, prise, that commeth of thy desert. For aine gentilnesse ne maketh thee nat gentill. But certes if there be any good in gentilnesse, I trowe it be all onely this: that it seemeth as that a maner necessite be imposed to gentilmen, for that they

they ne ſhuld not outragen or forleauen fro the vertues of her noble kunred.

Omne hominum genus in terris Simili ſurgit ab ortu. Vnus enim rerum pater eſt. Vnus cunctu miniſtrat,&c.

ALL the lynage of men, that ben in earth ben of ſemblable birth. One alone is father of thinges: one alone miniſtreth all thynges: he yafe to the ſunne his beams: he yafe to the moone her hornes: he yafe to men the earth: he yafe the ſterres to the heauen: he cloſed with membres ỳ ſoules that comen from his hie ſeat. Than comen all mortal folk of noble ſeed. Why noiſen ye, or boſten of your elders? For if ye loke your beginning and God your father authour & your maker, Than nis there no forleſued wight or vngentill but if he nouriſh his corage vnto vices, and forlete his proper birth.

Quid autẽ de corporis voluptatibus loquar, quarũ appetẽtia quidã plena eſt anxietatis,&c

BUt what ſhal I ſain of delyces of body, of which delices ỳ deſirings ben full of anguiſhes, & the fulfillings of hem ben full of penance? How great ſickeneſſes & how great ſorows vnſuffrable, right as a maner frute of wickednes, ben thilke delices wont to bringen to ỳ bodies of folke that vſen hem? of which delices I not what ioy may been had of her mouing. But this wote I wel, ỳ who ſo euer wol remembrẽ him of his luxures he ſhall well vnderſtand, ỳ the iſſues of delices ben ſorowful & ſory. And if thilke delices mow make folke bliſſful, than by ỳ ſame cauſe motẽ theſe beeſts been cleped bliſſfull. Of which beeſts all the entencion haſteth to fulfil her bodely iolite. And the gladneſſe of wife and children were an honeſt thyng, but it hath ben ſaid that itis ouer mokel ayenſt kind, ỳ children haue ben founden tourmentours to her fathers, I not how many. Of which childrẽ how biting is euery cõdicion, it nedeth not totellẽ it thee, that haſt er this time aſſaied it, & art yet now anguiſhous. In this time aproue I the ſentence of my diſciple Euripidis, that ſaid, that he that hath no childrẽ is weleful by infortune.

Habet hoc voluptas omnis ſtimulis agit fruẽtes: Apiumq; par volantiũ vbi gratia mella fuit, fugit& nimis tenaci ferit icta corda morſu,&c

EVery delite hath this, ỳ it anguiſheth hem with prickes that vſen it. It reſſembleth to theſe flieng flies that we clepen bees, that after that he hath ſhed his agreable honies, he flieth away, and ſtingeth the herts of hem that ben ſmitten with biting ouerlong holden.

Nihil igitur dubium eſt, quin he ad beatitudinem vic deuia quedam ſint, nec perducere eo quemque valeant.

NOw it is no dout than, ỳ theſe waies ne been a maner miſſeadings to bliſſfulneſſe: ne that they ne mowen not leden folke thider, as they beheten to leden hem. But with how great harms theſe forſaid waies ben enlaced, I ſhall ſhew you ſhortly. For why, if thou enforceſt thee to aſſemble mony, thou muſt bireuen him his money ỳ hath it. And if thou wolt ſhinen with dignities, thou muſt beſechen and ſupplien hem, that yeuen tho dignities. And if thou coueiteſt by honor to gone before other folkes, thou ſhalt defoule thy ſelfe thorow humbleneſs of aſking. If thou deſireſt power thou ſhalt by awaits of thy ſubiects anoiouſly be caſt vnder many parils. Aſkeſt thou glory? thou ſhalt been ſo diſtract by aſpre things, that thou ſhalt forgone ſikerneſſe. And if thou wouldeſt leden thy life in delites, euery wight ſhall diſpiſen thee & forleten thee, as thou that art thrall to thyng, that is right foule and brittel, that is to ſaine, ſeruaunt to thy body. Now is it wel ſeene, how little and how brittle poſſeſſion they coueiten, that putten the goods of ỳ body aboue her owne reaſon. For maiſt thou ſurmounten theſe oliſauntes in greatneſſe or in weight of body? Or mayeſt thou ben ſtrenger than the bull? mayſt thou be ſwifter than the Tygre? Behold the ſpaces and the ſtabieneſſe, and the ſwift courſe of heauen, and ſtint ſometyme to wondren on foule thyngs. The which heauen certes nys nat rather for theſe thynges to be wondred vpon, than for the reaſon by whych it is gouerned. But for the ſhinyng of thy forme, that is to ſayne, the beaute of thy body, how ſwiftly paſſing is it, and how tranſitory, certes, it is more fliting than the mutabilite of floures of the ſommer ſeaſon. For ſo as Ariſtotell telleth, that yf the men had eyen of a beeſt that hight Lynx, ſo that the lookynge of folke might pierten thorough tho

thyngs that withstonde it. Who so loked than in thentrailes of the body of Alcibiades, that was full faire in the superfycie without, it should seeme right foule. And for thy, yf thou seemest fayre, thy nature ne maketh nat that, but the deceuaunce of feeblenesse of the eyen that looken. But praise the goods of the body as much as euer the lyst, so that thou know algates that what so it be, that is to saine, of the goods of the body, which that thou wondrest vpon, may ben distroied or els dissolued by the heet of a feuer of thre daies. Of which forsaid thynges I may reducen this shortly in a sum, that these worldly goods, which ỹ ne mowen yeuen that they behighten, ne been not parfite by the congregacion of all goods, that they ne ben not waies ne pathes, that bringen men to blisfulnesse, ne maken men to be blisful.

Heu heu que miseros tramite deuios abducit ignorantia, Non aurum in viridi queritis arbore, &c.

ALas, which foly, and which ignorance misleadeth wandring wretches, fro the path of very good. Certes ye seken no gold in greene trees, ne ye gadren not precious stones in vines: ne ye ne hiden not your gunnes in hie mountains to catchen fisshe: of the which ye may maken rich feests.

And if you like to hunt to Roes, ye ne go nat to the fords of the water that hight Thyrene. And ouer this men know well the crekes and the cauernes of the see yhid in the floods, and knowen eke, which water is most plenteous of white perles, & knowen which water haboundeth most of reed purpure, ỹ is to sain, of a maner shelfish, with which men dien purpure: and knowen which strondes habounden most of tender fisshes, or of sharpe fisshes, that hight Echines. But folke suffren hem selfe to been so blind that hem ne retchen not to know where thilke goods ben yhidde, which that they coueiten but plungen hem in yerth, and seeken there thilk good, that surmounteth the heuen, that beareth the sterres. What praier may I maken that be digne to the nyce thoughts of men? But I pray that they coueiten rychesse and honours, so that whan they haue gotten tho false goods with great trauaile, that therby they mowen knowen the very goods.

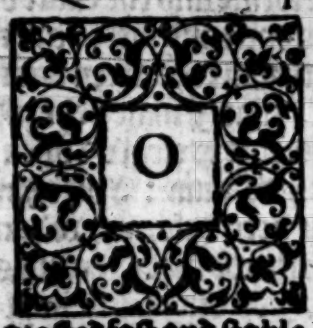
Hactenus mendacis formam felicitatis ostendisse sufficerit, quod si perspicaciter intuearis, ordo est deinceps, &c.

IT suffiseth that I haue said hiderto, ỹ form of false welfulnesse: so that if thou loke now clerely, ỹ order of mine entẽcion requireth frõ hensforth, to shewẽ ỹ very welefulnesse. Boecius. Forsoth (qd. I) I see wel now, that suffisaunce may nat comen by richesse, ne power by realms, ne reuerence by dignities, ne gentilles by glory, ne ioy by delices. Ph. And hast thou well knowen the causes (qd. she) why it is? B. Certes me semeth (qd. I) that I see hem, right as though it were through a litle clift: But me were leauer knowen hem more openly of the. Phi. Certes (qd. she) the reason is all redy. For thilke thing that simply is one thing wit hout any deuision, the errour and foly of mankind, deuideth and departeth it and misleadeth it, and transporteth from very and parfite good, to goods that be false and vnparfite. But say me this: weenest thou that he that hath need of power that him ne lacketh nothing? Boecius. Nay (qd. I) Philosophy. Certes (qd. she) thou sayest aright: for yf so be that there is a thing that in any party be feebler of power, certes as in that it mote nedes be nedy of forayne helpe. Boecius. Right so it is (qd. I.) Philosophy. Suffisaunce and power been of one kind. Boecius, So seemeth (qd. I.) Philosophy. And deemest thou (qd. she) that a thyng that is of this manner, that is to say, suffisaunt and mighty, ought ben dispised, or els that it be right digne of reuerence aboue all thyngs? Boecius. Certes (qd. I) it is no doubt that it is right worthy to be reuerenced. Philosop. Let vs adden (qd. she) reuerence to suffisaunce and to power, so that we demen that these three thyngs be all one thing. Boecius. Certes (qd. I) let vs addẽ it if we wil graunt the soth. Ph. What demest thou (qd. she) than is that a darke thing and not noble, that is suffisaunt, reuerent, and mighty? Or elles that it is right noble and right cleare by celebrate of renome? Consider than (qd. she) as we haue graunted here byforne, that he that ne hath no neede of nothing, and is most mighty and most digne of honour, yf him needeth any clearenesse of renoume, which clearenesse hee might not graunten of himselfe, so for lacke of thilke clearenesse he might seemen the feebler on any side, or the more outcast. Glose. That is to say, nay: For who so that is suffisaunt, mighty, and reuerent, clearenesse of renoume foloweth of the foresaid thynges: he hath it all ready of his suffisaunce. Boecius.

I may not (qd. I) deny it, but I mote graunten as it is, that this thyng is right celebrable by clearenesse of renomme and noblesse. P. Than followeth (qd. she) that we adden clarenelle of renomme to the forsayd thyngs, so that there be amongs hem no difference. B. This is a consequence (qd. I) Philosop. This thyng than (quod she) that ne hath nede of no forame thyng, and that may doe all thyng by his strengths, and that is noble and honourable, is it not a merry thyng and ioyful. Boecius. But whence (qd I) that any sorow myght come to this thyng that is such, certes I may not thinke. Philosophy. Than mote we graunten (quod she) that this thyng be full of gladnesse, if the forsaid thyngs be soth. And certes, also mote we graunten, that sufficiaunce, power, noblesse, reuerence, and gladnesse be only diuers by names, but her substaunce hath no diuersite. Boecius. It mote nedely be so (quod. I) Philosophy. Thilk thyng than (quod she) that is one and simple in his nature, the wickednesse of men departeth and deuydeth it: And whan they enforcen hem to getten party of a thyng, that ne hath no part, they ne getten hem neyther thilke party that nys none, ne the thyng all hole that they desire. Boecius. In whych manner (quod I) Philosophy. Thilk man (qd. she) that secheth richesse to flyen pouerty: he ne trauayleth hym not for to get power, for he hath leauer be darke and vyle, and eke withdraweth from hymselfe many naturall delytes, for he nold lese the money that he hath assembled. But certes in this manner he ne getteth hym no sufficiaunce, that power forleteth and that molesty prycketh, and that lyth maketh out cast, and that derkenesse hydeth. And certes he that desireth only power, wasteth and scattereth rychesse, and dispiseth delices and eke honour that is without power, ne he ne prayseth glory nothyng. Certes, this seest thou well that many thyngs faylen to hym: For he hath sometyme defaut of many necessitees, and many anguyssbes byten hym. And whan he may not done tho defauts away, he forletteth to be mighty, and that is the thyng that he most desyreth. And right thus may I make semblable reasons of honour, of glory, and of delices. For so euery of these forsaid things is the same that these other thyngs ben, that is to sain, all one thyng. Who so euer seketh to getten that one of these and not that other, he ne getteth not that he desyreth. Boecius. What sayest thou than, if that a man coueit to getten all these thyngs togider. Philosophy. Certes (quod she) I would say that he would get hym soueraine blisfulnesse, but that shall he not find in tho thyngs that I haue shewed, that mow not yeue that they byheten. Boecius. Certes no (qd. I) Phi. Than (quod she) ne shullen men not by no wayseken blisfulnesse in such thynges, as men wenen that they ne mow gyuen, but one thyng singlerly of all that men seken. Boecius. I graunt wel (quod I) ne non fother thyng may be sayd. Philosophy. Now hast thou than (quod she) the forme and the cause of false welefulnesse: Now turn and flitte agayn to thy thought, for there shall thou seen anon thilke very blysfulnesse, that I haue behight the. Boecius. Certes (qd. I) it is clare & open, though it were to a blynd man: And that shewedst thou me a little here before, whan thou enforcedest thee to shewe mee the causes of the false welefulnesse. For (but if I be begiled) than is that thilke very blisfulnesse and parfite, that parfitely maketh a man sufficiaunt, mighty, honourable, noble, and ful of gladnesse. And for thou shalt well know, that I haue well vnderstanden these thynges within my heart: I know well that thylke blisfulnesse that men verely yeuen one of ỳ forsayd thyngs, sens they ben all one: I knowe doubtlesse that thilke thyng is full of blisfulnesse. Philosophy. O my norice (qd. she) by this opinion I say that thou art blisfull, if thou put this therto that I shall sayne. Boecius. What is that (qd. I) Phi. Trowest thou that there be any thyng in this erthly mortall tombling thyngs, that may bringen this estate? Bo. Certes (qd. I) I trow it not: and thou hast shewed me wel, that ouer thilk good there nys nothyng more to ben desired. P. These thyngs than (quod she) that is to saine, earthly sufficiance and power, and soch things erthly, they seemen likenesse of very good, or els it seemeth that they yeuen to mortall folke a manner of goodnesse, that ne be not parfite, but thilke good that is very and parfite, that may they not yeuen. Bo. I accord me well (quod I) Phi. Than (quod she) for as moch as thou hast knowen, which is thilke very blisfulnesse, and eke which thilke things ben, that lien falsely blisfulnesse, that is to say, ỳ they by diseeite semen very goodes: Now behoueth thee to knowe whence and wher thou mow seke thilke very blisfulnesse. B. Certes (qd. I) ỳ desire I greatly and haue abyden long time to herken it. P. But for as moch (qd. she) as it liketh to my dis-

ciple Plato in his booke of Tymeo, ꝑ in right little thyngs men shoulden beseech the help of God: What iudgest thou that be now to done, so that we may deserue to find ꝑ seat of thilke souerain god? B. Certes (qd. I) I deme that we shullen cleape to the father of all goddes, for without en hym nis there nothyng founded a right. P. Thou saiest a right (qd. she) and began anon to singen right thus.

O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas,
Terrarum celiq; sator, qui tempus ab euo, ire
iubes, stabiliq; manens das cuncta moueri.
Quēnon externe pepulerūt fingere cause, &c.



Thou father, souerain & creatour of heuē and of erths, that gouernest this world by pardurable reason, ꝑ cōmandest the times to gone, sith that age had beginning. Thou ꝑ dwellest thy self ate stedfast and stable, & yeuest all other thyngs to be meued, ne forreyn causes ne constreyne the neuer to compoun werk of flatering mater, but only the form of souerain good yset, within the without envy, ꝑ meued thee freely. Thou ꝑ art alderfarest, bearing ꝑ fair world in thy thought: formedest this world to thy likenes semblable, of ꝑ fair world in thy thought. Thou drawest all thing on thy souerain ensampler, and commaundest that this world perfectlich ymaked, haue freely and absolute his parfite parties. Thou bindest the elements by nombres proporcionables, that the cold things, mowen accorden with the hotte things, & the dry things with the moist: That the fire, that is purest, ne flye not ouer hie, ne that the heuinesse ne draw nat adoun ouerlow the earths, that be plonged in the waters. Thou knittest togider, the meane soule of treble kind mouing all things, and deuidest it by membres accordyng. And whan it is thus deuided, it hath assembled a mouyng into rounds, it goeth to turne agayne to himselfe, and enuironneth a full deepe thought, and turneth the heauen by a semblable ymage. Thou by euen like causes enhaunsest the soules and the lesse liues, & sendest hem to height by light waines or carts. Thou sowest hem into heauen and into yerth, and whan they bee conuerted to thee by thy benigne law, thou makest hem retourne ayen to thee by ayen ledyng fire. O father yeue thou to the thought to flyen vp into thy straite seat, and graunt him to cuironne the well of good, And the light yfound graunt him to fixen the cleare sights of his corage in the, and scatter thou and to breake that weights & the clouds of erthly heauinesse, and shyne thou by thy brightnesse. For thou art clearenesse, thou art pesible rest to debonaire folke, thou thy self art beginning, bearer, leder, path, and terme to loke on the that is our end.

Quoniam igitur, que sit imperfecti, que etiam perfecti boni forma vidisti, nunc demonstrandum reor, &c.

For asmuch than, as thou hast sene which is the forme of good that nys not parfite, and the form of good, which that is parfite. Now trow I that it were good to shew in what this perfection of blisfulnesse is set. And in this thyng I trow that we shal first enquire for to weten, if that any soth manner good, as thilke good as thou hast diffynished a little here before, that is to sain, souerain good, may be found in the nature of thyngs. For ꝑ vame imagination of thought ne deceiue vs not, and put vs out of the sothfastnesse of thilk thyng that is submitted to vs. But it may not be denied that thilke ne is, and that is right as a well of all goods. For all thyng that is cleaped imparfite is proued imparfite, by the amenusyng of perfection of thyng that is parfite. And hereof commeth it that in euery thyng generall, if that men seene any thyng that is imparfite, certes in thilke thyng generall, there mote be some thyng that is parfite. For if so bee that perfection is done away, men may not thinke ne saye from whence thilke thyng is, that is cleped imperfite. For the nature ne tooke not her begynning, of thynges amenused and imparfite, but it proceedeth of thynges that been all hole absolute, and descendeth so down into the vttrest thynges, and into thynges empty and without fruit. But as I haue shewed a little here before, that if that there be a blisfulnesse that be freel and vaine, and imparfayte, there maye no man doubte that there nys some blisfulnesse, that there is sadde stedfast and parfyte. Boecius. This is concluded (qd. I) fermely and sothfastly. P. But consider also (qd. she) in whom this blisfulnesse inhabyteth. The commune accord and concept of the corage of men, proueth and graunteth, that God prince of all thynges is good. For so as nothyng may be thought better than good, it may not be doubted than that he that

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nothyng nis better then he nis good. Certes, reason sheweth that GOD is so good, that it prouveth by very force, that parfit good is in him. For if God nis soch, he ne may not been prince of all thing. For certes, some thing possessyng in it self parfite good, should be more worthy then God: and it should seemen that thilke thing were first and older then God. For we haue shewed apertly, that all thynges that been parfite, been first, or thynges that been imperfite. And for thy, for as much as that my reason, or my processe, ne go not away withouten an end, we owen to graunten, that the soueraine good is rightfull of soueraine parfite good. And we haue estáblished, that the soueraín good is very blisfulnesse: then mote it needes be, that very blisfulnesse is set in soueraín good. Boecius. This take I wel (qd. I) ne this ne may not be withsaid in no manner. Philosophy. But I pray thee (qd. she) se now how thou maiest prouen holily, and withouten corruption, this that we haue saied, that the soueraine God, is full of right soueraine good. Bo. In which maner (qd I). Phi. Wenest thou aught (qd she) that the father of all things, hath taken thilke soueraín good, any where out of himselfe? Of which soueraine good, men proueth that he is full. Right as thou mightest thinken, that God, that hath blisfulnesse in himselfe, and thilke blisfulnes that is in him, were diuers in substaunce. For if thou wene, that God hath receiued thilke good out of himselfe, thou maiest wene, that he that yaue thilke good to god be more worthie then God. But I am beknowe and confesse, that right dignely, that God is righte worthie aboue all thinges: And if so be that this good be in him by nature, but that is diuerse from him by wening reason, sens wee speaken of God, prince of all things. Faine, who so faine maie, who was he that conioyned these thinges togither. And eke at the last see wel, that a thyng that is diuers fro any thyng, that thilke thing nis not that same thing, for which it is vnderstanden to been diuers. Then foloweth it well, that the ilke thing that by his nature, is diuerse from soueraín good, ỳ thing is not soueraín good. But certes, it were a felonous cursednesse, to thinken that of him, that nothing nis more worthe. For alway of all thinges, the name of hem ne may not been better, then her beginner. For which I may concluden by right verie reason, that thilke that is begynning of all thinges, thilke same thyng is soueraine God in his substance. Boecius. Thou hast saied rightfully (qd I). Philosophie. But we haue graunted (qd she) that the soueraín good is blisfulnesse. Boecius. That is soothe (qd I). Philosophie. Then (qd she) we moten needes graunten and confessen, that the ilke same soueraine good be God. Boecius. Certes (qd I) I ne may not denye, ne withstande the reasons purposed, and I see well that it foloweth by strength of the premisses. Philosophie. Loke now (qd she) if this be proued yet more firmely thus, that there ne mowen not ben two soueraine goods that beene diuers emong hem selfe. For certes, the goodes that been diuers emong hem selfe, that one is not that the other is. Then ne mowen neither of hem be parfite, so as either of hem lacketh to other, but that that nis not parfite, men may seen apertly, that it nis not soueraine. The things then that be soverainly good, ne mowen by no way be diuers. But I haue well concluded, that blisfulnesse and GOD, been the soueraine good, for which it mote needes been that soueraine blisfulnesse, is soueraine dignitie. Boecius. Nothing (qd I) is more stedefast then this, ne more firme by reason, ne a more worthie thyng then God, may not bee concluded.

Philosophie. Upon these thinges then (qd she) right as these Geometriciens, when they haue shewed their propositions, been wonte to bringen in thinges, that they clepen porismes, or declarations of forsaide thinges, right so woll I yeue thee here, as a Corallarie or a mede of crowne. For why, for as much as by the gettinge of blisfulnesse, men beene maked blisfull, and blisfulnesse is dignitie. Then it is manifeste and open, that by the getting of dignitie, men been maked blisfull, right as by the getting of Justice. And by the getting of Sapience, they be maked wise, right so needes by the semblable reason, whē they haue gotten diuinitie, they bee made gods. Then is euery blisful man a God. But certes, by nature there nis but one God, but by the participation of the Diuinitie, there ne letteth ne destourbeth nothing, that there ne be many Goddes. Boecius. This is (qd I) a faire thing and a precious, clepe it as thou wilt, be it Corallaric, or Porisme, or mede of Croune, or declaring. Philosophie. Certes (qd she) nothing nis fairer, then is the thing, that by reason should be added to these forsaide things. Boecius. What thing (qd I). Philosophie. So (qd shee) as it seemeth

that blisfulnesse containeth many thynges, it were for to weten, whether that all these thyngs maken or conioynen, as a maner body of blisfulnesse, by the diuersite of parties of members, or els if any of al these thyngs, bee sothe that it accomplish by himselfe, the substaunce of blisfulnesse. So all these other thyngs been referred, and brought to blisfulnesse, that is to say, as to the chief of hem. Boecius. I would (quod I) that thou madest me clearely to vnderstand what thou saiest, and what thou recordest me the forsaied thyngs. Philosophy. Haue I not iudged (qd. she) that blisfulnesse is good? Boecius. Yes forsoth qd. I) and that souerain good. Philosophie. Adde then (qd she) thilke good that is made blisfulnesse, to all the forsaide thinges. For thilke same blisfulnesse, that is deemed to be Souerain sufficiance, thilke selfe is souerain power, Soueraine reuerence, soueraine clernesse or noblesse, and soueraine delite.

What saiest thou then of al these thinges, that is to saie, sufficiaunce, power, and these other things? Been they then as members of blisfulnesse, or been they referred and brought to soueraine good, right as all thinges that been brought to the chief of hem? Boecius. I vnderstond well (qd I) what thou purposest to seeke: But I desire for to herken, that thou shewe it to me. Philosophie. Take now thus the discrecion of this question (qd she) If all these things (qd she) weren members to felicitie, then weren they diuers that one from ỳ other: and such is the nature of parties or of members, that diuers members compounen a bodie. Boecius. Certes (qd I) it hath well ben shewed here before, that al these things been all one thing. Philosophie. Than been they no members (qd she). For els it shoulde seme that blisfulnesse were conioyned all of o member alone, but that is a thing that may not be doen. Boecius. This thing (qd I) then, nis not doubtous, but I abide to herken the remnant of thy question. Philosophi. This is open and clere (qd she) that all other things ben referred and brought to good. For therefore is sufficiaunce required, for it is deemed to be good: and for thy is power required, for mẽ trowen also that it be good. And this same thing mowen wee thinken, and coniecten of reuerence, of noblesse, and of delite. Then is souerain good the somme and the cause, of all that ought to been desired. For why, thilke thing that with holdeth no good in it selfe, ne semblaunce of good, it ne may not well in no maner be desired ne required. And the contrary: for though that thinges by her nature, ne ben not good, algates if men wenen that they been good, yet been they desired, as though they were verely good. And therfore it is said that men ought to wene by right, that bountie be the souerame fine, & the cause of all the thingis ỳ ben to requiren. But certes, thilke ỳ is cause for which men requiren any thing; it semeth that thilke same thing be most desired as thus: if that a wight would ride for cause of heale, he ne desireth not so much the moning to riden, as the effect of his heale. Now then sens that al things ben required, for the grace of good, they ne been not desired of all folke, more then the same good. But we haue granted that blisfulnes is that same thing, for which that all these other things been desired. Then is it thus, that certes only blisfulnesse, is required & desired. By which thing it sheweth clerely, that of good & blisfulnes, is all one and the same substance. Boec. I se not (qd I) wherefore that men might discorden in this. Philosophi. And we haue shewed, that God & veerie blisfulnes is all one thing. Boecius. That is sothe (qd I). Philosophie. Then mow we conclude siker ly, that the substance of God, is set in thilke same good, and in none other place.

Huc omnes pariter venite capti, Quos fallax ligat improbis catenis. Terrenas habitans libido mentes. Hic erit vobis requies laborum, &c.

Ome ye altogither now ye ỳ been ycaught and bound with wicked chains, by the deceimable delite of yearthly thyngs, inhabityng in your thoughte. Here shall bee the rest of your labour: here is the hauen stable, in quiete pesible. This alone is the open refute to wretches, that is to saine, that ye that be combred and deceiued, with worldly affections, cometh now to this souerain good, that is God, that is refute to hem that willen commen to hym. All the thyngs that the riuer Tagus yeueth you, wyth his golden graueis: or els al the thyngs that the riuer Hermus, yeueth with his red bryncke: or that Indus yeueth, that is next the hote party of the world, that medleth the greene stones with the white: ne should not clearen the loking of your thought, but hyden rather your blind corage within her derknes. All that liketh you here, and exciteth and moueth your thoughts, the yerth hath nourished

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it within his low caues. But the shyning, by which the heauen is gouerned, & whence that his strength, that escheweth the darke duerthowing of the soule, and who so euer may knowen thilke light of blisfulnesse, hee will shine, that the white beames of the Sunne ne be not cleare.

Assentior (inquam) cuncta enim firmissimis nexa rationibus constant. Tum illa, quãti, inquit, tu estimabis, si bonam ipsum, quid sit, agnoueris, &c.

Boecius. I assent me (qd I) for all things ben strongly bounden with right ferme reasõs. Phi. Howe much wilt thou prysen it (qd shee) if that thou know what thilke good is? Boecius. I will prayse it (qd I) by price without ende, if it shall betide me to know also together God that is good. Philos. Certes (qd she) that shall I do thee by verie reason, if that tho thyngs, that I haue concluded a little here beforne, dwellen onely in her granting. Boecius. They dwellen graunted to the (qd I) that is to sain, as who saith, I graunt to thy foresaid conclusions. Philosophie. I haue shewed thee (qd she) that the thyngs that ben required of many folke, ne been not very goods ne perfite. For they been diuers, that one frõ that other. And so as eche of hem is lacking to other, they ne haue no power to bring a good, that is full and absolute. But then at erst been they very good, when they been gathered togider all into one forme, and into one working: so that thilk thing that is sufficient, thilke same is power, and reuerence, noblesse, and mirth. And forsothe, but if all these things be all one same thyng, they ne haue not whereby that they mowe be put in the number of thynges that ought to be required and desired. Boecius. It is shewen (qd. I) ne hereof may there no manne doubten. Philosophy. The thynges then (qd. she) that ne been no goods, when they been diuers, and whan they begynnen to be all one thyng, then been they goods, ne commeth it not then, by the getting of vnity, that they bee maked goods? Boecius. So seemeth it (qd. I.) Philosophy. But al thyng that is good (qd. she) grantest thou that it be good, by the participation of good or no? Boecius. I graunt it (qd. I.) Philosophie. Then must thou graunten (qd. she) by semblable reason, that one and good be one same thyng. For of thynges, of which the effect nys not naturally diuers, nedes her substance must bee one same thyng. Boecius. I ne may not denie it (qd. I.) Philosophie. Hast thou not knowen well (qd. she) that all thyng that is, hath so long his dwelling and his substaunce, as long as it is one, but when it forletteth to been one, it must needs dien, and corrumpen togither. Boecius. In which manner (qd. I.) Philosophy. Right as in beasts (qd. she) when the soule and the body ben conioyned in one and dwelling together, it is cleaped a beast: and when her vnity is destroyed, by the discreuerance of that one from that other, then sheweth it well, that it is a dedde thyng, and it is no lenger no beast.

And the body of a wight, while it dwelleth in one forme, by conunction of members, it is wel seene, that it is a figure of mankinde: And if the parties of the body, bee deuided and discouered, that one from that other, that they destroy the vnity, the body forletteth to bee that it was beforne. And who so would renne in the same manner by all thyngs, he should seen that without doubt, euery thyng is in his substaunce, as long as it is one. And when it forleteth to be one, it dieth and perisheth.

Bo. When I consider (qd. I.) many thyngs, I see none other. Philosophy. Is there anye thyng (qd. she) that in as much as it liueth naturelly, that forletteth the talent, or ỹ appetite of his being, and desireth to come to death and to corruption? Boeci. If I consider (qd I) the beastes that haue any maner nature of willing, and of nilling, I ne finde no beast, but if it be constrained fro without forth, that forletteth or dispiseth the intencion to liuen and to duren, or that will his thankes hasten him to dien.

For euery beaste trauayleth him to defende and keepe the sauacion of his life, and escheweth death and destruction. But certes I doubt mee of herbes and trees, that ne haue no feeling soules, ne no naturell woorkinges, seruing to appetites, as beastes haue: whether they haue appetite to dwellen, and to duren.

Philosophie. Certes (qd she) thereof dare thee not doubt. Nowe looke vpon the Herbes and Trees, for they weren firste in such places, as been conuenable to hem: in whiche places they mowe not dien ne dzien, as longe as her nature may defende hem. For some of hem weren in fieldes, and some weren in Mountaignes, and other were in Marcis, & other cleauen on rockes, and some weren

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plenteous in fonds. And if any wight enforce him to beare hem into other places, they wexen dzie. Foz nature peueth to euery thinge, that is conuenient to him, and trauaileth that they ne dye, as long as they haue power, to dwellen and to liuen. What wilt thou saine of this, that they drawen all her nourishings by her rootes, right as they hadden her mouthes yplunged within the earthes, and sheaden by her maries, her wood and her barke? And what wilt thou sain of this, that thilke thing that is right softe, as the Marie is, that is alway hid in the seate all within, and that is defended from without, by the stedfastnesse of wood, and that the vttereste barks, is put ayenst the distemperance of the heauen, as a defendour, mightie to sufferen harme? And thus certes mayest thou well seen, howe great is the diligence of nature: foz all things renouelen and publishen hem with seed ymultiplyed.

Ne there nis no man, that ne wote well, that they ne been right as a foundement, and edifice, foz to duren not onely foz a tyme, but right as foz to dure perdurably by generacion. And the thinges eke, that men wenen ne haue no soules, ne desire they not by semblable reason, to kepen that is his, that is to sain, that is accozding to her nature, in conseruacion of her being and enduring? Foz wherefoze els beareth lightnes the flambes vp, and the weight pzesseth the earth adoune, but foz as much as thilke places, & thilke mouinges, be conuenable to euerich of hem. And foz sothe euery thing keepeth thilke, that is accozding and pzoper to him, right as things that been contrarious, and enemies corrumpen hem. And yet the harde things (as stones) cleauen and holden her parties togither, right fast & hard, and defenden hem in withstanding, that they ne departen lightly, and yeuen place to hem that breaken oz deuiden hem: but nathcles, they retournen ayen sone into the same thinges, from whence they be araced. But fire fleeth and refuseth all deuision. Ne I ne treat not now here, of wilfull mouinges of the soule that is knowing, but of naturell entencion of things, as thus: right as we swallowen the meate that we receiuen, and ne thinke not on it, and as we draw our breath in sleping, that we wete not while we slepen. Foz certes in the beastes, the loue of her liuinges, ne of her beinges, ne commeth of the wilning of the soule, but of the beginninges of nature. Foz certes, through constrayning causes, will desireth and embraceth full oft times the death, that nature dreadeth, that is to sain, as thus, That a man may be constramed, so by some cause, that his will desireth, and taketh the death, which that nature hateth and dreadeth full sore. And sometime wee seene the contrary, as thus: that the wil of a wight disturbeth and constraineth that, that nature alway desireth and requireth, that is to saye, the werkes of generation, by the which generation onely dwelleth, and is sustained the long durabilitie of mortall thinges, as thus, This charitie and this loue that euery thing hath to him selfe, ne commeth not of the moning of the soule, but of the entencion of nature. Foz the purueyaunce of God hath yeuen to thinges that beene create of him this, that is a full greate cause to liuen and to duren, foz which they desiren naturally her life, as long as euer they mowen: foz which thou maiest not drede by no maner, that all things that beene any where, that they ne requiren naturally, the ferme stablenesse of perdurable dwelling, and eke the eschewinge of destruction.

Boecius. I confesse (qd I) that I see well now, & certainly withouten doubt, the things that awhile ago, semeden vncertaine to mee.

Phil. But (qd she) thilke thing that desireth to be & dwell perdurably, hee desireth to been one: foz if that one were destroyed, certes, being should there none dwellen to no wight.

Boecius. That is soth (qd I.) Philosophie. Then (qd she) desiren all things ont. Boecius. I assent (qd I). Philosophie. And I haue shewed (qd she) that like same one is, thilke that is good. Boecius. Yea fozsoth (qd I). Philosophie. All things then (qd she) requiren good, and thilke maist thou discriuen thus: good is thilke thing, that euery wight desireth.

Boecius. There ne may be thought no moze verie thing (qd I) foz either all thinges be referred and brought to nought, & flotteren without gouernour disporled of one, as of her pzoper hed, oz els if there be any thing, to which that all thinges tenden & hien to, that thinge must be the souerain good of all goodes.

Philosophie. Then said she thus: O my nourice (qd she) I haue great gladnes of the, foz thou hast fixed in thy harte, the middle sothefastnesse, that is to sain the pzicke, but this thing hath be discouered to thee, in that thou saidst, that thou wistest not a little here beforne.

Bo. What is that (quod I). Philosophie. That thou ne wistest not (qd she) which was the end

of

of thinges, and certes, that is the thinge that euery wight desireth. And for as much as wee haue gathered and comprehended, that good is thilke thing, that is desired of al, then mote we nedes confesse, that good is the fine of all thinges.

Quisquis profunda mentis vestigat verum.
Cupitq; nullis ille deuijs falli, In se reuoluat intimi lucem visus, &c.

WHO so seeketh sothe by a depe thowzt and coueiteth to been disceiued by no miswayes, let him rollen and treaten withyn him selfe, the light of his inward sight: and let him gatheren ayen, enclining into a compace, the long mournges of his thoughtes. And let him teachen his courage, that he hath enclosed, and hidde in his treasours, all that he hath cõpassed or sought fro without: and then thilke thing, that the blacke cloudes of errour, whilome had couered, shall light more clerely than Phebus him selfe ne shineth. Glosa. Who so woll seeke the deepe groundes of sothe in his thought, & woll not be deceiued, by false propositiõs, that gone amisse from the troth, let him well examine, and rolle within him selfe, the nature & properties of the thing. And let him eft sones examine and rollen his thoughts, by good deliberation, or that he deme. And let him teachen his soule, that it hath by naturell principles, kindliche yhidde within it selfe, all the trouth, the which he imagineth to been in things without: and then all the darknesse of his misknowing, shall seeme more euidẽtly to the sight of his vnderstanding, then the Sunne ne semeth to the sight without forth. For certes, the body bringeth the weight of forgetting, ne hath not chased out of your thought, all the clerenesse of your knowinge, For certainly, the seede of sothe, holdeth and cleaueth within your courage, and it is awaked and excited by the windes, and by the blastes of doctrine.

For wherfore els demen ye of your owne will the righties, when ye bee asked, but if so were that the nourishing of reason, ne liued yplunged in the depe of your harte, that is to saine, how should men demen, the sothe of any thing that were asked, and if there nere a rote of sothfastnesse, that were yplunged & hid in naturell principles, the which sothfastnes liued within the deepenesse of the thought. And if so bee, that the Muse and the doctrine of Plato singeth sothe, all that euery wight learneth, he ne doeth nothing els then, but recordeth, as menne recorden thinges that ben forgeten.

Tum ego Platoni (inquam) vehementer assentior. Nam me horum iam secundo cõmemoras. Primum quod memoriam corporea contagione, &c.

THen saied I thus. I accord me greatly to Plato, for thou recordest and remembrest me these things, yet the second time, that is to say, first when I left my memorie, by the contrarious coniunction of the bodie with the soule: and eftsones afterwarde, when I lost it confounded by the charge, and by the burden of my sorowe, and then said she thus. If thou looke (qd she) first the things that thou hast graunted, it ne shal not ben right ferre, that thou ne shalt remembren the ilke thing, that thou saidest that thou nistest not. Boecius. What thing (qd I). Phil. By which the gouernement (qd she) that this world is gouerned. Boecius. I remember it well (qd I) & I confesse well, that I ne wist it naught. But all be it so, that I see now from a farre, what thou purposest, algates I desire yet to herken it of the more plainly. Philoso. Thou ne wendest not (qd she) a little here before, that men shuld doubt, that this worlde is gouerned by God. Boecius. Certes (qd I) ne yet, ne doubt I it not, ne I nill neuer wene that it wer to doubt, as who saith, but I wot well that God gouerneth this worlde. And I shall answeren thee, by what reasons I am brought to this. This world (qd I) of so many diuers & contrarious parties, ne might neuer haue ben assẽbled in o forme, but if there were one, that conioyned so many diuers thinges. And the same diuersitie of her natures, that so discorden, that one fro that other must departen, and vnioynen the thinges that been conioyned, if there ne were one that conteyned that he hath conioyned and ybounde. Ne the certaine order of nature, ne should not bringe forth so ordein mouings, by places, by times, by doings, by spaces, by qualities, if there ne were one, that were aye stedfast dwelling, that ordained and disposed, these diuersities of mouinges. And thilke thinge, what so euer it bee, by which that all things be ymaked and ladde, I clepe him GOD, that is a worde that is vsed to al folkes. Philosophie. Then said shee: Sith thou feelest thus these thinges, I trowe that I haue little more to

doen, that thou mightie of welefulnesse, hole and sounde, ne see eftsones thy countrey. But lette vs looken the thinges, that we haue purposed here beforne. Haue I not nombred and saied (qd she) that sufficiaunce is in blisfulnesse. And we haue accorded, that God is thilke same blisfulnesse. Boecius. Yes forsoth (qd I). Philosophie. And that to gouern this worlde (qd she) ne shal he neuer haue neede of no helpe fro without. For els if he had neede of any help, he ne should not haue no full sufficiaunce. Boecius. Yes thus it mote needes be (qd I). Philosophy. Then ordeined he by him self alone all things (qd she). Boecius. That may not be denied (qd I). Philosophie. And I haue shewed that God is the same good. Boecius. It remembreth me wel (qd I). Philosophie. Then ordeineth he al thinges by thilke good (qd she) sith he which we han accorded to be good, gouerneth all things by himself. And he is a key and a steire, by which the edifice of this worlde is kept stable, and without corrumping. Boecius. I accorde me greatly (qd I). And I haue apperceiued a little here beforne, that thou wouldest say this. All were it so, that it were by a thinne suspection. Philosophie. I trowe well (qd she). For as I trow thou leadest now more ententifly thine eye, to loken the very goods. But nat helelle, ỳ thing that I shall tell thee, yet ne sheweth not lasse to loken. Boecius. What is that (qd I). Philosophie. So as men trow (qd she) and that rightfully, that God gouerneth all thinges, by the key of his goodnes. And all these same things that I haue taught thee, hasten hem by naturel contencion, to come to good, there may no man douten, that they ne been gouerned voluntarily. And that they ne conuerten hem of her own good will, to her ordenour. As that they ben according, and enclining to her gouernor, and to her king. Boecius. It mote needes be so (qd I) for the realme ne should not seme blisfull, if there were a yoke of mis dwo yngs in diuers partes, ne the sauing of obedient thinges, ne should not be then. Philosophie. Is there nothing (qd she) that kepeth his nature, that enforceth him to gon ayenst God. Boecius. No (qd I). Philosophie. And if that any thing enforced him to withstande God, might it auailen at last ayen hem, that wee haue graunted to bee almighty, by the right of blisfulnesse. Boecius. Certes (qd I) all vtterly it ne might not auaile him. Philosophie. Then is there nothing (qd she) that either may, or wil withstanden to his Soueraine God. Boecius. I trowe not (qd I). Philosophie. Then (qd she) is thilke the soueraine God, that all thinges gouerneth strongly, and ordeineth hem softely. Boecius. Then saied I thus, I delite me (qd I) not onely in thendes, or in the somme of the reasons, that thou hast concluded and prooued, but thilke words that thou vsest deliten me much more, so that at laste fooles, that sometime renden great thinges, oughten been ashamed of hem self, that is to sain, that we fooles that reprehende wickedly ỳ things, that touchen gods gouernaunce, wee oughten beene ashamed of our selfe. Is I, that saied that God refuseth onely the werkes of men, and ne entermeteth not of it. Philosophie. Thou hast well heard (qd she) the fables of the Poets, how the Gyantes assaileden heauen, with the Goddes: but forsooth the debonaire force of God, disposed hem as it was worthie, that is to same, destroyed the Gyants as it was worthy. But wilte thou that wee reioynen together thilke same reasons. For peraventure of such connection, may sterten vp some faire sparke of sothe. Boecius. Do (qd I) as thee list. Philosophie. Weenest thou (qd she) that God ne be almighty. Boecius. No man is in doubt of it certes (qd I). Philosophie. No wight ne doubteth it, if he be in his minde (qd she.) But he that is almighty, there nis nothing that he ne may. Boecius. That is sooth (qd I). Philosophie. May God do euil (qd she). Boe. Nay forsoth (qd I). Phi. Than is euil nothing (qd she) sith that he may done none euil, that may done al things. Bo. Scornest thou me (qd I) or elis plaitest thou, or deceiuest thou me that hast so wouen with thy reasons, the house of Dedalus so enterlasing, that it is vnable to be vnlaced, that thou otherwhile entrest there thou issuest, and otherwhile issuest there thou entrest. Ne foldest thou not togither, by replication of words, a manner wonderfull circle, or enuironing of the simplicitie diuine. For certes, a little here beforne, when thou began at blisfulnesse, thou saiedst that it is a soueraine good, and that God is the blisfulnesse, for which thou yaue me as a couenable yefte, that is to saine, that no wight nis blisfull, but if he be God also therewith. And saidest eke, that the forme of good is, the substaunce of God and of blisfulnesse. And saidest that thilke one is thilke same good that is required and desired of all the kinde of thinges. And thou prouedest in disputing, that GOD gouerneth al the thinges of the worlde, by the gouer-

g diuernaunce of bounty, and saidest that all thyngs would obein to hym, and saydest that the nature of yuell is nothyng. And these thynges shewdest thou not with no reasons taken from without, but by proues in cercles and homelych knowing. The whych proues drawen to hemselfe her faith and her accord euerich of hem of other. Philo. Than said she thus: I ne scorne not, ne play, ne disceiue thee but I haue shewed the thing that is greatest ouer all thynges, by the yeft of God, that wee whilome praiden. For this is the forme of diuine substaunce, that is suche, that it ne slydeth not in to vtterest forayne thynges, ne receiueth not no straunge things in hym.

But right as Permendes said in Greeke, of thilke diuine substaunce: He saied thus, that thilke deuine substaunce, tourneth the world and the mouable cercle of thynges, while the like diuine substaunce keepeth it selfe without mowynges, that is to sayne, that he moueth neuer mo, and yet it moueth all other thyngs. But natheless, if I haue styred reason that be not taken fro without ỹ compasse of ỹ thing, of the which we treaten, but reasons ỹ beene bestowed within compasse: there nis not why thou shouldest meruailen, sith thou hast lerned by ỹ sentence of Plato, ỹ needs ỹ words mote ben cosins to the things, of which they spekē.

Fœlix qui potuit boni, Fontem visere lucidum,
Fœlix qui potuit grauis, &c.

Blissed is that man that may seen ỹ clere wel of good: Blissfull is he that may vnbinden him from the bounds of heuy yearth. The Poet of Thrace Orpheus, that whilome had right great sorowe, for the death of his wife. After that hee had maked and constrained by his weepely songes, the woodes mouable to renne, and had maked the ryuers to stonden still, and had maked the Hartes and Hyndes to ioynen dreadlesse her sydes to cruel Lions, to hearken his song, and had maked that the Hare was not agast of ỹ Hound, which was pleased by song: So whan the most ardaund loue of his wife, drende the entrailes of his breast, ne the songs that had ouercommen all thyngs, ne mightē not aswagen her lord Orpheus. He plained him of the heauen goddes, which that were cruell to him, hee went hym to the houses of the hel: And he tempered his blandishing songs, by reasouning of strings, and speaketh and song in weping, al that euer he had receiued and laued out the noble weis of his mother Caliope ỹ goddesse. And he sang with as much as he might of weping & with as much as loue ỹ doubled his sorow might yeuen him and teach him, and commoued the hell, & required and besought by swete prayer the lordes of soules in hell of releasing, that is to say, to yeelden him his wife, Cerberus the porter of hell, with his three heeds was caught and all abashed of the newe song. And the three goddesses, Furyes and vengeresses of felonies, that tourmenten and agasten the soules, by anoy woxen sorowfull and sory and teares wepten for pitee. Tho was not the heed of Ixion tourmented, by the ouerthrowing wheele. And Tantalus, that was distroied by the woodnes of long thurst, dispised the floods to drincke. The foule that hight Vultour, that eateth the stomacke or the Giserne of Tytus is so fulfylled of hys song, that it ntill eaten ne tyren no more. At the last the lord and iudge of soules was moued to misericordies, and cried: we been ouercomen (qd. he) yeue wee to Orpheus his wife to beare him company, he hath well ybought her by his songes and his ditees: but we wyll putten a lawe in thys, and couenant in the yefte, that is to saine, that till he bee out of hell if he looke behind him, that his wife shall come agayne vnto vs. But what is he that may yeue a lawe to louers? Loue is a greater lawe and stronger to himselfe than any lawe that men may yeuen. Alas, when Orpheus and his wife were almost at the termes of the nyght, that is to saine, at the last bounds of hell, Orpheus looked backward on Euridice his wife, and lost her, and was dedde. This fable appertaineth to you all, whosoeuer desireth or seeketh to leade his thought in to the soverain day, that is to say, to clerenesse of soueraine good. For who so euer be so ouercommen, that he fixe his eyen into the pitte of hell, ỹ is to sain: who so euer set his thoughts in yearthly things, all ỹ euer he hath drawne of the noble good celestiall, he leseth it, when he loketh to the hels, this is to saine, into low things of the earth.

Thus endeth the third booke of Boece, and hereafter foloweth the fourth.

Hec cum Philosophia dignitate vultus, & oris grauitate seruata, leuiter suauiterq; cecenisset, Tum ego non dum penitus nisi meroris oblitus, &c.

WHan Philosophy had longen softely and delectablye the forsaied thynges, keping ẏ dignity of her chere, & the weight of her wordes. I than that ne had all vtterly forȝeten ẏ wepyng and the mourning that was set in mine hert, forbrake the entencion of her that entended yet to sain some other thynges.

O (qd. I) thou that art guidere sse of very light, the thynges that thou hast said me hitherto, ben to me so clear and shewyng by the deume looking of hem, & by thy reasons, that they ne mowen ben ouercommen. And thilke thynges, that thou toldest me, all be it so that I had whilome forȝeten hem, for the sorow of the wrong that hath bee done to me: yet neuertheiesse they ne weren not vtterly vnknowen to me. But this same is namely a right great cause of my sorowe, so that as the gouernour of thyngs is good, if that yuels mowen ben by any waies, or elles if that yuelles passen without punyshyng, the whych thyng only, how worthy is it to ben wondred vpon. Thou considrest it wel thy self certainly. But yet to this thing there is yet another thyng ioyned more to be wondred vpon. For felony is Emperesse, and floureth full of richesses, & vertue nis not all onely wythout meedes, but it is cast down, & eke forstroden vnder the fete of felonous folke: and it abieth the turments in stede of wicked felons. Of al which things there is no wight may meruayien ynough ne complainen, that such thynges be doone in the reigne of God, that all thynges wote, and all thynges may, and ne will not only but good things. Than said she thus: Certes (qd. she) that were a great maruaile, and an abashing without end, and well more horrible than all the monsters, if it were as thou weenest, that is to sain, ẏ in the right ordaine house of so much a father, and an ordainour of meine, that the vessels that ben foule and vile, should ben honoured and heried, and that precious vessels that should been defouled and vile. But it is not so, for if the things that I haue concluded a little here before, been kept hole and vnaraced, thou shalt well know by the authority of God, (of the whole reigne I speake) that certes the good folke be alway mighty, and shrewes ben alway outcast and and feeble. Nor the vices be neuermore without paine, ne the vertues ne bee not without mede. And ẏ blisfulnesse commeth alway to good folk, and infortune commeth alway to wicked folke. And thou shalt well knowen many things of this kind, ẏ should ceasen thy plaints, and strengthen thee with stedfast sadnesse. And for thou hast seen the forme of very blisfulnesse by me, that haue whilome shewed it thee, & thou hast knowen in whom blisfulnesse is set: all thyng treated, that I trow be necessary to put forth, I shall shewē thee the way, that shal bringen thee ayen vnto thine house, and I shal fixe fethers in thy thought, by which it may arisen in height, so that all tribulation ydone away thou by my guiding and by my pathe, & by my fledes, shalt mowen retourne hole and sound into thy country.

Sunt enim penne volucres mihi, Que celsa conscendunt poli, Quas sibi cum velox mens induit, &c.

THan for thy swifte fethers ẏ sourmounten the height of the heuen, whan ẏ swift thought hath clothed it in tho fethers it dispiseth the hateful erths, & surmounteth the roundnesse of the great ayre, and it seeth the clouds behind his back, and passeth the height of the region of ẏ fire, ẏ enchaufeth by the swift mouing of ẏ firmament, till that he ariseth into the houses, ẏ bearen the sterres, and ioyneth the way with the son Phebus, and fellawshippeth the way of the old cold Saturnus, and bee ymaked a knight of the cleare sier, that is to sain, whan the thought is made Gods knight, by the seeking of cleare trouth to commen to the very knowledge of God. And thilke soule renneth by the cercle of sterres, in all the places there as the shinyng nyght is ypainted, that is to sayne, the nyght that is cloudlesse. For on nyghtes that bee cloudelesse it seemeth that the heauen were paynted wyth dyuers ymages of sterres. And whan he hath done there ynough, hee shall forleten the laste heauen, and hee shall prescn & wenden on the backe of the swift firmament, and hee shall bee maked partite of the worshipful light of God. There holdeth the lord of thinges the ceptre of hys myght, and attempzeth the gouernements of the world, and the shinyng iudge of things

stable

stable in hym selfe, gouerneth the swift cart or waine, that is to saine, the circulet mouyng of the sonne. And if thy way leadeth thee ayen, so that thou be brought thider, than wylt thou say, that is the countrey that thou requirest, of which thou ne haddest no mind: But now it remembreth me wel, here was I born, here wol I fasten my degre, here woll I dwel. But if thee liketh than to loken on the derknesses of the yearth, ỳ thou hast forgeten, than shalte thou seene, that these felonous traunts, that the wretched people dredeth now, shullen bee exiled from thilke faire countrey.

Tum ego pape inquam, vt magna promittis. Nec dubito, quin possis efficere, tu modo quem exitaueris, ne morcris, &c.

THan said I thus: O wonder me ỳ thou behetest me so great thinges. Ne I ne doute not ỳ thou ne maiste well performe ỳ thou behetest: But I pray thee this that thou ne tarte not, to tell me thilke thynges, that thou hast moued. Phil. First (qd. she) thou must nedes know, that good folke been alwaie stronge & mighty, and the shrewes ben feeble and defect, & naked of all strengthes. And of these thinges certes euerich of hem is declared and shewed by other. For as good and yuell ben two contraries, if so be that good be stedfast, thā sheweth the feeblesse all openly. And if thou knowe clerely the freelnesse of yuell, the stedfastnesse of good is knowen. But for as much as the faith of my sentence shall bee the more ferme and habound aunt, I woll gone by that one way and by that other, and I woll confirme the thynges that been purposed now on this syde, & now on that side. Two thinges there ben, in which the effect of al the deeds of mankind standeth, that is to saine, wil and power: and if that one of these two faileth, there nis nothyng that may bee done. For if that will lacketh, there nis no wight that vndertaketh to doe that he wol not done: And if power faileth, the wil nis but idle, and stant for nought. and therof cometh it, that if thou see a wight that would getten ỳ hee may not getten, thou maiest not dout that power ne faileth yim to hauen that he would. B. This is open & clere (qd. I) ne it ne may not ben denied in no manner. Philoso. And if thou see a wight (qd. she) that hath done that he would done, thou nyit not doubt, that he ne hath had power to done it. Bo. No (qd. I) Phi. And in that that euery wight may, in that men holden hem mighty to done a thing. Insomuch as a man is mighty to done a thing, insomuch men holde him mighty: & in that that he ne may, in that men demen him to be feble. B. I confesse it wel (qd. I.) Ph. Remember thee (qd. she) that I haue gathered and shewed byt he forsaid reasons, that all the entencion of ỳ will of mankind, which that is led by diuers studies, haseth to comen to blisfulnes. Boecius. I remembreth me wel (qd. I) that it hath been shewed, Philosophie. And recordeth the naught than (qd. she) ỳ blisfulnesse is thilk same good that men requiren, so that whan blisfulnesse is required of all e Bo. It recordeth me nat (qd. I.) For I haue it alway in my memory fixed, Philosophy. All folke than (qd. she) good and eke badde, enforcen hem without difference of entencion to comen to good. Boecius. This is very consequence (qd. I.) Philoso. And certain is (qd. she) that by getting of good be men maked good. Bo. That is certain (qd. I.) Philosop. Than getten good men that they desiren. Boe. So it semeth (qd. I.) Philosop. But wicked folke (qd. she) if they getten the good that they desiren, they ne mowen not bee wicked. Boe. So it is (qd. I.) Philoso. Than so as that one and that other (qd. she) desiren the good, & the good folke getten the good, & not the wicked folke: Than it is no doubt that the good folk ne be mighty, and wicked folke be feeble, Boecius. Who so that euer doubteth of this, hene may not consider the nature of thinges ne the consequence of reasons. Philosop. And ouer this (qd. she) if that there beene two thynges that haue one same purpose by kynd, and that one of hem purlueth and performeth that same thyng by naturall office, and that other ne may not done thilke office naturell, but folowerh by other maner, than is conenable to nature, him that accomplisheth his purpose kindely, and yet he ne accomplisheth not his owne purpose: whether of these two desirest thou for more mighty? Boet. If that I contest (qd. I) that thou wouldest say, algates I desire yet to herken it more plainly of thee.

Philosop. Thou nyit not than deme (qd. she) that the mouement of goyng nys in men by kynd. Boecius. No forsooth (qd. I.) Philosop. Ne thou doubtest not (qd. she) that this naturell office of goyng, ne bee the office of feete. Boecius. I ne dout it not (qd. I.) Philosoph. Than (qd. she) yf that a wight bee mighty to

moue and goeth vpon his feet, and another to whom thilke naturel office of feet lacketh, enforceth hym to goe creepyng on his handes, whyche of these two ought to bee holden the more mighty by right. Boecius. Knyt foorth (qd. I) the remenaunte. Philosophie. For no wyght ne douteth, that he that may gone by naturall office of feete, ne bee more mighty thanne hee that ne maye not. But the souereine good (qd. shee) that is euenlike purposed to the good and to the badde, The good folk seken it by naturel office of vertues, and shrewes enforcen hem to getten it by diuerse couetise of yearthly thynges, which that nis no naturell office to getten thilke souerain good. Trowest thou that it be any otherwise? Bo. Nay (qd. I.) for the consequence is open, and shewyng of thynges that I haue graunted, that needs good folk moten ben mighty, and shrewes moten bene feble and vnmighty. Ph. Thou rennest a ryght beforne me (qd. she) and this is the iudgemente, that is to saine, I iudge of right, as these leches been wont to hopen of sicke folke, whan they apperceyuen, that nature is redressed and withstandeth to the malady. But for I see thee now, al redy to the withstanding, I shal shew the more thilke and continuel reasons. For loke how greatly sheweth the feblenesse and infirmitie of wicked folk, that ne mowen not commen, to that her naturell entencion leadeth hem: And yet almost thilke naturell entencion constraineth hem. And what were to demen than of shrewes, if thilke naturel helpe had forleten hem the whyche naturell helpe of entencion goeth alway beforne hem, and is so great, that vneth it may be ouercommen? Consider than how great defaute of power, and howe great feblesse there is in wicked fellonous folke, as who saith, the greater thyng that is coueited and the desire not accomplished, of the lasse myght is he that coueiteth it, and may not accomplish. And for thy Philosophy sayth thus by sourcain good. Ne shrewes ne requiren not right medes ne vayne games, which they ne may not followen ne holden, but they saylen of thilke somme of the height of things, that is to saine, sourcain good. Ne these wretches ne commen not to the effect of sourcain good, the whyche they enforcen hem onely to getten by nyghtes and by dayes, in getting of whych good, the strength of good folke is full wel ysene. For right as thou mightest demen hym mighty of goyng, that goeth on his feet till he might commen to thilke place, fro the whych place there ne lay no way further to be gone: right so must thou needs demen him for right myghty, which that getteth and attaineth to the ende of all thynges, whyche that been to desiren, beyonde the whych ende there nys nothyng to desire. Of the which power of good folke, men may conclude, that we wycked men semen to be baraine & naked of al strength. For why forleten they vertues and folowen vices, nis it not for that they ne knowen not the goodes? But what thyng is more feeble and more captife, than is the blindnesse of ignorance? or els they knowen well, whych thynges they oughten folowen, but lechery and couetise ouerthroweth hem misturned. And certes so doth distemperaunce to feeble men, that mowe not withsitten ayen these vices. Ne knowe they not well that they forleten the good wilfully, and tournen hem wilfully to vices. And in this wise they ne forleten not onely to bee mighty, but they forleten all vtterly in any wise for to beene. For they that forleten the comune fine of all thynges that been, they forleten also therewithall for to been. And peraucenture it should seemen to some folke, that this were a meruayle to saine, that shrewes, which that contemnen the more partes of men, ne beene not, ne haue no beyng. But natheleesse it is so, and thus stant this thyng. For they that be shrewes, I deny not, but that they be shrewes, but I deny simply and plainly that they ne bee not, ne haue no beyng. For right as thou myghtest saine of the caraine of a man, that it were a deed man: so graunt I well forsooth, that vicious folke ben wicked, but I ne may not absolutely and simply graunt that they ben. For thilke thyng that withholdeth order & keepeth nature, thilke thyng is and hath beyng. But what thyng sayeth that, that is to saye, her that forleteth naturel order, he forleteth thilke beyng that is sette in his nature. But thou wolt saine, the shrewes mowen. Certes that ne deny I not: but certes her power ne discendeth not of strength, but of feblesse, for they mowen doone wyckednesse, the whych they ne might not, if they mighten dwellen in the forme, and in the doyng of good people. And thilke power sheweth euidently, that they mowen right naught. For so as I haue gadred and proued a litel here beforne, that yuel is not, and so as shrewes may onely but shrewednes. This conclusion is al clere, that shrewes ne mowen right naught, ne haue no power. And for as much as thou vnderstondest

which

whych is the strength of this power, I haue definished a little here before, that no thyng nys so mighty as soueraine good. B. That is sooth (qd. I.) Phi. And thilke same soueraine good may done none yuel. Boecius. Certes no (qd. I) Philosop. Is there any wight thau (qd. she) that weneth that men mowen don al thyngs. Boecius. No man (qd. I) but if he be out of his wit. P. But certes shrews mowen don yuels (qd. she.) Boecius. We wold god (qd. I) that they ne mighten done none. Phi. Thā (qd. she) so as he that is mighty to done onely good thyngs, he may done all thynges, and they that been mighty to done yuel thynges, ne mowen not all thyngs. Than is it open thyng and manifest, that they that mowen don yuel ben of lasse power. And yet to proue this conclusion there helpeth me this, that I haue shewed here before, that al power is to be numbred among thyngs that men oughtē require. And I haue shewed that all thyngs that oughten been desired be referred to God, right as to a maner height of her nature: but for to mowen done yuell and felony, ne may not been referred to God. Than is not yuell of the numbre of thyngs, that oughten to beene desired and required. Than is it open & cleare ỳ the power ne the mouyng of shrewes nis no power. And of all these things it sheweth wel that the good folke ben certainly mighty, and the shrews doutelesse vnmighty. And it is clere and open that thilk sentence of Plato is very and sooth, that saith, that only wise men may done that they desiren, and shrewes mowen haunten that hem liketh, but that they desirē, that is to sain, to come to souerain good, they ne haue no power to accomplish that. For shrews don what hem list, whā by tho thyngs in which they deliten, they wenen to attain to thilke good that they desiren. but they ne getten ne attaine not thereto, for vices ne comen not to blisfulnesse.

Quos vides sedere celsos, Solij culmine reges, Purpura claros nitente, &c.

Who so that the couerture, of her vaine apparailes, might stripē of these proud kings that thou seest sittē an high in her chairs, glittering in shining purpure, enuironned with sorowfull armures, manassing with cruel mouth, blowing by woodnesse of hert, yee should seene ỳ thilke lords bearen within her courages full straite chains: for lechery tourmenteth hem on that one side, with greedy venimes & troublable ire, ỳ araiseth in hem the flood of troublings, tourmenteth on that other side, her thought or sorow halt hem wery & ycaught, or sliding and disceiuing hope tourmenteth hem. And therefore sith thou seest one heed, ỳ is to saine, one tiraunt bearē so many tirannies, than ne doth thilke tyraunt, not that he desireth sith he is cast downe with so many wicked lords, that is to saine, so many vices ỳ haue so wickedly lordships ouer hym.

Vides ne igitur quando in cœno probra voluantur, que probitas luce resplendeat? In quo perspicuum est nunquam bonis premia, &c.

Seest thou not than, in howe great filth these shrewes been ywrapped, and with whych clearenesse these good folk shinen. In this sheweth it well that to good folke ne lacketh neuer mo her medes, ne shrews lacken neuer more tourments. For of all things that be done, thilke thyng for whych any thyng is done, it semeth as by right, that thilke thyng be the mede of that, as thus: If a mā renneth in the stady or in the forlonge for the crowne, than lieth ỳ mede in the crowne for which he renneth. And I haue shewed that blisfulnesse is thilk same good, for which that all thyngs ben done. Than is thilk same good purposed to the werks of mankind, right as a cōmune mede, which mede ne may not bee discouered frō good folke: For no wight as by right, frō thenssorth that him lacketh goodnes, ne shall be cleped good for which thyng folke of good maners, her medes ne forsakē hem neuer mo. For albeit so that shrews waxen as wood as hem list against good folk, yet neuertheless ỳ crown of wise men, ne shal not fallen ne faden fro forsaine shrewdnesse ne benimmen not fro the corage of good people her propre honour. But yf any wight reioysed him of goodnesse, that he had taken fro without, as who saith, if a man had his goodnesse of any other man than of him selfe: certes hee that yaue hym thilke goodnesse, or elles some other wight might bynomme it him. But for as much as to euery wight his propre bounte yeueth him his mede, than at erst shall he failen of mede, whan he forleteth to be good. And at the last, so as all medes been required, for men wenen

that they be good, who is he that nold deme, that he that is ryghte mightye of good, were part lesse of mede? And of what mede shall he be reguerdoned. Certes of ryght fayre mede and right great, abouen all medes. Remembre thee of thilke noble corallary that I yaue thee a lyttle here before, and gather it togither in this manner. So as God himselfe is blisfulnesse, than is it cleare and certaine, that al good people ben maked blisful, for they ben good and thilke people that ben blisfull, it accordeth and is conuenable to be goddes. Thã is the mede of people soch, that no day ne shal empayren it, ne no wickednesse shall dymmen it, ne power of no wight ne shall not amenuse it, that is to saine, that been maked goddes.

And sith it is thus, that good men ne failen neuer more of her mede, certes no mãne may doute of the vndepartable paine of shrewes, that is to saine, that the paine of shrewes departeth not from hem selfe neuer mo. For so as good and yuell, and paine & medes be contrary, it mote needes be, that ryght as we see betiden in guerdone of good, that also mote the paine of the yuel answere by the contrary portheg to shrewes. Now than so as bounty and prowesse been mede to good folke, also is shrewdnesse it selfe tourment to shrewes. Than who so euer is entetched and defouled with paine, he ne doubteth not, that he is entetched and defouled with yuel. Yf shrewes than wollen praisen hemselfe, may it seemen to hem that they been withouten party of tourment, sith they ben such that the vttereste wickednesse, that is to say, wicked theeues, which is the vttreste and worst kind of shrewdnesse, nede fouleth ne entetcheth not hemonly, but enfecteth and enuenimeth greatly. And also looke on shrewes, that been the contrary party of good men, how great paine fellowshippeth and fouleth hem: for thou hast lerned a little here before, that al thing that is and hath beyng is one, and thilke same one is good: than is this the consequence, that it seemeth well, that al thing that is and hath beyng, is good, that is to saine, as who saith that beyng, vnite and goodnesse is all one.

And in this manner it followeth than, that all thyng that fayleth to be good, it stinteth for to be and for to haue any maner being: wherfore it is that shrewes stinten for to be that they weren. But thilke other forme of mankind, that is to saine, the fourme of the bodye without, sheweth that these shrewes weren whilome men, wherefore whan they ben peruerted and turned into malice, certes than they haue forlorne the nature of mankinde: But so as onely bountye and prowesse maye enhaunsen euery man, ouer men: than mote it needes be that shrewes which that shrewdnesse hath cast out of ỳ condicion of mankind, been put vnder the merit of desert of men.

Thã betideth it, ỳ if thou seest a wight which that is transfourmed into vices, thou mayest not wene ỳ he be a man. For if he bee ardaunt in auarice, and that he be a rauenour by violence of forayne richesse, thou shalt saine that he is like a wolfe. And if he be felonous and withouten rest, and exercischis tongue to chidungs, thou shalt liken him to the hound. And if he be a pryuy awaitour hidde, and reioysteth him to rauish by wiles, thou shalt saine hym lyke to the fare whelpes. And if he be distempred and quaked for ire, men shal wenen that he beareth the courage of a lion. And if he be dreadfull and flying & dredeth things, whych that ne ought not to bee dredde, men shall hold hym lyke to the Hart. And if he be slowe and astonyed and lache, men shall holde hym lyke to an asse. And yf hee bee lyght and vnstedfast of courage, and chaungeth aye his studies, men shall hold him like to the birds. And yf he bee plounged in foule and vncleane luxuries, hee is withholden in the foule delyces of the foule sow, than followeth it, that he that forletteth bounte and prowesse, he forletteth to bee a man, sith hee ne may not passen in the condicion of God, he is turned into a beest.

Vela Naricij ducis, & vagas pelago rates,
Eurus appulit insule, pulcra qua residens dea,
Solis edita semine, &c.

EVrus the wind, arriued the saities of Ulixes duke of the countrie of Narice, and his wandryng shyppes by the see, into the yle there as Circes ỳ fayre goddesse doughter of the Sun dwelleth, that medleth to her newe ghestes, drinkes that beene touched and maked with enchauntementes. And after that hir hande mighty ouer the hearbes, had chaunged her ghestes into diuers maners, that one of hem is couered his face with fourm of a Boze, that other is chaunged into a Lion, of the country of Marmorike, and his nayles and his teeth wexen. That other of hem is newlych chaunged into a wolfe, and howleth whan he

he would weep, that other goth debonairly in the house as a Tygre of Inde. But all be it so that the goddesse of Mercury, that is clepyd the birde of Arthadie, hath had mercy of the duke Ulyxes, beseged wyth diuerse yuelles, and hath vnbounden hym fro the pestilence of hys hostesse, algates the rowers and the marrineres hadden by this ydrawen into hyr mouths, and dronken the wicked drinckes. They that were woxen swine, hadden by this ychaunged hyr meate of bread, for to eaten acorne of Okes. None of hir lims ne dwelleth with hem hoole, but they haue lost the voyce and the body, onely her thought dwelleth with hem stable, that weepeth and bewaileth the monstruous chaunging that they suffren. O ouer light hand, as who saith, feble & light is the hand of Circes the enchaunteresse, that chaungeth the bodies of folke into beestes, to regard and to comparison of mutacion, that is maked by vices, ne the herbes of Circes ne bee not mighty, for all bee it so that they may chaungen the lummes of the body, algate yet they may not chaunge the hearts, for wythin is yhyd the strength and the vigour of men in the secretour of her hearts, that is to sain, the strength of reason, but thilke venims of vices, do drawen a man to hem more mightely than the venime of Circes, for vices been so cruell that they pierren and thorow passen the courage within, and though they ne anoy not the body, yet vices wooden to destroyen men by wound of thought.

Tu ego fateor, inquam, nec iniuria dici video vicioſos, tam & ſi humani corporis ſpeciem ſeruent, &c.

THan said I thus: I confesse and am aknow it (qd. I) ne I ne see not that men may say, as by right, ỳ shrewes ben chaunged into beests, by the quality of her souls, all be it so that they kepen yet the forme of the body of mankinde: but I would not of shrewes, of which the thought cruell and wood, woodeth alway to the distruction of good men, that it were leful to hem to done that.

Certes (qd. she) ne it is not lefull to hem, as I shall well shew thee in couenable place: but natheless if so were that thilke, that men wene been lefull to shrewes, were binommed hem, so that they ne might not anoien or done harme to good men, certes a great partye of the payne to shrewes should been alleged and releued. For all be it so that it ne seeme credible thyng, peraventure to some folke, that it mote needes be that the shrewes ben more wretches and sely, whan they may full done and performe that they coueiten, than if they might not accomplish that they coueiten. For it so be that it bee wretchednesse to wilnen to dons yuel, than is it more wretchednesse to mowen done yuell, without which mowyng, the wretched wyll shoulde languish wythout effect. Than sith euery of these thynges hath his wretchednesse, that is to sain, wil to done yuel, and mowyng to done yuel, it mote needs be that they shrewes be constrained by her vnselinesses, that wolen and mowen, and performen felonies and shrewednesses. Boecius. I accord me (qd. I) but I desire greatly, ỳ shrewes lesten soone thilke vnselinesse, that is to saine, that shrewes weren dispoiled of mowyng to done yuel.

Philoſoph. So shullen they (qd. she) sooner peraventure than thou woldest, or soner than they hem selfe wene: for there nys nothynge so late in so short bondes of this life, that is long to abide, namely to a courage immortel. Of which shrewes the great hope and the hye compassings of shrewednesse, is oft destroied by a sodein end or they be ware: And that thing esta blisheth to shrewes, the end of her shrewednesse, for if that shrewdnes maketh wretches, than must be needes be most wretch, ỳ longest is a shrew, the which wicked shrewes would I deemen aldermoste caitifes and vnsely, yf her shrewdnesse ne were finished at least way by vttereſt death: for if I haue concluded soth of the vnselinesse of shrewdnes, than sheweth it plainly, that thilk wretchednes, is without ende, the which is certaine to be pardurable. Bo. Certes (qd. I) this conclusion is hard and wonderfull to graunt. But I knowe well that it accordeth muche to thynges that I haue graunted here before. Ph. Thou hast (qd. she) right estimacion of this. But who so euer wene that it be a harde thyng, to accord hym to a conclusion, it is right that he shew that some of the premisses ben false, or els he mote shew that the collacion of propositions nys not speedfull to a necessary conclusion. And yf it ne be not so, but that the premisses been ygraunted, there nis not why he should blame ỳ argument. For this thyng ỳ I shal tel the now ne shall not seeme lasse wonderfull, but of the thynges that been taken. Also it is necessary,

as who saith, it followeth of that which that is purposed before. Boece. What is that (qd. I.) Philosophy. Certes (qd. she) that is, that these wicked shrewes bee more blisfull, or els lasse wretches that abien the tourmentes that they haue deserued, than if no paine of iustice ne chastised hem. Ne this ne say I not nowe, for that any man myght thinke that the maners of shrewes been coriged and chastised by vengeance, and that they be brought to the right way by the drede of tourment, ne for that they yeuen to other folkes ensample to flien fro vices:

But I vnderstand yet in another manner, that shrewes been more vnsely whan they ne be not punished, all be it so that there ne be had no reason or lawe of correction, ne none ensample of lookyng. Boecius. And what maner shall that ben (qd. I) other than hath be told here before? Haue we not graunted than (qd. she) that good folke been blisfull, and shrews ben wretches. Boeci. Yes (qd. I) Philosophy. Than (qd. she) If that any good were added to the wretchidnesse of any wight nys he not more wofull, than he that ne hath no medling of good in his solitary wretchednes? Boecius. So semeth it (qd. I.) Philosop. And what sayest thou than (qd. she) of thilke wretch that lacketh all goodes, so that no good nis medled in his wretchednes, and yet ouer all his wickednesse for whych he is a wretche that there be yet another yuell anexed and knit to him, shal not men demen him more vnsely, than thilke wretch of which the vnselines is relcued by the participacion of some good? Boecius. Why should he not (qd. I) Philosophy. Than certes (qd. she) han shrewes whan they been punished somewhat of good annexed to her shrewednesse that is to saine, the same paine that they suffren, whych that is good, by the reason of Iustice. And whan thilke same shrewes escapen without tourment, than haue they somewhat more of yuell, yet ouer the wickednesse that they han doen, that is to sain, defaut of paines, whych defaute of paine thou haste graunted is yuel, for the desert of felony. Boecius. I ne may not deny it (qd. I.) Philosophy. Much more than (qd. she) been shrewes vnsely whan they been wrongfully deliuered from paine, than whan they beene punished by rightfull vengeaunce. But this is open thyng and cleare, that it is right that shrewes been punnyshed, and it is wickednesse and wrong that they escapen vnpunished. Boecius. Who might deny it (qd. I) Philosophy. But (qd. she) may any man deny that all that is right ne is good, and also the contrary, that all that is wrong is wicked. Boeci. Certes (qd. I) these thyngs ben cleare ynough, and that we haue concluded a litell here before. But I pray thee that thou tell me yf thou accordest to letten no tourment to the soules, after that the body is ended by the death, that is to saine, vnderstandest thou aught, that soules haue any tourment after the death of the body? Philosop. Certes (qd. she) yea, and that right great, of whych soules (qd. she) I trowe that some been tourmented by asprenesse of paine, and some soules I trowe been exercysed by a purgyng meekenesse, but my counsaile nys nat to determine of this paines. But I haue trauailed and told yet hiderto, for thou shouldest know that the nowyng of shrews, whyche nowing thee semeth to be vnworthy, nis no nowyng, and eke of shrewes, of whych thou playnedest that they ne were not punished, that thou woldest se that they ne weren neuer mo without the tourments of her wyckednesse. And of the lycence of the nowyng to dooen yuell, that thou praidest that it might soone be ended, and that thou wouldest faine learnen that it ne should not longe endure. And that shrewes been more vnsely if they were of lenger during, and moste vnsely yf they weren perdurable. And after this I haue shewed the that more vnsely ben shrewes, whan they escapen without her ryghtfull paine, than whan they been punished by rightfull vengeaunce. And of this sentence followeth it, that than ben shrewes constrayned at the last with most greeuous tourment whã men wene that they ne be not punished. Boeci. Whan I consider thy reasons (qd. I) I ne trow nat that men saine any thyng more verely. And if I tourne ayen to the studies of men, who is he to whom it should seeme, that hee ne should nat onely leuen these thynges, but eke gladly herken hem. Philosoph. Certes (qd. she) so it is, but men may nat, for they haue their eyen so wont to the derkenesse of earthly thyngs, that they ne may nat lyfte hem vp to the light of cleare soothfastenesse. But they been lyke to bynles, of whiche the nyght lyghteneth her lookyngs, and the day blindeth hem. For whan men looken not the order of thynges, but her lustes and talents, they wene that either the leue or the nowyng to dooen wickednesse, or els the scaping without payn, bee welefull. But consider the

iudgement

iudgement of the perdurable lawe, for if thou confirme thy courage to the beste thynges, thou ne hast no neede of no iudge to yeuen the prise or mede, for thou hast ioyned thy selfe to the most excellent thinges. And if thou haste enclined thy studies, to the wicked thynges, ne seke no foraine wreche out of thy selfe, for thou thy selfe hast thrust thy selfe unto wicked thinges, right as thou mightest looken by diuers times, the foule earth and the heauen, & that all other thinges, stinten fro without, so that thou were in neither, ne see nothinge more. Then should it semen to thee, as by only reason of loking, that thou were now in the Sterres, and now in the earth, but the people looketh not on these things. What then, shall we then approche vs to hem that I haue shewed, that been like to beastes? And what wouldest thou sain of this, if that a man had all forlorne his sight, and had forgetten that he euer saw, and wened that nothing fayled him, of perfeccion of mankinde? Nowe wee which mighten seen the same things, woulde we not sain, that he were blinde, ne also ne accordeth not the people, to that I shall saine, the which thinge is susteyned, by as stronge foundements of reason, that is to same, that more vnselie been they, that done wrongs to other folke, then they that the wrong suffren. Boecius. I woulde hearen thilke same reasons (qd I.) Philosoph. Deniest thou (qd she) that all shrewes ne been worthie to haue torment? Boecius. Nay (qd I). Philosophie. But (qd she) I am certain by many reasons, that shrewes been vnselie. Boecius. It accordeth (qd I). Philoso. Then ne doubtest thou not (qd she) that thilke folke, that been worthie of torment, that they ne bee wretches. Boecius. It accordeth wel (qd I). Philoso. If thou were then set a Judge, or a knower of thinges, whither troweste thou that men should tormenten hem, that hath don wrong, or els hem that suffred the wrong? Boecius. I doubt not (qd I) that I nolde do sufficient satisfaccion to hem that haue suffred wroug. by the sorow of hem that hath done wrong. Ph. Then semeth it, qd she, that the dooe of wróg is more wretch, then he that suffred wronge. Boecius. That followeth wel (qd I). Philos. Then (qd she) by these causes, and by other causes, that been enforced by the same roote, that filth of sinne, by the proper nature of it, maketh men wretches, and it sheweth well, that the wrongs that men done, nis not the wretchednes of him that receiueth ỳ wrong, but the wretchednesse of him that doeth the wrong. But certes (qd she) these orators or aduocates, done al the contrary, for they enforcen hem to commoue the Judges, to haue pitie of hem that doen the greuances and the wrongs: the which shrewes, it were a more conenable thing, that the accusours or aduocates, not wroth, but piteous and debonaire, ledden tho shrewes that haue don wrongs, to the iudgement, right as men leden sicke folke to the Leche, for that they shoulden ben out, the maladies of sinne by torment. And by this couenaunt, either the entent of aduocates, should cessen in all, or els if thoffice of the aduocates, would better profiten to menne, it should bee tourned into the habite of accusacion, that is to sain, they shoulden accuse shrewes, and not excusen hem. And eke ỳ shrewes hem self, if it were leful to hem, to seene at any clift, the vertue that they haue forletten, and sworn that they should putten adoun the filthes of her vices, by the torments of paines, they ne oughten not, right for that recompensation, for to getten hem bountie & prowesse, which that they houe loste, demen & hold that the like paines weren torments to hem, and eke they woulden refuse the attendaunce of her aduocates, and taken hem selfe to her iudges, and to her accusours, for the which it bitideth, that as to the wise folkes, there nis no place yletten to hate, that is to sain, that hate ne hath no place emonge wise men. For no wight nil haten good men, but if he were ouermuch a foole, and for to haten shrewes, it nis no reason, for right as languishing is maladie of bodie, right so been vices & sinne malady of courage. And so as wee ne deme not ỳ they, which ỳ ben sick of her body, ben worthy to ben hated but rather worthie of pitie. Wel more worthie not to ben hated, but for to ben had in pitie ben they, of which ỳ thoughts ben constrained by felonous wickednesse, that is more cruel, then any languishing of bodie.

Quid tantes iuuat excitare motos. Et propria fatum sollicitare manu? Si mortem petitis propinquat ipsa sponte sua, volucres nec remoratur equos, &c.

What delighteth you to excriten so great mouing of Hatredes, and to hasten and busien the fatall disposicion of your death, with your proper handes, that is to saine, by battailes or contekes

For if ye aſken the death, it haſteth him of his owen will, ne death ne tarieth not his ſwifte horſe. And the men that the Serpents, & the Lion, and the Tiger, and the Beare, and the Boze, ſeken to ſlean with their teeth, yet thilke ſame men, ſeken to ſlean eyerich of hem other with ſweardes. Loe, for her manners ben diuers and diſordeinant, they mouen, inwightfull hoſtes, and cruell battailes, and wilnen to periſh by enterchanging of dartes, but the reaſon of crueltie, nis not ynough righteſull. Wilt thou then yelden a conenable guerdon, to the deſertes of men? Loue rightfully good folkes, and haue pitie on ſhrewes.

Hinc ego video inquam, que ſit vel felicitas vel miſeria in ipſis proborum atq; improborum meritis conſtituta. Sed in hac ipſa fortuna populari, &c.

THis I ſee (qd I) either what bliſſulneſs, or elſ what vnſelineſs is eſtabliſhed in ỳ deſertes of good men, and of ſhrewes.

But in this ilke fortune of the people, I ſee ſomewhat of good, and ſomwhat of euil. For no wiſeman had not leauer be exiled pooze and nedie, and nameleſſe, then for to dwellen in his citie, and flouren of richeſſe, and be redoubtable of honour, and ſtrong of power. For in this wiſe more clearly & witneſſully, is the office of wiſe men treated, then the bliſſulneſs of power, & gouernors, is as it were ſhad emonges ỳ people, ỳ be neighbors & ſubiects, ſith that namely priſon, lawe, & theſe other tormentes of lawful paines, be rather owed to felonous citizẽs: for the which felonous citizens, the paines be eſtabliſhed, more then for good people.

Boecius. Then I marualle greatly (qd I) why that the things be ſo miſceenterchaunged, that torments of felonie, preſſen and confounden good people, and ſhrewes rauiſhen medes of vertue, & ben in honours, and great eſtates. And I deſire eke for to weten of thee, what ſeemeth thee to be the reaſon of this ſo wrongful a concluſion. For I would wonder wel the laſſe, if that I trowed that all things were medled with fortunous hap. But nowe crepeth & encreaſeth mine aſtonyings, GOD gouernour of things, that ſo as God yeueth oft times to good men, goods & mirthes, and to ſhrewes, euil & aſpre things: And yeueth ayen to good folke hardneſſe, and to ſhrewes he granteth hem her will, and that they deſiren.

What difference may there be, betweene that that God doeth, and happe of fortune, if men knowen not the cauſe why it is.

Philoſopher. Nis it no marueile (qd ſhe) though ỳ men weenen, that there be ſomwhat foolish and confuſe, when the reaſon of the order is vnknowen? but although that thou ne know not the cauſe of ſo great a diſpoſition, nathleſſe, for as much as God the good gouernour, attempreth and gouerneth ỳ world, ne doubte thee not, but all thinges been done a right.

Si quis arcturi fidera neſcit. Mergatq; ſeras æquore flammas. Propinqua ſummo cardine labi. Cum nimis ſeleres explicet ortus. Cur legat tardus plauſtra Bootes, &c.

WHo ſo that knowe not the ſterres Arcture, turned to the ſoueraine centure or point, that is to ſaine, tourned nigh to the ſoueraigne Pole of the firmament, and wote not why the ſterre Bootes paſſeth, or gathereth his waines, and dyencheth his late flambes in the ſea, and why that Bootes the ſterre vnfoldeth his ouerſwift aryſings, then ſhal he wondren of the Law of the high ayre. And eke if that he ne knowe not why, that the hornes of the full Moone waxen pale & inſect, by the boundes of the dark night, & how the Moone darke and confuſe, diſcouereth the ſterres that ſhe had couered by her clere viſage.

The common errour moueth folkes, and maketh wearie her baſens of Braſſe by thilke ſtrokes, that is to ſaie, that there is a maner people, that hight Lozibantes, that wenen, that when the Moone is in the Eclipſe, that ſhe be enchaunted, and therefore for to reſcue the Moone, they beaten her baſins with the ſame ſtrokes. Ne no man ne wondreth when the blaſtes of the winde Thorus, beaten the ſtrondes of the Sea, by quaking floodes. Ne no man ne wondreth, when the weight of the Snow, harded by the cold, is reſolued by the brenning heate of Phebus the Sunne, for here ſeene men readily the cauſes. But the cauſes yhid, that is to ſaine in heauen, troublen the breaſtes of men. The mouable people, is aſtonied of all thinges that comen ſelde and ſodainly in our age, but the trouble errour of our ignorance, departeth fro vs, ſo that if they wiſten the cauſe, why that ſuche thinges betiden, certes they ſhoulden ceaſe to ſeme wonders.

Ita est inquam. Sed cum tui muneris sit latentium rerum causas euoluere, velatasq; caligine explicare rationes: quelo vti hinc decernas, &c.

THus it is (qd I) but so as thou hast yeuē or beheight me, to vnwrap the hid causes of things, & to discouer mee the reasons, couered with darkneſſe, I praye thee, that thou deuise and iudge me of this matter, & that thou do me to vnderstand it, for this miracle of this wōder, troubleth me right greatly. And then she a little what smiling said. Thou clepest me (qd she) to tell that is greatest of al thinges, ỹ mowen ben asked, & to the which questiō, vneth there aught ynough to lauen it, as who saieth, vneth is there any thing to answere perfitly to thy question, for the matter of it is such, that whē o doubt is determined & cut away. Ther waxen other doubtes without number, right as the heddes of Idre the Serpent waxen, ỹ which Serpent Hercules slough: ne there ne were no manere, ne none ende, but if a wight constrained the doubtes, by a right liuely and quicke fire of thought, that is to saine, by vigour & strength of witte. For in this matter men weren wont to maken questions, of the simplicitie of the purueighance of GOD, and of the order of Destinie, & of sodain happe, and of knowing of predestination diuine. And of the libertie of freewill, the which things thou thy selfe apperceiuedst well, of what weight they been. But forasmuch as the knowinges of these things, is a maner porcion or medicine to thee, al be it so, that I haue little time to done it, yet neuertheleſſe, I would enforcen me to shewen somewhat of it: But although the nourishings of ditee of Mulike deliteth thee, thou must sufferen and forbearen a litle of the like delite, while that I weue to the reasons, knitte by order.

Boecius. As it liketh to thee (qd I) so doe.

Philosophie. Tho spake she right, as by an other beginning, & saied right thus. The engendring of al things (qd she) and all the progressions of mouable Nature, & all that moueth in any maner, taketh his causes, his order, & his formes, of the stablenesse of Diuine thought: And the like Diuine thought, that is sette, & put in the Toure, that is to saine, in the height of the simplicitie of GOD, stablisheth many manner giſes, to the thinges that bene to done, the which maner, when that mē looken it, in the pure cleanesse of the Diuine intelligence, is cleaped purueiaunce.

But when the like manner is referred by menne, to things that it moueth or disponeth, then of olde men it was cleaped Destinie, the which thinges, if that any wight loketh well in his thought, the strength of that one, and of that other, he shall lightly mowe seen, that these two thinges been diuers. For purueyaunce is the like Diuine reason, that is established in the Soueraine Prince of thinges, the which purueiaunce disponeth al thinges. But certes, Destinie is the disposicion and the ordinaunce, cleauing to mouable thinges, by the which disposicion, the purueighaunce knitteth all thinges in her order: For purueighaunce embraseth all thinges to heape, although they be diuers, and although they be infinite, but Destinie certaine, departeth and ordaineth all thinges singulerly, and deuideth in mouing, in places, in formes, and in tymes, as thus: Let the vnfolding of temporell ordinaunce, assembled and oned in the lookinge of the Diuine thought, bee cleaped purueighaunce, and thilke same assemblinge and oning, deuided and vnfolden, let that bee called Destinie.

And all bee it so, that these things been diuers, yet neuertheleſſe, hanged that one on that other, for why, the order destinably, procedeth of the simplicitie of purueighaunce.

For right as a workman perceiueth in his thought, the forme of a thinge that hee woll make, and mooueth the effecte of the worke, and leadeth that he had looked before in his thought, simplye and presently by corporall ordinaunce: certes, right so GOD in his purueighaunce, disponeth singulerly and stably the thinges that bee to done, but he administreth in maners, and in diuers times by Destinie, the like same thinges that he hath disponed, then whether Destinie bee exercised, either by some diuine spirites, seruauntes to the Diuine purueighaunce, or els by some soule, or els by all nature seruing GOD, or els by the celestiall mouinges of Sterres, or els by the vertue of Angels, or els by dyuers subtelties of Diuels, or els by anye of hem, or els by hem all, the destinable ordinaunce is wouen and accomplished. Certes, it is open thinge, that the purueighaunce, is an vnmouable and simple forme of thynges to doen, and the mouable bonde, and the temporall ordinaunce of thynges, which that the Diuine

nine simplicitie of purueiance hath ordained to done, that is destinie. For which it is that all thinges that been put vnder destinie, been certes subicetes vnto purueiaunce, to whiche purueiaunce destinie it selfe is subiect & vnder but some things ben put vnder purueiaunce, that surmounten thordinance of destenie: and tho been thilke that stablie been fixed nigh to the first godhed, they surmounten the order of destinable mouabilitie. For right as circles turnen about a same centre, or about a point, thilke circle that is innerest or moste within, he ioyneth to the simplesse of the middle, and is as it were a centre or a point to that other circles, that turnen about him: & thilke that is vtterest, compassed by larger enuironning, is vnfolde by larger spaces, in so much as it is fortherest from the middelest simplicitie of the point. And if there be any thing that knitteth and felowshippeth himselfe, to thilke middle point, it is constrained into simplicitie, that is to saie, into vnmouabilitie, and it ceaseth to been shad, and flit diuersly. Right so by semblable reason, thilke thing that departeth furtherest, fro the first thought of God, it is vnfolden, and also submitted to greater bondes of destinie, and in so much is the thing more free and lose fro dignitie, as it aketh and holdeth nere to thilke centre of thinges, that is to saine, to God. And if the thing cleaueth to the stedfastnesse of the thought of God and be without mouing, certes it surmounteth the necessitie of destinie. Then such comparison as is skilling to vnderstandinge, and of thing that was engenred, to thinge that is of time to eternitie, and of the circle to the centre, right so is the order of mouable destinie, to the stable simplicitie of purueyaunce. Thilke ordinaunce moueth the heauen and the Sterres, and attempreth the elementes togither emong hemselfe, and transformethe hem by enterchangeable mutation. And thilke same order neweth ayen, all things growing & falling adoune, by semblable progressions of seedes and of sexus, that is to saine, male & female: and this ilke order constraineth ỹ fortunes, and the dedes of men, by a bond of causes, not able to be vnbounden: the which destinable causes, when they passen out fro the beginninges of vnmouable purueiaunce, it mote nedes be that thei ne be not mutable, as thus: be the things well gouerned, if that the simplicitie dwellinge in the diuine thought, sheweth forthe the order of causes, vnable to be bowed. And this order constraineth by the proper stabilitie, the mouable thinges, or els they shoulden flete folilie. For which it is, that thinges semen confuse, & trouble to vs men, for we ne mowen not cõsider thilke ordinãce. Neuertheless, ỹ proper maner of euery thing dressing him to good, disponeth hem all, for there nis nothinge doone for euill, for thilke thing that is doone by wicked folke, nis not doen for euil. The which shrewes, as I haue shewed full plenteously seke good, but wicked errour mistourneth hem, ne the order coming fro the point of soueraine good, ne enclyneth not fro his beginning. But thou maiest saie, what vnrest may ben a worse confusion, than that good men haue soemtime aduersitie, and sometyme prosperitie: and shrewes haue now also thinges that they desiren, and now thinges that they haten. Whether men liue nowe in such holinesse of thought, as who saith bee men now so wise, that such folke as they demen to be good folke or shrewes, that it mote needs be, that folk be soch as they wenẽ. But in this maner domes of men discordẽ, ỹ thilke men that some folke demen worthy of mede, other folke deme hem worthy of turment, but let vs graunt: I suppose that some man may well deme or know the good people, and the bad, may he then know and see thilke innerest attemperaunce of courage, as it hath be wont to be said of bodies, as who saith: may a man speaken of complexions, and attemperaunce of bodies, ne it ne is not, as who sayth but it is like a meruaile or a miracle, to hem ỹ ne knowe it not; why that sweet thinges bee conenable to some bodies, that been hole, & to some people bitter things be conenable: & also why some people ben holpen with light medicines, and some people ben holpen with bitter medicines: but natheless tho that knowẽ the manner, and the temperaunce of heale and of malady, ne marueileth it nothing. But what other thing semeth helth of corages but bontie, and what other thinge seemeth malady of courage but vices? Who is els keper of good, & driuer away of euil, but God the gouernor & leader of thoughts: the which God, when he hath beholden from the high tour of his purueiaunce, he knoweth what is conenable to any wight, & leaueth hem that he wote wel ỹ is conenable to hem. Lo, herof cometh & hereof is doen this miracle of the order destinable, when God that al knoweth doth soch thing, of which thing, vnknowing folke beene astonied, but for to constraine as who saieth, but for to comprehende and tell a fewe thinges of

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the diuine depenesse, the which that mannes reason may vnderstande. Thilke manne that thou weenest to been right iust, and right keeping of equitie, the contrarie of that, seemeth to the Diuine purueighaunce that all wote. And Lucan my familier telleth, that the victorious cause liked to the Goddes, & the causes ouercome, liketh to Caton. Then what so euer thou maiest seene, that is done in this worlde vnhoped, or els vnknowen, Certes, it is the right order of thinges, but as to thy wicked opinion, it is a confusion. But I suppose that some man be so welthewed, that the diuine iudgement, and the iudgement of mānkinde, accorden hem togider of him: but he is so vnstedfast of courage, that if any aduersitie come to him, he woll forletten parauenture to continue innocencie, by the which hee ne may not withholden fortune: than ỹ wise dispensacion of GOD sparcth him, the whiche man aduersitie, might empaire, for that God wil not him to trauaile, to whome that trauaile nis not couenable. An other manne is parfite in all vertues, and is an holye manne, and nigh to God, so that the purueighance of God would deme, that it were a felonye, that he wer touched with any aduersities, so that he would not suffre, that such a man be with any bodily maladie moued. But so (as saied ỹ Philosopher) the more excellēt is by me saied in great, that vertues haue edified the bodie of the holie manne. And oft time it betydeth, that the somme of thinges, that been to doen is taken to gouerne to good folke, for that the malice habundant of shrewes, should been abated. And God yeueth & departeth to other folke, prosperities and aduersities, medled to heape, after the qualitie of her courages, and remordeth some folke by aduersities, for they ne should not waxen proude, by long welfulnesse. And other folke he suffereth, to be trauailed with hard thinges, for that they should confermen the vertues of courage, by the exercitation of vsage of pacience. And other folke dreden more then they oughten, ỹ which they mighten well bearen, and some dispise, that they mowe not beare, and thilke folke GOD leadeth into experience of hem selfe, by ayre and sorowful thinges. And many other folke haue boughte, honourable renoume of this worlde, by the price of glorious death.

And some men that ne mowe not been ouercomen by tormente, haue yeuen ensample to other folke, that vertue may not been ouercomen by aduersities. And of al these thinges ther nis no doubt, that they ne ben don rightfully and ordeinly, to the perfite good of hem, to whome we seene these things betiden. For certes, that aduersities commeth somtime to shrewes, and sometime that they deliren, it cometh of these forsaide causes. And of sorowfull things that betyden to shrewes, certes, no man ne wondreth, for all menne wene that they haue deserued it, and that they been of wicked merite. Of which shrewes, the torment agasteth sometime other to doen felonies: And sometime it amendeth hem that suffereth the torments. And the prosperitie that is yeuen to shrewes, showeth a great argument to good people, what thinge they should demen of thilke welefulnesse, whiche prosperitie men seene ofte, serue to shrewes: In which thinge, I trowe that God dispenseth, for parauenture, the nature of some man is so ouerthrowing to euil, and so vncouenable, that the nedie pouertie of his houlholde, might rather agreue him to done felonies, & to the maladie of him, God putteth remedie, to yeuen him richesse. And some other manne beholdeth his conscience defouled with sinnes, and maketh comparison of this fortune, and of himselfe: and dredeth parauenture that the blisfulnesse, of which ỹ blage is ioyful to him, that the leting of thilke blisfulnesse, ne bee not sorowfull to him, and therefore he woulde chaunge his maners: and for hee dreadeth to lese his fortune, he forletteth his wickednes. To other folkes welefulnes is yeuen vnworthelie, the which ouerthrowoth hem into destruction, that they han deserued, and to some other folke, is yeuen power to punishen, for that it shall be cause of continuacion, and exercising to good folkes, and cause of torment to shrewes.

For so as there nis none aliaunce betwene good folkes, and shrewes, ne shrewes ne mowen not accorden among hem selfe: and why not? For that shrewes discorden of hem selfe, by her vices, the which vices, all to renden her consciences, and doen ofte tymes things, the which things, when they haue doen hem, they deme that tho things ne should not haue be done, for which thing the louerain purueiaunce, hath maked oft time miracle: So that shrewes haue maked shrewes to beene good men. For when that some shrewes seen, that they suffre wrongfully felonies of other shrewes, they waxen eschaufed into hate of hem that anoied hem, & retournen to the fruit of vertue. Then they studien to be vnlike to hem

that

that they haue hated. Certes onely is this the deuine might, to the which might iuels been then good, when it vseth the iuelles couenable, and drawoth out the effecte of any good, as who saieth, that iuel is good onely to the might of god, for the might of god ordeineth thilke iuell to good: for one order embraceth all thinges, so that what wight departeth frō the reason of thilke order, that is alligned to him, algates yet he slideth into another order so that nothing is lefull to folye, in the realme of diuine purueighaunce, as who saieth, nothyng is without ordinaunce, in the realme of diuyne purueyghaunce, sith that the right strong GOD gouerneth all thynges in this world, for it is not lefull for men to cōprehend by wit, ne vnfolden by worde, all the subtell ordinance and the dispolicion of the diuine entent, for only it ought to suffice, to haue looked that god himselfe, maker of all natures, ordaineth all thinges to good, whyle that hee hasteth to withhold the thyngs that hee hath maked into his semblaunce, that is to saye, for to withholden the things into good, for he himself is good. He chaseth out all iuels frō the bond of his commalties, by the order of ỳ necessitie deffinable: for which it followeth, ỳ if thou looke the purueiance, ordeining the thinges, that men women be outragious, or haboundant in yearthes, thou shalt not seen in no place, no thyng of iuell. But I see now ỳ thou art charged, with the weight of the question, and wearie with lengthe of my reason, & that thou abidest some sweetenesse of song, take then this draught, & when thou art wel refreshed & refect, thou shalt be more stedfast to stie into higher questions or thinges.

Si vis celsi iura tonantis. Plura solers cernere mente, Aspice summi culmina cœli.

If thou wise woit demē, in thy pure thought, the rightes or ỳ lawes of the hie thunder, that is to sain of God, looke thou & behold the heights of the souereine heauen: There keepen the Sterres, by rightfull attaunce of thyngs her old peace: The Sonne inoued by his roddy fire, ne disbourdeth not the cold cercle of the Moone, ne the sterre ycleaped the Bere, that encliueth his rauishing courses, abouten ỳ soureine height of this world: Ne the same sterre Tyla, nis neuer mo washen in the deepe Westren sea, ne coueteth not to dien his flames in the sea of ỳ Occian, although it see other sterres yplonged in the sea: And Hesperus ỳ sterre boodeth, and telleth alway the late nightes: And Lucifer the sterre bringeth ayen the clear day.

And thus maketh loue enterchaungeable, the perdurable courles, and thus is discordable battaile, yputte out of the countrey of the Oters. This accordaunce attempreth by euenlike manners the Elements, that ỳ moiste thinges, striuing with the dry thynges, yeuen place by stounds: And that the cold thynges ioynen hem by faith, to the hoee thinges, and that the light fier, ariseth into height, and ỳ heauie yearths, auailen by her weights: by the same cawles the flourie yere yeldeth swete smels, in the first Sommer season warming, and the hot Sommer dryeth the Cornes, and Autumpne cometh ayen of heauie Apples, & the fleeting Raine bedeweth the Winter, this attemperance norisheth, and bringeth fourth all thinges, that beareth life in this worlde, and thilke same attempyance rauishing, hideth, benimeth, and drencheth vnder the lasse death all thinges thorne.

Emong thele thinges, sitteth the high maker, King and Lorde, weale and begynning, Lawe and wise Judge, to dorn equitee, and gouerneth and encliueth the bridels of thyngs and tho things that he sterreth, to gone by moumge, he withdraweth and aresteth, and affirmeth the mouable or wandering thyngs. For if that he ne called not ayen the right going of thynges. And if that hene constrained hem not eftsones, into roundenesse enclined, the things that been now continued by stable ordinance, they should departen from her weale, that is to saine, from her begynnyng & fallen, that is to sayne, tournen into naught. This is the common loue to all things: and all things aslken to been holden by the fine of good, for elles ne mighten thei not fallen, if thei ne come not eftsons ayen by loue, retourned to the cause, that hath yeuen hem being, that is to sain, God.

Iam ne igitur vides quid hec omnia que diximus consequantur. Quid nam inquit Ornem inquit, &c.

Best thou not thā what thyng followeth all the thynges that I haue saied. Boecius. What thyng (qd. I.) Philosophy. Certes (qd. she) all vtterly, that all fortune is good. Boecius. And how maie that be (qd. I.) Philosophie. Now

vnderstand

vnderstand (qd she). So as al fortune, whether so it be ioyfull fortune, or aspre fortune, is yeuen either because of guerdoning, or els of exercising of good folkes, or els because to punishen, or els chastisen shrewes: then is all fortune good, the which fortune is certaine, that it be either rightfull, or els profitable.

Boecius. Forsooth this is a full verie reason (qd I) and if I consider the purueighaunce and the destinie that thou oughtest me a litle here before, this sentence is susteined by stedfast reasons. But if it like vnto thee, let vs nõbren hem emonges the like thinges, of which thou saidest a little here before, that they ne were not able to been wened to the people.

Philosophie. Why so (qd she.) Boecius. For that the comon worde of men (qd I) misuseth this maner speache of fortune, and saine ofte times, that the fortune of some wight is wicked. Philosophie. Wilt thou then (qd she) that I approche a litle to the wordes of the people so that it seme not to ben, that I be ouermuch departed as fro the vsage of mankinde. Boecius. As thou wolt (qd I.) Philosoph. Weenest thou not (qd she) that all thing that profiteth is good? Boecius. Yes (qd I). Philos. Certes all thing that exerceth or corrigeth, it profiteth. Boecius. I confesse well (qd I). Philoso. Then is it good (qd she). Boecius. Why not (qd I). Philo. But this is the fortune (qd she) of hem that either be put in vertue, and battailen against aspre things, or els of hem that enclinen, and declinen fro vices, and taken ỳ way of vertue. Boecius. This ne may I not denie (qd I). Philosophie. But what sayest thou of ỳ merie fortune, that is yeuen to good people in guerdon, denieth oft the people that it be wicked?

Boecius. Nay for soth (qd I) but they demen as it is sothe, that it is right good.

Philos. What saiest thou of the other fortune (qd she) that although that it be aspre, & restraineth the shrewes by rightful turment, weeneth ought the people that it be good?

Boecius. Nay (qd I) but the people demeth that it is moste wretched of all thinges, that may be thought.

Philosophie. Ware nowe, & looke well (qd she) leste wee in following the opinion of the people, haue confessed and concluded thing, which that is vnable to been wened to ỳ people. Boecius. What is that (qd I?) Phi. Certes (qd she) it followeth or cometh of things ỳ ben graunted, that all fortune whatsoeuer it be, of hem that been either in possession of vertue, or in the encreasse of vertue, or els in ỳ purchasing of vertue, that thilk fortune is good: and that all fortune is right wicked, to hem that dwellen in shrewdnes, as who saith, and thus weneth not the people. Boecius. That is sothe (qd I.) Albeit so that no man dare confesse it, ne know it. Phi. Why so (qd she.) For right as the strong man, ne seemeth not to abashen or disdainen, as oft time as he heareth the noise of the battaile: ne also it seemeth not to the wiseman, to bearen it grenously, as oft as hee is ledde into strife of fortune. For both to that one man, and eke to that other, the like difficultie is the matter, to that one man of encreasse of his glorious renoume, and to that other man, to conserue his sapience, that is to say, to the asperneſſe of his estate, for therefore is it called vertue, for that it sustaineth & enforceth by his strengthes, so that it nis not ouercomen by aduersities. Ne certes, thou that art put in encreasse, or in the height of vertue, ne hast not comen to sleten with delices, and for to walken in bodily lust. Thou sowest or plantest a full eiger battaile in thy courage, ayenst euery fortune: for that the forowfull fortune confound thee not, ne that the merie fortune ne corrumpe thee not, occupie ỳ mean by stedfast strengthes. For al that euer is vnder the meane, or all that ouerpasseth ỳ mean, despiseth welefulnes, as who sayeth, it is vicious, and ne hath no mede of his trauaile, for it is set in your hand, as who saith, it lyeth in your power, what fortune you is leueſt, that is to saye, good or euill, for all fortune that semeth sharpe or aspre, if it ne exercise not the good folke, ne chastice the wicked folke, it punisheth.

Bella bis binis operatus annis. Vltor atrides phrigierimus, &c.

THE werker Atrides, that is to saine Agamemnon, that wrought & continued the battailes by x. yere, recouered & purged in wrecking by ỳ destruction of Troy, the lost chambers of Mariage in his brother, that is to saie, that Agamemnon wan ayen Heleine, that was Menelaus wife, his brother. In the meane while that thilk Agamenon, desired to yeuen sailes to the Greeks naue, and brought ayen the windes by bloode: He vnclothed him of pitie of Father, and the forie priest yeueth in sacrificing, the wretched cutting of the throte of the doughter. that is to say, that Agamemnon let cut the throte of his doughter by the priest, to maken alliaunce

with

with his Goddes, and for to haue wind, with which he might wenden to Troy. Itacus, ꝑ is to saie Ulixes, bewept his fellowes ylorne, the which felowes, the fers Poliphemus, ligging in his great caue, had fretten & dreint in his emptie wombe: But natheleſſe Poliphemus wood for his blinde viſage yelde to Ulixes ioy, by his sorowful teares, that is to saie, that Ulixes smote out ꝑ eye of Poliphemus, that stoode in the forehed, for which Ulixes had ioy, when he sawe Poliphemus weping & blind. Hercules is celebrable for his hard trauaile, he daunted the proud Centaurus, halfe horſe, halfe man, & beraft the dispoiling fro ꝑ cruell Lion, that is to saie, he slough the Lion, & beraft him his skin. He smote the birdes that hight Arpies, with certaine arrowes. He rauished Apples, fro the wakinge dragon: and his hande was the more heanie, for the golden metall. He drough Cerberus the hound of hell, by the triple chaines. He ouercomer, as it is saied, hath put an vnmeete lord, fodder to his cruel horſe, ꝑ is to say, Hercules slough Diomedes, & made his horſe to fretten him: and he Hercules slough Idra the serpent, and dreint the venim. And Achileus the flood defouled in his forehedde, dreint his shamefast viſage in his stroundes, that is to saie, that Achileus coulde transfigure himself into diuers likenes, & as he faught with Hercules, at last he turned him into a Bull, & Hercules brake one of his hornes: and he for shame hid him in his Riuer. And ouer that, he Hercules cast adoune Antheus the Giant, in the strondes of Libie. And Cacus appeised the wrathes of Euander, that is to saie, that Hercules slough the monster Cacus and apeised with that death, the wrath of Euander. And the bristled Bore, marked with vomes, the shoulder of Hercules, the which shoulders, the hie circle of heauen should thirst. And the last of his labors was, that he susteined the heauen, vpon his neck vnbowed, and he deserued eftsones, the heauen to be the last ende of trauaile. Goeth now then ye strong men, ther as the great ensample leadeth you. O nice men, why make ye your backes, as who saieth: O ye slowe & delicate men, why se ye aduersities, & ne fight not ayenst hem by vertue, to winne the mede of heauen: for the mede ouercomen, yeueth the sterres, that is to saine, that when that earthly lust is ouercomen, a man is maked worthie to the heauen.

Here endeth the fouth booke of Boecius.

¶ Here followeth the fifth booke of Boecius.

Dixerat, orationiſque curſum
ad alia quedam tractanda atq; expedienda vertebat. B. Tum ego; recta quidem inquam, &c.

SHE had saied, and turned the course of her reason, to som other thinges, to be treated & to be sped. Boecius. Then said I, certes, rightful is thine amonesting, & full of digne by authoritie. But ꝑ thou saidst whilom, ꝑ the question of the Diuine purueiance, is enlaced with many other questions, I vnderstande wel and proue it, by ꝑ same thing. But I aske, if that thou weneſt, that happ be any thing, in any waies, and if thou weneſt, that happe be any thyng, what is it? Philosophie. Then (qd. she) I haſt me to yelden and aſſoilen, to the debte of my beheſt, and to shewen and open ꝑ way, by whiche way, thou maieſt come ayen to thy countree: but albeit so that the thynges, whiche that thou aſkeſt, been right profitable to know, yet been they diuers, somewhat fro the pathe of my purpoſe, and it is to doubte, that thou ne bee maked weary by misse waies, so that thou ne maieſt not suffice, to measure the right way.

Boecius. Ne doubt thee thereof nothyng (qd. I.) For to knowen thilke things togider, in the whyche thynges I delite me greatly, that shall been to me in stede of reſt, sith it nis not to doubten of the thyngs folowing, when euery thynge of thy disputacion, shall hauen ben stedfaſt to me, by vndoubtous faith.

Philosophie. Then (saied she) that manner woll I dooen to thee, and beganne to speaken right thus. Certes (qd. she) if any wight deſtitute hap in this manner, that is to saine, that happe is betidyng ybrought forth, by foolish mouing, and by no knitting of causes, I confyrme that hap nys right naught in no wise, and I deeme all vtterlie, that hap nis, ne dwelleth but a voyce, as who saieth, but an ydell woorde, without any signification of thynge, committed to that voyce. For what place myght been left, or dwellynge in folye, and to disordenaunce, sithe that GOD leadeth and constrayneth all thynges by order, for this sentence is very soothe, that nothyng hath his beeyng of naughte, to the whych

sentence,

sentence, none of these old folke ne withsaied neuer, all be it so, that they ne vnderstanden it not, by GOD, Prince and beginner of wooryng, but they casten, as a maner foundement of subiect materiall, that is to sain, of the nature of all reason. And if that any thing is waxen or commen of no causes, then shall it seeme, that thilke thing is comen or woxen of naught. But if this ne may not be doen, then is it not possible that hap be any soch thyng, as I haue definished a little here beforn. Boecius. How shal it then be (qd. I) nis there the nothing, ỳ by right may been cleaped, either hap, or els aduenture, or fortune? Or is there ought, all be it so, that it is hid fro the people, to which thyng these wordes ben conuenable.

Philosophy. Wise Aristotle (qd. she) in the booke of his Physicke, definished this thing by short reason, and nigh to the soth.

Boecius. In which maner (qd. I)

Philosophy. As oft (qd. she) as men doen any thyng, for grace of any other thing, and another thyng then thilke thyng, that men entenden to doen, betideth by some causes, it is ycleaped happe, right as a manne daise the earth, bicause of tilling of the field, and found there a gobbet of gold bedolven, then wenen folke, that it is befall by fortunous betidyng. But forsoth it nis not of naught, for it hath his proper causes, of which causes, the cours vnforeseene and vnware, semeth to haue maked hap. For if the tiller of the field, ne dolue not in the yearth, and if the hider of the gold, ne had hid the gold in that place, the gold ne had not been found. These been then the causes, of the abredgyng of fortuit hap, ỳ which abredgyng of fortuit hap commeth, of causes of encountryng, and flowyng togyther to hemselfe, and not by the entencion of the doer. For neither the hider of the gold, ne the deluer of the field, ne vnderstanden not, that the gold should haue been found. But as I said, it betid and ran togither, that he dalfe ther as that other had hid the gold. Now may I thus definish hap. Happe is an vnware betiding of causes, assembled in thyngs, that ben done for some other thing. But thilke order procedyng, by an vnescheuable betidyng togither, wherch that discendeth from the well of pureighaunce, that ordeineth all thyngs in her places, & in her times maketh, that the causes rennen and assemblen togither.

Rupis Achemenee scopulis vbi versa sequentū.
Pectoribus fugit spicula, &c.

Tigris and Eufrates, resoluen and springen of o well, in the cragges of the roch of ỳ countrey of Archemenee, there as the flying battailes fixen her darts, retourning in the breasts of hem that folowen hem. And sone after the same riuers, Tigris and Eufrates, vnioinen and departen her waters, and if they comen together, and been assembled, and cleaped together into o courle, then moten thilke thynges fleeten togider, which that ỳ water of the enterchanging flood bringeth. The ships and the flocks araced with the flood moten assemblen, & the waters ymedled, wrappeth or emplieth many fortunell happes or manners, the which wandring happes nathelesse, thilk declining lowenesse of the yerth and the flowing order of the fluing water gouernith. Right so fortune that semeth, as it fleeteth with slaked or vngouerned bridles it suffreth wrioles, that is to sain, to ben gouerned, & passeth by thilk law, that is to sain, by the deuine ordinaunce.

Animaduerto inquam, idq; vti tu dicis ita esse, consencio. Sed in hac herentium, &c.

This vnderstand I wel (qd. I) & I accord me ỳ it is right as thou saiest. But I aske if there be any liberty of free will, in this order of causes, ỳ cleaue thus togither in hemselfe, or els I would weten if that the destinall chaine, constraineth the mouing of the courages of men.

Philosophy. Yes (qd. she) there is liberty of free will, ne there ne was neuer no nature of reason, that it ne had liberty of free will. For euery thyng that may naturelly vsen reason it hath doue, by which it discerneth and demeth euery thing. Then knoweth it by it self thyngs that been to flien, and thyngs that been to desiren, and thilke thyng that any wight demeth to ben desired, that asketh or desireth he, and flieth thilke thyng, that he troweth be to flien. Wherfore in all thyngs that reason is, in him also is liberty of willyng and of nillyng, but I ne ordaine not, as who sayth, I ne graunt not, that this liberty, be euen like in all things. For why in the Soueraines deuines substaunces, that is to saine, in spirits, indgement is more clear and will not corrumpe, and mighty redy to speden thynges that been desired. But the soules of

men moten needes been more free, when they looken hem in the speculation, or lookyng of the deuine thought, and lasse free when they sliden into the bodies, and yet lasse free when they been gathered togither, and comprehended in yearthly members, but the last sauage is, when that they been yeuen to vices, and haue yfall from the possession of her proper reasō. For after that they haue cast away her eyen, fro the light of the soueraine sothfastnesse, to low things, and darke, anon they darken by the cloud of ignorance, and be troubled by felonous talents, to ꝑ which talents, when they approchen and assenten, they heapen & encrecasen the seruage, which they haue ioyned to hem selfe. And in this manner they ben caitines, fro her proper liberty, the which thyng natheless, the looking of the deuine purueiaunce seeth, that all thyngs beholdeth and seeth fro eterne, and ordeineth hem eurich in her merits, as they been predestinate, & it is said in Greeke, that all thyngs he seeth, and all thyngs he heareth.

Puro clarum lumine phebum. Melliflui canit oris Homerus, &c.

HOmer with the Hony mouth, that is to sain, Homer with the sweet ditees singeth, that the Sonne is cleare by pure light. Natheleslle, yet ne may it not by the infirm light of his beams, breakē or pierren the inward entrails of the yearth, or eis of the Sea. So ne seeth not God, maker of the great world, to him ꝑ looketh all things from an high, ne understādeth nothings by heauinesse of the yearth, ne the night ne withstandeth not to hym by the blacke clouds, thilke God seeth in o stroke of thought, all thyngs that been, weren, or shull come: and thilk God, for he looketh and seeth all thyngs alone, thou maist saine that he is the very Sonne.

Tum ego: en inquā difficiliore rursus ambiguitate confundor, &c.

THen said I thus, now am I confounded, by a more hard doubt thē I was.

Philosoph. What doubt is that (qd. she) for certes, I coniect now by such things, thou art troubled. Boecius. It semeth (qd. I) to repugnen and to contrary greatly, that God knoweth before all things, and that there is any freedome or liberty, for if so be that God looketh all thyngs before, ne god ne may not been deceiued in no manner. Then mote it needs be, that all thyngs the which that the purueighaunce of God, hath seen before to come, for which if that God knoweth tofore, not only the werkes of men, but also her counsailes and her willes, then ne shall there be no liberty of arbitree, ne certes there ne may be none other deed, ne no wil, but thilke which that the deuine purueighaunce (that ne may not been deceiued) hath feeled before, for if that they mighten withen away, in other manner, then they been purueighed, then ne should there bee no stedfast prescience of thyng to commen; but rather an incertaine opinion, the which thing to trowen of God, I deme it felony and vnleful. Ne I ne proue not thilke same reason, as who saieth, I ne alow not, ne I ne praise not thilke same reason, by which that some men wenen, that they mowen assoilen, and vnknitten the knot of this question. For certes they saine, that thing nis not to commen, for that the purueighaunce of GOD, hath seen before that it is to comen, but rather the contrary, and that is this, that for that the thyngs is to commen, that therefore ne may it not been hid fro the purueighaunce of God. And in this manner, this necessity slideth ayen into the contrary party, ne it ne behoueth not needes, that thynges betiden that been ypurueighed, but it behoueth needs, that thyngs that been to commen ben ypurueied, but as it were ytrauailed, as who saith, that thilke answere procedeth right as though menne trauaileden or weren busie to enquiren, the whych thyng is cause of the which thyngs. As whether the prescience is cause, of the necessity of thyngs to comen, or eis that the necessity of things to commen, is cause of the purueighaunce. But I ne enforce me not now to shewen it, that the betidyng of thynges ywist before is necessary, how so or in what maner, that ꝑ order of causes hath it selfe, although that it ne seme not, that the prescience bryng in necessity of betiding, to things to commen. For certes, if that any wight sitteth, it behoueth by necessity, that the opinion be soth, of hym that conjecteth that he sitteth, and ayenwarde also is it of the contrary, for if the opinion bee soothe of any wight, for that he sitteth, it behoueth by necessity that he sitte. Then is here necessity in that one, and in that other: for in that one is necessity of sitting, and certes in that other is necessity of soth. But therefore ne sitteth not a wight, for that the opinion of the

sitting

sittyng his sooth, but the opinion is rather sooth, for that a wight sitteth before. And thus although that the cause of the sooth, commeth of that other side, as who saith, that although the cause of sooth commeth of the sitting, and not of the true opinion, algates yet is there a common necessity, in that one, and in that other. Thus sewerth it, that I may make semblable skilles, of the purueighaunce of God, and of thyngs to comen. For although that for that thyngs been to commen, therefore been they pursueighed, and not certes, for they been purueighed, therefore ne betide they not, natheless it behoueth by necessity, that either the thyngs to commen, been ypurueyed of God, or els that the thyngs, that been purueighed of God betiden. And this thyngs onely sufficeth ynough, to destroyen the freedome of our arbitre, that is to saine, of our free will. But certes, (now shewerth it well how farre fro the sooth, and how vp so doun is this thyng, that we seen that the betidyng of temporall thyngs, is cause of the eterne prescience. But for to wenen that God purueyeth the things to commen, for they ben to commen. What other thyng is but for to wene, that thilke thyngs that betide whilome, been causes of thilke soueraine purueighaunce, that is in God. And hereto adde I this thynges, that right as when that I, wote that a thyng is, it behoueth by necessity, that thilke self thyng be, and eke when I haue knowen that any thyng shall betiden, so behoueth it by necessity, that thilke same thyngs betide. So followeth it then, that the betyding of the thyngs ywist before. ne may not be eschewed, and at the last, if that any wight wene a thyng to been otherwise then it is, it nis not onely vnscience, but it is deceiuable opinion, full diuers and farre fro the soth of science.

Wherefore, if any thing be so to commen, that the betidyng of it, ne be not certaine, ne necessary, who may weten before, that thilke thyng is to commen. For right as science, ne may not be medled with falsenesse, as who saith, that if I wote a thyng, it ne may not be falle that I ne wote it, right so thilke thyng, that is conceiued by science, ne may not be none, otherwise then as it is conceiued, for that is the cause why, that science wanteth leasing, as who saith, why that wetyng ne receiueth not leasing of that it wote, for it behoueth by necessity, that euery thyng be right, as science comprehendeth it to be. What shal I then saie, in which manner knoweth God, before all the thyngs to commen, if they ne be not certain, for if that he deme, that they ben to commen vnleschuably, and so maybe that it is possible, that they ne shullen not commen, God is deceiued, but not only to trowen, that God is deceiued, but for to speake it with mouth, it is a felonous synne. But if that God wote, that right so as thyngs ben to commen, so shoullen they commen, so that he wote egally, as who sayth indifferently, that thyngs may be doen, or els not ydoen. What is thilke prescience, that ne comprehendeth no certaine thing ne stable, or els what difference is there betwene the prescience of thilke iape, worthy Deuinyng of Tirelie Deuinour, that saied. All that I say (qd. he) either it shall be, or els it shall not be, or els how moch is worth the Deuine prescience, more then the opinion of mankind, if so be that it demeth the thynges vncertaine, as men doen. Of the whych domes of men, the betidyng nis not certaine. But if so be, that none vncertaine thyngs, ne may been in him, that is right certaine well of all thynges, then is the betidyng certaine of thilke thyngs, whych that he hath wist before, fermely to commen, for which it followeth, that the freedome of the counsailes, and of the werkes of mankynd nis none, sith that the thought of God, that seeth all things, without errour of falsenesse, byndeth and constraineth hem to a betidyng by necessity. And if this thyng be once ygraunted and receiued, this is to sain, that there nys no free will, then shewerth it well, how great destruction, and how great domages there followen of things of mankind, for in dell been there then purposed, and behight meedes to good folke, and paines to badde folke, sith that no mouyng of free courage voluntary, ne hath not deserued hem, that is to sayne, neyther mede ne paine. And it should seeme then, that thilk thing is alderworst, which that is now deemed for aldermost iust, and most rightfull. That is to saine, that shrewes ben punished, or elles that good folke be yguerdoned, the whych folkes seene that her proper wille ne sent hem to that one, ne to that other. That is to saine, neither to good ne harme, but constraineth hem certaine necessity of thyngs to commen, then ne shullen there neuer been, ne neuer weren vice ne vertue, but it shullen rather there be confusion of al deserts, medled without discretiō. And yet there followeth another inconuenient, of the whych there ne may be thought no more felonous, ne more wicked,

and that is thus, ꝑ so as the ordre of thynges is ꝑied, and commeth of the puruciaunce of God, ne that nothing nis lefull, to the counsailes of mankinde, as who saieth, that men haue no power to doen nothyng, ne will nothyng, then followeth it that our vices been referred to the maker of al good, as who saith then folowe th it, that God ought to haue the blame of our vices, sith he constraineth vs by necessity to doen vices, then nis there no reason to hopen in God, ne to praien to God, for what shuld any wight hopen to God, or why should he praien to GOD, sith that the ordenaunce of destinie, whiche that ne maye not been enclined, knitteth & streineth all thynges, that men maie desiren. Then should there be doen awaie thilke onely aliaunce, betweene God and man, that is to sain, to hopen and to praien. But by the price of right wisnesse, and of very meknesse, we deseruen the guerdon of Diuine grace, which that is inestimable, that is to saie, that is so great, that it ne may not beene full praised, and this is onely ꝑ maner, that is to saie, hope & praiers. For whych it seemeth that men woll speake wyth God, and by reason of supplication, been coniomed to thilk clearnesse, that nis not approched no rather, or that men seeken it and impetren it. And if mē ne weuenot that hope ne prayers, ne haue no strengths, by ꝑ necessity of things to comen receiued, what thing is there thē, by which we mowen ben coniomed, & cleauen to thilke soueraine prince of thynges. For whych it behoueth by necessity, that ꝑ linage of mankind, as thou song a litle here beforne, bee departed and vniouned from his wele, and failē of his beginning, that is to saine God.

Quenam discors federa rerum, Causa resoluit: Quis tanta deus, &c.

What discordable cause hath torent, and vniouned the byndyng or the aliaunce of thynges, that is to sain, the coniunctions of God, and of man? Which God hath established so great battel, betweene these two sothfast, or very thinges, ꝑ is to sain, betweene the puruciaunce of God, & fre wil, ꝑ they ben singuler, and deuided, ne that they ne wollen not beene medled, ne coupled togeder? But there nis no discord to the very thinges, but they cleauen alway certaine to hemselfe. But ꝑ thought of man confounded & ouerthrowen, by the darke members of the body, ne may not by fire of his darke lookyng, that is to sain, by ꝑ vigor of his inright, while the soule is in the body, knowen the thyn subtel knittings of thynges. But wherefore eschaufeth it so by so great loue, to finden thilk notes of soth ycouered, that is to sain, wherefore eschaufeth the thought of man, by so great desire, to knowe thilke notifications, that been ꝑid vnder the couertures of soth? Wote it ought thilke things, that it anguishous desireth to know? As who sayth nay. For no man ne trauaileth, for to weten things that he wote. And therfore the text saith thus.

But who trauaileth to weten thynges yknow? And if that hee ne knoweth hem not, what seeketh thilk blind thought? What is he that desireth any thynges, of which hee wote right naught? As who saith, who so desireth any thyngs, needs somewhat he knoweth of it, or els he ne coud not desiren it. Or who may folow thyngs, that ne ben not ywist, and though that he seeke the thyngs, where shall hee finde hem. What wight that is all vnconning and ignoraunt, may know that forme, ꝑ is ysound.

But when the soule beholdeth, and seeth the high thought, that is to sain God, then knoweth it togither the som and singularities, that is to sain, the principles, and euerich of hem by himselfe. But now while the soule is hid in the cloud, and in the darknesse of the membres of the body, it ne hath not all forgeten it selfe, but it withholdeth the somme of thyngs, and leeseth the singularities. Than who so ꝑ seeketh sothnesse, he nis neither nother habite, for he wote not all, ne he ne hath not all forgetten, but yet him remembreth the sum of thynges, that he withholdeth and asketh counsaile, and retreateth deplich thyngs yseen beforn, that is to saine, the great summe in his mind, so that hee mow adden the parts, that he hath forgeten to thilk parties, that he hath withholden.

Tum illa. Vetus inquit, hec est de prouidēcia querela; Marquoq; Tullio, &c.

Then saied shee, this is (qd. she) the olde question of the puruciaunce of GOD. And Marcus Tullius, when hee deuided the Deuinations, that is to sayne, in his Bookes that hee wrote of Deuinations, hee mooued greatelie this question, and thou thy selfe haste ysought it moche, and bitterlie and long, but yet ne hath it not beene

determined

determined, ne yspedfermely and diligently of any of you, and the cause of this darkneſſe, and of this difficulty is, for that the mouyng of the reason of mankind, ne may not mouen to, that is to saine, applien or ioynen to the simplicity of the diuine prescience, the which simplicity of the diuine prescience, if that men mighten thinken it in any maner. That is to saine, that if men mighten thinke, and comprehenden the things, that God seeth himself then there dwelled vtterly no doubt, the whichr reason and cause of difficulties, I shall alsay at last to shew and to speden, when I haue first yspended, and answerd to thy reasons, by whych thou art mooued, for I aske why thou weneſt, that thilke reasons of hem that assoilen this question, ne be not speedfull inough ne sufficient, the which solucion or the which reason, for that it demeth, that the prescience is not of necessity of thyngs to come, as who sayth, any other way then thus, but that the like thyngs, that the prescience wote before ne may not vnbetiden, that is to saine, that they moten betide. But then, if that prescience ne putteth none necessity to thyngs to commen, as thou thy self hast confessed it, and beknow a little here before, what cause, or what is it, as who sayth, there may no cause be, by whych that the ends voluntary of thyngs, mighten be constrained to certaine betidyng. For by grace of policion, so that thou may the better vnderstand this that followeth, I suppose that there ne be no prescience: then aske I (qd. she) in as much as apartaineth to that, shoulden then thyngs that commen of fre wil, be constrained to betidyng by necessity? Boecius. Nay (qd. I) Philosop. Then ayenward (qd. she) I suppose that there be prescience, but that it ne putteth no necessity to thyngs, than trow I that thilke same fredome of wil, shall dwellen all hole and absolute, and vnbounden. But thou wilt saine, that albeit so that prescience, nis not cause of the necessity of betiding to things to commen algates yet it is a signe, that the thyngs been to betiden by necessity. By this manner then, although that prescience had neuer be, yet algates or at least way, it is certain thyng, that ends of betidings of things, to comen shouldē be necessary. For euery thyng sheweth and signifieth onely, what the thyng is, but it ne maketh not the thyng that it signifieth. For which it behoueth, first to shew that nothyng ne betideth, that it ne betideth by necessity: so that it may appeare, that the prescience is signe of necessity: or els if there were no necessity, certes thilke prescience ne might not be signe of thyng that nis not. But certes, it is now certain, that the proue of thus isusteined by stedfast reason, ne shall not been ladde, ne proued by signes ne by arguments, taken fro without, but by causes couenable and necessary. But thou maiest saine, how may it bee that the thyngs ne betiden not, that ben purueied to comen? But certes, right as we trowen that the thyngs, which that the purueiaunce wote before, to comen ne be not to betiden. But that ne shold we not demen, but rather although they shall betidē, yet ne haue they no necessity of her kind to betyden: and this maiest thou lightly apperceiuen, by this that I shall saine. For we seen many thynges, when they ben before your eyen, right as mē seen the Carter woorchyng in the tournyng, and in the attēpryng or adzelling of his cartes or chariottes, and by this maner, as who saieth, maiest thou vnderstand of all other werkemenne. Is there then any necessity, as who sayth, in our lookyng, that constraineth or compelleth, any of thilke things to been done so? Boecius. Nay (qd. I) for in idle and in vaine were all the effect of craft, if that all things weren moued, by constraynyng of our eyen, or of our sight. Philosophie. The thinges thē (qd. she) that when that men doen he, ne haue no necessity that men doen hem, eke tho same thynges first or they bee doen, they ben to comen without necessity: for why there been some thynges to betiden, of whych the ends and the betydynges of hem, been absolute and quite of all necessity. For certes, I ne trowe not that any manne would saine this, that the thynges that menne doen now, that they ne were to betiden first, er they were don. And thilke same thyngs, although men hadden wist hem before, yet they haue free betidynges. For right as science of thynges present, ne bryngeth in no necessity, to thynges that menne doen, right so to the prescience of things to commen, ne bringeth in none necessity, to thynges to betiden. But thou maiest sain, that of thilke same it is doubted, as whether that of thilke thyngs, that ne haue none issues and betidynges necessaries, if thereof may been any prescience. For certes, they seemen to discorden, for thou wenest, that if that thynges been seen before, that necessity followeth hem, and if necessity faileth hem, they ne might not beene wist before, and that nothyng may be comprehended by science, but

certaine. And if tho thynges ne haue no certaine betidings, be purueighed as certaine, it should be darkenesse of opinion, not sothfallnesse of science. And thou wenest that it be diuers, fro the holnesse of science, that any man should deeme a thyng, to be otherwise then it is it selfe, and the cause of this errour is, that of all the thinges, ỳ euery wight hath knowe they wene that tho thynges been know, onely by the strength, and by the nature of the thynges, that been wist or knowe, and it is all the contrarie: for all that euer is knowe, it is rather comprehended and know, not after his strength and his nature, but after the facultie, that is to saine, the power and the nature of hem that knowen. And for that this thyng, should now shew by a short ensample the roundnesse of a body, otherwise then the sight of the eye knoweth it, & otherwise then the touchyng. The looking, by casting of his beames, waiteth and seeth from a farre, all the body togither, without mouyng of it self, but the touchyng cleaueth to the round body, and moueth about the enuironnyng, and comprehendeth the parties by roundenesse: and the man hymselfe, otherwise beholdeth him, and otherwaies imagination, & otherwise reason, and otherwise intelligence: For the witte comprehendeth without forth, the figure of the bodie of man, that is vnstablished in the matter subiect. But the imagination comprehendeth onely, the figure without the matter. Reason surmounteth imagination, and comprehendeth by vniuersall looking, the common speache, but the eye of intelligence is higher, for it surmounteth the enuironnyng of the vniuersitie, and looketh outer that, by pure subtilty of thought. The likt same simple forme of man, that is perdurable, in the diuine thought, in which this ought greatlie to be considered, that the hielt strength for to comprehenden thynges, embraseth and contayneth the lower strength, but ỳ lower strength, ne ariseth not in no maner to the higher strength. For witte ne may comprehende nothing out of matter, ne the ymagination ne looketh not the vniuersall species, ne reason ne taketh not the simple forme, so as intelligence taketh it. But intelligence that looketh all abouen, when it hath comprehended the forme, it knoweth and demeth all the thynges, that beene vnder the forme, but she knoweth hem in thilke manner in whych it comprehendeth thilke same simple forme, that he may neuer bee knowen of none of that other, that is to say, to none of tho three forelaied strengthes of the soule, for it knoweth the vniuersity of reason, and the figure of imagination, and the sensible materiall conceiued by witt, ne it ne bleth not ne of reason, ne of imagination, ne of witte without forthe, but it beholdeth all thynges, so as I shall saie, by a stroke of thought fermly, without discourse of collation. Certes, reason when it looketh any thyng vniuersall, it ne bleth not of imagination ne witte, and algates yet it comprehendeth the thinges imaginable, and sensible, for reason is she that definisheth the vniuersall of her conceipte, right thus. Man is a reasonable two footed beast, and how so that this knowing is vniuersall, yet nys there no wight, that ne wote well, that a man is a thynge imaginable and sensible, and this same considereth well reason, but that nis not by imagination, nor by witte, but it looketh it by reasonable conception. Also imagination, albe it so, that it taketh of witte the beginnyng, to seen and formen the figures, algates although that witte were not present, yet it enuironneth and comprehendeth all thynges sensible, not by reason sensible of demyng, but by reason imaginatife. Seest thou not then, that all the thyngs in knowing, vsen more of her faculty, or of her power, then they doen of the faculty, or of power of thyngs that beene to knowen. ne that is no wrong, for so as euery iudgemẽt is the deed or doyng of hym that demeth, it behoueth ỳ euery wight performe his werke, and his entencion not of forraine power, but of his proper power.

Quondam porticus attulit. Obscuros nimium senes, &c.

THen the porche, that is to saie, a gate of the toune of Athenes there as Philosophers hadden congregation to dispute, thilke porche brought sometime olde men, full darke in her sentences, that is to saie Philosophers, that highten Stoiciens, that wend that Images and sensibilities, that is to saie, sensible imaginacions, or els imaginations of sensible thinges, were empринted into soules, fro bodies without foorthe, as who saieth, thilke Stoiciens wenden that the soule had bee naked of hymselfe, as a mirrour, or a cleane perohemme, so that all figures muste first comen fro things, fro without into soules, and been empринted into soules, right as we been wont some-

time

tyme by a swift pointel, to fixen letters emprynted in the smothnesse, or in the plainnesse of the table of wax, or in the parchymine, that hath no figure ne note in it. Glose. But now argueth Boece against that opinion, & sayth thus. But if the thryuyng soule ne implieth nothyng, that is to sayne, ne dooeth thyng by his proper mouing, but suffreth and lieth subiect to the figures, and to the notes of bodies without foorth, and yeldeth Images idel, peeld and vaine, in the manner of a mirrour: whence thriueth then, or whence cometh the like knowyng in our soule, that discerneth and beholdeth all thyngs, and whence is the like strength, that beholdeth the singuler things, or els whence is the strength, that deuideth things yknow, & thilke strength that gathered togither things deuided, & strength that choseth the enterchaunged way: for somtyme it heaueth the hedde, that is to say, that it heaueth vp ỹ entẽcio, to right high thyngs, & somtime it discẽdeth into right low things, and when it retourneth into himselfe, it reprouueth and destroyeth the false thyngs, by the true thyngs.

Certes, this strength is cause more efficient and much more mighty, to seen and to knowen thyngs, then thilke cause that suffreth and receiueth the notes and figures, impressed in manner of matter. Algates the passion, that is to say, the sufferaunce or the wit in the quick body, goeth before exiting and mouing the strengths of the thought, right so as whẽ that clearenesse smiteth the yen, and moueth hem to seen, or right so as voice or soun hurleth to the eares, and commoueth hem to herken, then is the strength of the thought mooued & exited, cleapeth forth to semblable mouings, the speces that it hait within it self, and addeth the speces to the notes, and to thyngs withoutforth, and medleth the Images of thyngs withoutforth, to thyngs hid within himselfe.

Quod si in corporibus sentiendis quamuis efficiant instrumenta sensuum, &c.

But what is that in bodies to be feeled, that is to say, in the taking: & in the knowyng of bodily thyngs. And all be it so ỹ the qualities of bodies, that bee obiect fro withoutforthe, mouen and entalenten the instruments of the wits, and all be it so, ỹ the passion of the body, ỹs to saine, the wit, or the sufferaunce, goeth before the strength, or the worchyng corage, the which passion or sufferance, cleapeth forth the deed of the thought in it selfe, and moueth and exciteth in this meane while, the formes that resten within forth, and insensible bodies, as I haue said, our courages nis not taught or emprynted, by passiõ to know these thyngs, but demeth & knoweth of his owne strength, the passion or sufferaunce, subiect to the body: much more then the thyngs ben absolute, and quicke fro all talents, or affections of bodies, as God or his Angels, ne followen not in discerning things obiect fro withoutforth, but they accomplishẽ and speden, the deeds of her thought. By this reason then, there commen many maner of knowyngs, to diuerse and to diffryng substances.

For the wit of the body, the whych wit is naked, & dispoiled of all other knowing, thilke wit commeth to beasts, the which ne mowen not mouen hem selfe here & there, as Oysters and Muskels, and other soch Shelfish of the Sea, that cleauen & been nourished to rocks, but the imaginacion commeth of remuable beasts, that semen to haue talent to flien, or to destren any thyng: But reason is al oncly the image of mankind, right as intelligence is aloncly the Diuine nature, of which it followeth, that thilke knowyng is more worth thẽ is either, sens it knoweth by his proper nature, not only his subiect, as who saieth, it ne knoweth not aloncly, that appertaineth properly to his knowyng, but it knoweth ỹ subiects of all other knowings. But how shall it than be, if that wit and imagination, striuen ayen reasonyng, and saine that of thilke vniuersal thing, that reason weneth to seen, that it nis right naught, for wit and imagination sain, that that is sensible or imaginable, it ne may not been vniuersall.

Then is there either the iudgement of reason sooth, ne that there nis nothyng sensible, or els for that reason wote well, that many things been subiect to wit, and to imaginacion: then is the conception of reason vaine and false, which that looketh and comprehendeth that that is sensible and singuler, as vniuersall. And if that the reason would answere ayenst these twoo, that is to say, to witte and imaginacion, and say that soothly she her self, that is to sain reason, loketh and comprehendeth by reason of vniuersality, both that that is sensible, and that that is imaginable, and thilke twoo, that is to saine, witte and imagi-

nacion, ne mowen not stretchen hem selfe, to the knowynge of vniuersalitie, for that the knowyng of hem ne may not exceden, ne surmounten the bodily figures. Certes, of the knowyng of things, men oughten rather yeuen more credence, to the more stedfast, and to the more perfite iudgement in this manner striuyng, then we that haue strength of reasoning, and of imagination, and of wit, that is to say, by reason and by imagination, wee would rather praise the cause of reason, as who sayth, then the cause of wit, and of ymaginacion. Semblable thing is it, that the reason of mankind ne weneth not, that the Diuine intelligence, beholdeth or knoweth thynges to come, but right as the reason of mankinde knoweth hem: For thou arguisie thus, that if that it ne seeme not to men, that some thynges haue certaine betidyngs, they ne may not be wist, before certainely to betiden, and then is there no prescience of thilke thynges, and if we trow, that prescience bee in these thynges, then is there nothyng, that betideth by necessity. But if we might haue the iudgement of the diuine thought, as wee been partenerys of reason, right so as we haue deemed that it behoueth by imagination and wit, and beneath reason, right so would wee deemen, that it were rightfull thyng, that mannes reason ought to submitte it selfe, to be beneath the diuine thought, for which if wee may, as who saieth, that if wee may, I counsaile, that we enhaunce vs in the height of thilke soueraine intelligence, for there shall reason well seene that, that it ne may not behold in it selfe, & certes, that is thus, in what manner the prescience of God, seeth all things and diffiniseth, although they haue no certaine betidyngs: ne this is none opinion, but rather the simplicity of the soueraine science that is not shet within no maner of bounds.

Quam varijs terras animalia permeant figuris. Namq; alia extento sunt corpore, &c.

The beasts passen by the yearthes, by full diuers figures, for some of hem haue her bodies straught, and crepen in the dust, & drawn after hem a trace, or a forough continued, that is to say, as Neders & snailes: & other bestes, by the wandring lightnes of her wings, beate the winds, & ouerswimme the spaces of the long aire, by most flying. And other beastes gladden hemselfe, to digge in her traces, or her steppes in the yearth, with her going, or with her feet, and to gone either by the greene fieldes, or els to walken vnder the woodes. And all be it so that thou seest, that they discorden by diuers forms, algates her faces enclined, betoken her dull wits: only the linage of man heaueth highest his hie hedde, and standeth light with his vpright body, and beholdeth the yearthy vnder him. And but if thou yeartily manne waxest euill out of thy wit, this figure amonesteth thee that art set the heauen with thy right visage, and hast arcised thy forhedde, to bearen vp on high thy courage, so that thy thought ne be not heauied, ne put low vnder foot, sith that the body is so high areised.

Quoniam igitur vti paulo ante monstratum est, omne quod scitur, &c.

Therfore the, as I haue shewed a litle here before that al thing that is wist, nis not knowē by his nature proper, but by the nature of hem that comprehenden it. Let vs loken now, in as much as it is leful to vs. as who saith, let vs loke now as we may. which that is the estate of the diuine substance, so that we may well know eke what his science is. The cōmon iudgemēt of al creatures reasonable, then is, that God is eterne. Let vs consider then, what is eternity, for certes, that shal shewē vs togider, the diuine nature, and the diuine science. Eternity then is perfit possession, and altogether of life interminable, and that sheweth the more clerely, by the comparison or collacion of temporal things.

For all thyng that liueth in tyme it is present, and procedeth fro preteritees into futures, that is to sain, from tyme passed, into tyme comming: ne there nis nothing established in tyme, that may embracen togither all the space of this life, for certes, yet ne hath it not taken the tyme of to morow, and it hath lost that of yester day. And certes, in the life of this day, ye ne liuen no more, but right as in this mouable, & transitory moment. Then thilke thyng that suffereth temporall condicion, all though that it neuer began to be, ne though it neuer ceasse to be (as Aristotles demed of the world) and although the life of it be stretched with infinite of tyme, yet algates nis it no such thyng, as men might not trowē by right that it is eterne. For although that it compreheude, and embrace the space of the life infinite

finite

mute, yet algates ne embraceth it not the space of the life all togither, for it ne hath not the futures that be not yet: Ne it ne hathe no lenger the preterities that beene done or passed. But thilke thing than, that hath and comprehendeth togider all the plentie of the life interminable, to whome there ne fayleth nought of the future, and to whome ther nys nought of the preterite escaped or passed, thilke same is ywitnessed and proued by right to ben eterne. And it behoueth by necessitie that thilke thinge be alwaye present to hym selfe, and competent as who sayeth, alway present to him selfe, and so mightie, that all be righte at his plesaunce, and that he haue all present the infinite of the mouable tyme. Wherefore some men trowen wrongfully, that whan they heren that it seemed to Plato, that this world had neuer beginninge of time, that it neuer shall haue fayling: they wene in thilke manner, that this worlde be maked eterne, with his maker, as who sayeth, they wene that this worlde and God be maked togither eterne. And that is a wrongfull weming, for other thing it is to be ladde by the life interminable, as Plato granted to the worlde, and other thing it is to embrace togither, all the presence of the like that is interminable, which thinge is clere and manifest to the dyuine thought. Ne it ne shoulde not seme to vs that God is elder than things that been maked by quantitie of time, but rather by ꝑ prosperitie of his simple nature. For this yike infinite mouinges of temporall thinges, foloweth this presentarie estate of this like immouable, and so as it ne may not counterfeten ne faine it, ne be euenlike to it for the immobilitie, that is to say, that is in the eternitie of God, it falleth and falleth in to mouing fro the simplicitie of the presence of God, and discreaseth in the infinite quantitie of future and preterite. And so as it may not haue togider all the plentie of the like, algates yet for as much as it ceaseth neuer, for to ben in some manner, yet it seemeth somedele to vs, that it foloweth and resembleth thilke thinge, that it ne may not attaine to ne fulfillen, and byndeth it selfe to some maner presence of this littel moment: the which presence of this little and swift moment for that it beareth a maner ymage of likenesse of the aye dwelling of God: it graunteth to such maner thinges, as it betideth to ꝑ it semeth hem as these things haue been, and been. And for that the presence of such little moment ne may not dwell, therfore it raunshed and toke the infinite wai of time, that is to saye, by successions, and by this manner it is done, for that it should continue the life in goyng, of the which lyfe ne might not enbrace the plenty of dwelling. And for thy if we wollen put worthy names to thynges that follower Plato, let vs say than soothly, that God is eterne, and that the worlde is perpetuall. Than sith euery iudgement knoweth and comprehendeth by his owne nature, thynges that been subiectt vnto hym, there is to God alwaies an eterne and a presentarie estate. And the sciencе of hym that ouerpasseth al temporal moment, dwellith in simplicity of his presence, and embraceth and considereth all the infinite spaces of times preteriteres, and of times futures. And looketh in his simple knowing, al thynges of preterite, right as they were done presently right now. If thou wolt than thynken and aduise the prescience, by whych it knowith all thyngs, thou ne shalt not deme it as prescience of thynges to comen, but thou shalt demen more rightfully that is science of presence or of instaunce that neuer ne faileth, for whyche it nis not yclepped prouidence, but it should rather ben clepped purueiance, which is stablished full ferre fro right low thyngs, and beholdeth from a ferre all thyngs, right as it were fro the hye hyght of thyngs. Why askest thou than, or why disputest thou than that thilke thyng ben dorn by necessitie, whiche that been yseene and yknowen by the diuine sight, syth that forsooth men ne maken nat thilke thynges necessary, whych that they sene ben posed in her sight: for addeth thy beholding any necessity, to thilke thynges whiche thou beholdest present? B. Nay qd. I. Certes qd. (he) than, if men mighten maken any digne comparison or collacion of the presence diuine, and of the presence of mankind, right so as ye seene some thinges in this temporal presence, right so seeth God all thing by his eterne presence. Wherfore this diuine prescience ne changeth not the nature of the property of thinges, but beholdeth soth thynges present to him warde, as they shulden betiden to you ward in tyme to commen. Ne it ne confoundeth not the iudgement of thynges, but by one syght of his thought he knowith the thinges to comen, as wel necessary as not necessary. Right so whan ye seene togither a man walke on the earth, and the sonne arisen in the heuen, al be it so that ye sene al togither that one and that other: yet neuertheles ye de-

men and discernen, that that one is voluntarie, and that other is necessary: Right so than the deuine loking, beholding all thyngs vnder him, ne troubleth not ỳ qualitie of things that ben certainly present to him warde, but as to the condition of time, forsoth they ben future, for which it followeth that this nys none opinion, but rather a stedfast knowinge ystrengthed by sothfastnesse, that whan that God knoweth any thing to be, he ne wnwote not that thilke thing wanteth necessity to be, this is to sain, that when that God knoweth any thing to betide, he wote well that it ne hath no necessitie to betide.

And if thou seest here that thilke thing that God seeth to betide, it ne mai not vnbetide, as who saieth it mote betyde, and thilke thinge that ne may not vnbetide, it mote betiden by necessitie, & that thou streine me to this name of the necessitie. Certes I will well confessen and beknowen a thing of full sadde trouthe, but vnneth shall there any wight mow seene it or come thereto, but if that he be beholder of the diuine thought, for I will answere the thus, that thilke thinge that is future when it is referred to the diuine knowing than it is necessarie. But certes, when it is vnderstanden in his owne kinde, men seene it vtterly fre and absolute from all necessitie. For certes there ben two maners of necessities, that one necessitie is simple, as thus, that it behoueth by necessitie that al men be mortal or deadly. Another necessitie is conditionell, as thus, if thou wost that a man walketh, it behoueth by necessitie that he walke, thilk thinge than that any wight hath yknowe to be, it ne may not be none otherwise than he knoweth it to be. But this condicion ne draweth not with her thilke necessitie simple, for certes this necessitie condicionell, the proper nature of it ne maketh it not, but the adiection of the condicion maketh it. For no necessitie ne constrayneth a man to gon, ỳ goeth by his proper wil, albeit so ỳ when he goeth, that it is necessary that he goeth. Right on this same manner than, if that the purueiance of God seeth any thing present, than mote thilke thing been by necessitie, although that it ne haue no necessitie of his owne nature. But certes the futures that betyden by fredom of arbytrie, god seeth hem altogether present. These things than if they been referred to the diuine sight, than beene they maked necessarie by the condicion of the diuine knowing. But certes if thilke thinges beene considered by hem selfe, they been absolute of necessitie, and ne forleten not, ne cessen not of the libertie of her own nature. Than certes, without doubte all the things shullen beene doone which that GOD wote before ne that they been to comen and betiden of fre arbitrie, or of free will, that al be it so that they betiden yet algates ne lese they not her proper nature in being, by the whiche firste or they weren done, they hadden power not to haue betide.

Boecius. What is this to saine than (qd I) that things ne be not necessary by her proper nature, so that they commen in all manners in the likenes of necessitie, by condicion of the diuine science? Philosophie. This is the difference (qd she) that those things which that I purposed thee a litle here before ne, that is to sain, Sunne arising, and the man walking, that therewhyles that thilke thinges ben done, they ne might not ben vndone. Natheles that one of hem or it was done, it behoueth by necessitie that it was done, but not that other. Right so it is here that the things which that God hath present, withouten dout they shullen ben, but some of hem discendeth of the nature of things, as the Sunne arisinge, and some discendeth of the power of the doers, as the manne walkinge. Boecius. Then saide I, no wrong, that if these thinges bee referred to the diuine knowing, than been they necessarie, and if they been considered by hem selfe, than been they absolute from the bond of necessitie. Right so as all things that appeareth or sheweth to the wittes, if thou referre hem to reason it is vniuersall, and if thou looke it or referre it to it selfe, than is it singuler. But nowe if thou sayest thus, that if that it be in my power to changen my purpose, than shall I voiden the purueyaunce of God, whan peraventure, I shall haue chaunged the thinges whiche that he knoweth before ne.

Philosophie. Then shal I answeren thee thus: Certes thou maiest well chaunge thy purpose but for as much as the present sothnesse of the diuine purueiance beholdeth that thou maist chaunge thy purpose, and whether thou change it or no, and whiderwarde that thou tourne it, thou ne maist not eschue the diuine prescience, right so thou ne mayest not flie the sight of the present eye, although that thou tourne thy selfe by thy free will into diuers actions. But thou maiest saine ayen to this, thus: How shall it than be, shal not ỳ diuine science ben chaunged by my disposi-

cion,

tion, whan that I will one thing nowe, and now another thing. And thilke prescience ne semeth it not to enterchange stoundes of knowing, as who saith, ne shal it not semen to vs that the diuine prescience interchaungeth his diuers stoundes of knowing, so that it knowe sometime on thing, and sometime it knoweth the contrarie of that thing. Philo. No forsoth (qd she) for the deuine sight renneth before and seeth all the futures, and clepeth hem ayen, and retourneth hem to the proper prescience of his proper knowing, ne he enterchangeth not, so as thou weenest ỹ stoundes of his foreknowing, as now this, now that: but he dwelling aye cometh before, and embraseth at o stroke al the mutations. And this prescience to comprehenden and to seene all things, God ne hath not taken it of the betydings of thinges to comen but of his proper simplicitie. And hereby is assoiled thilke things that thou puttest a little here before, that is to saine, that it is vnworthy thinge to saine, that our futures yeuen cause of the prescience of God. For certes strength of the diuine science, which that embraseth al thinges by his presentary knowing, establisheth maner to al things, and it ne oweth not to latter thinges. And sith that these things been thus, that is to saine, that necessitie is not in things by the diuine prescience, than is there freedome of arbitrie that dwelleth whole and vnwemmed to mortal men, ne the lawes ne purposen not wicked medes, and paines to the willings of men, that been vnbounden and quite of all necessitie: And God beholder and forewetere of all things dwelleth aboue, and the present eternitie of sight, renneth alway with the diuers qualitie of our deedes, dispensing or ordening medes to good men, and torments to wicked men. Ne in ydle ne in vaine ne become there not put in God hope and prayers, that ne mowen not ben vnspedefull, ne without effect, whan they ben rightfull.

Withstand than and eschew thou vyces, worshippe and loue thou vertues, areyse thy courage to rightfull hopes, yeld thou humble prayers and high. Great necessitie of prowes and of vertue, is encharged and commaunded to you if ye nil not dissimulen, sith that ye wot chen and done, that is to saine, your deedes & your workes before the eyen of the Iudge, that seeth and also that demeth all thinges.

Deo gracias.

Thus endeth the booke of Boecius of the consolation of Philosophie.

The dreame of Chaucer.

I Haue greate wonder by this light
Howe I liue, for daye ne night
I may not sleepe, welny nought
I haue so manye an ydle thought
Purely for defaut of slepe
That by my trouth, I take no kepe
Of nothing, how it commeth or gothe
Ne me nys nothing lefe nor lothe
All is yliche good to me
Joy or sorowe, where so it be
For I haue feeling in nothing
But as it were a maseled thing
Alday in point to fall adoun
For sorowfull ymagination
Is alway wholy in my minde

And well ye wote, against kinde
It were to liuen in this wise
For nature would not suffise
To none earthly creature
Not long time to endure
Without slepe, and be in sorowe
And I ne may, ne night ne morowe
Slepe, and this melancolye
And dredе I haue for to dye
Defaut of slepe and heauinesse
Hath slaine my spirite of quickenesse
That I haue lost all lustihead
Such fantasies ben in mine head
So I not what is best to do
But men might aske me why so
I may not slepe, and what me is

But natheles, who asketh his
Leseth his asking truely
My seluen cannot tel why
The soth, but truely as I gesse
I holde it be a sickenesse
That I haue suffred this eyght yere
And yet my boote is neuer the nere
For there is Phisician but one
That may me heale, but that is done
Passe we ouer vntil eft
That wil not be, mote nedes be left
Our first mater is good to kepe

So when I sawe I might not slepe
Til now late, this other night
Upon my bedde I sate vpright
And bade one reche me a booke

Ano-

A Romaunce, and he it me toke
To rede, and dryue the night away
For me thought it better play
Than play either at Chesse or Tables
And in thys boke were wrytten fables
That Clerkes had in old time
And other poetes, put in rime
To rede, and for to be in minde
Whyle men loued the lawe of kinde
This booke ne speake, but of such things
Of Queenes lines, and of Kings
And many other things smale
Among al this I fond a tale
That me thought a wonder thing.
This was the tale: There was a king
That hight Seies, and had a wife
The best that might beare life
And this Queene hight Alcione
So it befill, that after sone
This king wol wenden ouer see
To tellen shortly, whan that he
Was in the see, thus in this wise
Such a tempest gan to rysie
That brake her maste, and made it fall
And cleft her ship, and dreint hem all
That neuer was founde, as it telles
Borde ne man, ne nothing elles
Right thus this king Seyes lost his life
Now for to speake of Alcione his wife
This ladie that was lefte at home
Hath wonder, that the king ne come
Home, for it was a long terme
Anon her herte began to yerne
And for that her thought euermo
It was not wele, her thought so
She longed so after the king
That certes it were a pitous thing
To tel her heerely sorowfull life
That she had, this noble wife
For him alas, she loued alderbest
Anon she sent both East and West
To seke him, but they found nought.
Alas (qd she) that I was wrought
And where my lord my loue be dred
Certes I nyll neuer eat bread
I make a vowe to my God here
But I mowe of my lorde here
Such sorowe this lady to her toke
That truely, I that made this boke
Had such pitie, and such routhe
To rede her sorowe, that by my trouth
I forgate the worse all the morowe
After to thinken on her sorowe
So whan this lady could here no worde
That no man might finde her lorde
Ful oft she swowned, and saide alas
For sorow, ful nigh woode she was
Ne she coude no rede but one
But downe on knees she sate anon
And wept, that pitie was to here
A mercy swete lady dere
(Qd she) to Juno her goddesse
Helpe me out of this distresse
And yeue me grace my lorde to see
Soone, or wete where so he be
Or how he fareth, or in what wise
And I shall make you sacrifice
And wholly yours become I shall
With good wil, body, hart and all
And but thou wolt this lady swete
Send me grace to slepe and mete
In my slepe some certain sweuen
Where through that I may knowe euen
Whether my lord be quick or dead
With that word she hing downe the head
And fell in a swoune, as colde as stone
Her women caught her vp anone
And brought her in bed all naked
And she forweped and forwaked
Was wery, and thus the dead slepe
Fel on her, or she toke kepe
Through Juno, that had herde her boone
That made her to slepe soone
For as she praide, right so was don
In dede, for Juno right anon
Called thus her messangere
To do her eraund, and he come nere
What he was come, she bad him thus
Go bet (qd Juno) to Morpheus
Thou knowest him well, the god of slepe
Now understand wel, and take kepe
Say thus on my halfe, that he
Go fast into the great see
And bid him that on all thing
He take vp Seies body the king
That lieth full pale, and nothing rody
Bin him creepe into the body
And do it gone to Alcione
The Queene, there she lieth alone
And shewe her shortly it is no nay
How it was dreint this other day
And do the body speak right so
Right as it was wonned to do
The whyles that it was alyue
Go now fast, and hye thee blyue.
This messanger took leue and went
Upon his way, and neuer he stent
Til he came to the darke valey
That stant betwene rockes twey
There neuer yet grewe corne ne gras

Ne tree, ne naught that ought was
Beest ne man, ne nought els
Saue that there were a fewe welles
Came running fro the cliffes adowne
That made a dedly sleping sowne
And rennen downe right by a caue
That was vnder a rocke ygraue
Amyd the valey wonder depe
There these goddes lay a slepe
Morpheus and Sclympasteyne
That was the god of slepes heire
That slept, and did none other werke.
This caue was also as derke
As hel pitte, ouer all about
They had good leyser for to route
To hye who might slepe best
Some hing her chinne vpon her brest
And slept vpright her hed yhed
And some lay naked in her bed
And slept whiles their daies last
This messanger come renning fast
And cryed ho ho, awake anone
It was for naught, there herde him none
Awake (qd he) who lyeth there
And blewe his horne right in her eare
And cried awaketh wonder hie.
This god of slepe, with his one eye
Cast vp, and asked who clepeth there
It am I qd this messangere)
Juno bad thou shouldest gone
And tolde him what he should done
As I haue tolde you here before
It is no neede reherse it more
And went his way whan he had saide
Anone this god of slepe abraide
Out of his slepe and gan to go
And did as he had bidde him do
Toke vp the dead body sone
And bare it forth to Alcione
His wife the Queene, there as she lay
Right euen a quarter before day
And stode right at her beddes fete
And called her right as she hete
By name, and said: My swete wife
Awake, let be your sorowfull life
For in your sorow, there lyeth no rede
For certes swete loue, I am but dede
Ye shal me neuer on lyue ysee
But good swete heart that ye
Bury my body, for such a tyde
Ye mow it finde, the sea beside
And farewel swete, my worldes blisse
I pray god your sorowe lisse
To litle while our blisse lasteth
With that her eyen vp she casteth
And sawe nought, alas (qd she) for sorowe
And died within the thirde morowe
But what she said more in that swowe
I may not tell you as nowe
It were to long for to dwell
My first matter I will you tell
Wherefore I haue tolde this thing
Of Alcione, and Seyes the king
For thus much dare I say well
I had be dolven euerydele
And deed, right through default of slepe
If I ne had red, and take kepe
Of this tale next before
And I will tell you wherefore
For I ne might for bote ne bale
Slepe, or I had red this tale
Of this dreint Seies the king
And of the goddes of sleping.
Whan I had red this tale wele
And ouerloked it everydele
Me thought wonder, if it were so
For I had neuer herde speake or tho
Of no goddes that coude make
Men to slepe ne for to wake
And I ne knewe neuer God but one
And in my game I said anone
And yet me list, right euil to pley
Rather than that I should dey
Through defaute of sleping thus
I would giue thilke Morpheus
Or that goddesse dame Juno
Or some wight els, I me couth who
To make me slepe and haue some rest
I will giue him the aither best
Yefte, that euer he abode his lyue
And here onward, right now as blyue
If he woll make me slepe a lite
Of downe of pure Doues white
I wol yeue him a fether bed
Raied with gold, and right wel cled
In fine blacke Sattin doutremere
And many a pillow, and euery bere
Of cloth of raines to slepe on soft
Him thare not neede to turne oft
And I woll yeue him all that falles
To his chamber and to his halles
I wol do paint with pure golde
And tapite hem full manyfolde
Of one sute this shal he haue
If I wist where were his caue
If he can make me slepe sone
As did the goddesse, Queene Alcione
And thus this ylke god Morpheus
May winne of me mo fees thus
Than euer he wanne, and to Juno

That

That is his goodnesse, I shal so do
I trowe that she shal hold her paide.
I had vnneth that word ysaide
Right thus as I haue told you
That sodeinly I nyst howe
Such a luste anon me tooke
To slepe, that right vpon my booke
I fel a slepe, and therwith euen
Me met so inly such a sweuen
So wonderfull, that neuer yet
I trowe no man had the wit
To con well my sweuen rede
No not Joseph without drede
Of Egypt, he that rad so
The king metinge Pharao
No more than coude the lest of vs
Ne nat scarsly Macrobeus
He that wrote all the auision
That he met king Scipion
The noble man the African
Such mcruailes forruned than
I trowe a rede my dremes euen
Lo thus it was, this was my sweuen.
Me thought thus, that it was May
And in the dawning there I lay
Me met thus in my bed al naked
And loked forthe, for I was waked
With small foules a great hepe
That had affraied me out of my slepe
Through noise, and swetnesse of her song
And as me met, they sate among
Upon my chamber rofe without
Upon the tyles ouer all about
And eueriche song in his wise
The moste solempne seruise
Be note, that euer man I trowe
Had herde, for some of hem song lowe
Some high, and all of one accord
To tell shortly at o worde
Was neuer herde so swete steuen
But it had be a thing of heuen
So merie a sowne, so swete entunes
That certes for the towne of Tewnes
I nolde, but I had herde hem sing
For all my chamber gan to ring
Through singing of her ermony
For instrument, nor melody
Was no where herde, yet halfe so swete
Nor of acorde halfe so mete
For there was none of hem that fained
To sing, for eche of hem him pained
To finde out many crafti notes
They ne spared nat her throtes
And soth to saine, my chamber was
Ful wel depainted, and with glas
Were al the windowes, wel yglased
Full clere, and not an hole ypraised
That to beholde it was great ioy
For wholly all the storie of Troy
Was in the glasing ywrought thus
Of Hector, and of king Priamus
Of Achilles, and of king Lamedon
And eke of Medea, and of Jason
Of Paris, Heleine, and of Lauine
And all the walles with colours fine
Were paynte, both text and glose
And all the Romaunt of the rose
My wyndowes weren shit echone
And through the glasse the sunne shone
Upon my bed with bright bemes
With many glad gilden stremes
And eke the welkin was so faire
Blewe, bright, clere was the ayre
And full atempre, for soothe it was
For neither too colde, ne hote it was
Ne in all the welkin was no clowde.
And as I lay thus wonder lowde
Me thought I herde a hunt blowe
Tallay his great horne, and for to knowe
Whether it was clere, or horse of sowne
And I herde going both vp and downe
Men, horse, houndes, and other thing
And all men spake of hunting
How they wold slee the hart with strength
And how the hart had vpon length
So much enbosed, I not now what
Anon right whan that I herde that
How that they would on hunting gone
I was right glad, and vp anone
Toke my horse, and forth I went
Out of chamber, I neuer stent
Til I come to the felde without
There ouertoke I a great rout
Of hunters, and eke of foresters
And many relaies and limers
And hied hem to the forest fast
And I with hem, so at the last
I asked one lad, a lymere
Say felowe, who shal hunt here
(Qd I) and he answered ayen
Sir, the Emperour Octauyen
(Qd he) and is here fast by
A goddes halfe, in good time (qd I)
Go we fast, and gan to ryde
Whan we come to the forest side
Euery man did right soone
As to hunting fel to doone.
The maister hunte, anon fote hote
With his horne blewe three mote
At the vncouplyng of his houndes

within

Within a while, the hart fownd is
Ihalowed, and rechaſed faſt
Long time, and ſo at the laſt
This harte rouſed and ſtale away
Fro all the hounds a pryuie way
The hounds had ouer ſhot him all
And were vpon a default yfall
Therewith the hunt wonder faſt
Blewe a forloyn at the laſte
I was go walked fro my tree
And as I went, there came by me
A whelp that fawned me as I ſtood
That had yſolowed, and could no good
It cam and crept to me as lowe
Right as it had me yknow
Held down his heed, and loyned his eares
And laid all ſmothe downe his heares
I would haue caught it anone
It fled, and was fro me gone
As I him ſolowed, and it forth went
Down ne by a flourie greene it went
Ful thick of graſſe, ful ſoft and ſwete
With floures fele fare vnder fete
And little vſed, it ſemed thus
For both Flora and Zepherus
They two, that make floures grow
Had made her dwelling there I trowe
For it was on to beholde
As though the earth enuy wolde
To be gayer than the heauen
To haue no floures ſuch ſeuen
As in the welken ſtarres be
It had forget the pouertie
Had winter, through his colde morowes
That made it ſuffre, and his ſorowes
All was forgetten, and that was ſene
For all the wood was worden grene
Swetneſſe of dewe, had made it waxe
It is no nede eke for to axe
Where there were many grene greues
Of thick of trees, ſo full of leues
And euery tree ſtood by him ſelue
Fro other, wel ten foote or twelue
So great trees, ſo huge of ſtrength
Of fourty or fifty fedom length
Clean without bow or ſtick
With croppes broad and eke as thick
They were not an inch a ſonder
That it was ſhade ouer all vnder
And many an hart, and many an hinde
Was both before me and behind
Of fawnes, ſowers, buckes, does
Was full the wodde, and many roes
And many ſquirils, that ſete
Ful high vpon the trees and ete
And in her maner made feaſtes
Shortly, it was ſo full of beaſtes
That though Argus the noble countour
Sate to reken in his countour
And recken with his fingers ten
For by tho figures ne we all ken
If they be crafty, reken and nombre
And tel of euery thing the nombre
Yet ſhould he faile to reken euen
The wonders me met in my ſweuen
But forth I romed, right wonder faſt
Down the wood, ſo at the laſt
I was ware of a man in black
That ſate, and had yturned his back
To an ooke, an huge tree
Lord thought I, who may that be
What eyleth him to ſitten here
Anon right, I went nere
Than found I ſitt, euen vpright
A wonder welfaring knight
By the maner me thought ſo
Of good moſel, and right young therto
Of the age of foure and twenty yere
Upon his berde, but litle here
And he was clothed all in black
I ſtalked euen vnto his backe
And there I ſtood, as ſtill as ought
The ſooth to ſay, he ſaw me nought
For why he hing his head adown
And with a dedly ſorowfull ſowne
He made of rime, ten verſes or twelue
Of a complaint to him ſelue
The moſt pitie, the moſt routh
That euer I herd, for by trouth
It was great wonder that nature
Might ſuffer any creature
To haue ſuch ſorow, and he not dead
Full pitous pale, and nothing red
He ſaid a lay, a maner ſong
Without note, without long
And was this, for ful wel I can
Reherſe it, right thus it began.
I haue of ſorowe ſo great wone
That ioy get I neuer none
Now that I ſee my lady bright
Which I haue loued with all my might
Is fro me dead, and is agone
And thus in ſorowe, left me alone
Alas death, what eyleth thee
That thou noldeſt haue taken me
Whan that thou toke my lady ſwete
Of all goodnes, ſhe had none mete
That was ſo faire, ſo freſh, ſo free
So good, that men may well ſee.
Whan he had made thus his complaint

His

His sorowful hert, gan fast faint
And his spirites waxen dede
The blood was fledde, for pure drede
Downe to his hart, to maken him warme
For wel it feeled the hart had harme
To wete eke, why it was adradde
By kinde, and for to make it gladde
For it is membre principall
Of the body, and that made all
His hewe chaunge, and wexe grene
And pale, for there no blood is sene
In no maner lymme of his.
Anon therwith, whan I saw this
He farde thus pucl, there he sete
I went and stode right at his fete
And grette him, but he spake nought
But argued with his owne thought
And in his wit disputed fast
Why, and how his life might last
Him thought his sorowes were so smart
And lay so colde upon his hart.
So through his sorowe, and holy thought
Made him that he herd me nought
For he had welnye lost his minde
Though Pan, that men clepeth god of kinde
Were for his sorowes neuer so wrothe
But at the last, to saine right sothe
He was ware of me how I stoode
Before him, and did off my hoode
And had ygret him, as I best coude
Debonairly, and nothing loude
He saied, I pray thee be not wrothe
I herde thee not, to saine the sothe
Ne I saw thee not, sir truely
Ah good sir, no force (qd I)
I am right sorie, if I haue ought
Disroubled you, out of your thought
Forgeue me, if I haue mille take
Yes, thamendes is light to make
(qd he) for there lyeth none thereto
There is nothing misdaide, nor do
Lo how goodly spake this knight
As it had be another wight
And made it neither tough ne queint
And I sawe that, and gan me acqueint
With him, and founde him so tretable
Right wonder skilful and reasonable
As me thought, for all his bale
Anon right, I gan finde a tale
To him, to loke where I might ought
Haue more knowleging of his thought
Sir (qd I) this game is done
I holde that this hart be gone
These hunts can him no where see.
I do no force thereof (qd he)
My thought is thereon neuer adele
By our lord (qd I) I trowe you wele
Right so me thinketh by your there
But sir, o thing woll ye here
Me thinketh in great sorowe I you see
But certes sir, if that ye
Would aught discure me your wo
I would, as wis God help me so
Amende it, if I can or may
Ye mowe prove it by assay
For by my trouth, to make you hole
I woll do all my power whole
And telleth me, of your sorowes smart
Paraunter it may ease your hart
That seemeth ful sicke under your side.
With that he loked on me aside
As who saith nay, that wyl not be.
Grauntmercy good frend (qd he)
I thanke thee, that thou wouldest so
But it may neuer the rather be do
No man may my sorowe glade
That maketh my hewe to fall and fade
And hath mine understanding lorne
That me is wo, that I was borne
May nought make my sorowes slyde
Not al the remedies of Ouide
Ne Orpheus, god of melodie
Ne Dedalus, with his playes slye
Ne heale me, may no Phisicien
Nought Ipocras, ne Galien
Me is wo, that I liue houres twelue
But who so woll assaye hem selue
Whether his hart can haue pitie
Of any sorower, let him see me
I wretch, that death hath made all naked
Of all the bliss that euer was maked
I wroth, werst of all wights
That hate my daies, and my nights
My life, my lustes, be me loth
For all fare and I be wroth
The pure death is so ful my foe
That I wold die, it wil not soe
For whan I folow it, it wil flie
I wold haue him, it nil not me
This is paine without reed
Alway dying and be not deed
That Tesyphus that lieth in hell
May not of more sorow tell
And who so wist all, by my trouth
My sorow, but he had routh
And pite of my sorowes smert
That man hath a frendly hert
For who so seeth me first on morow
May sayne he hath mette with sorow
For I am sorow, and sorow is I

Alas,

Alas, and I wil tel the why
My sorow is tourned to plaining
And all my laughter to weping
My glad thoughts, to heuinesse
In trauaile is mine idlenesse
And eke my rest, my wele is wo
My good is harme, and euermo
In wrath is tourned my playing
And my delite into sorowing
Mine heale is turned into sicknesse
In drede is all my sikernesse
To derke is turned all my light
My witte is foly, my day is night
My loue is hate, my slepe waking
My mirth and meles, is fasting
My countenaunce is nicete
And all abawed, where so I be
My peace pleding, and in werre
Alas, how might I fare werre
My boldnesse is turned to shame
For false fortune, hath plaied a game
At the chesse with me, alas the while
The traitoresse false and ful of gile
That all behoteth, and nothing halt
She goeth vpright, and yet she halt
That baggeth foule, and loketh faire
The dispitous debonaire
That scorneth many a creature
An ydoll of false purtraiture
Is she, for she wol sone wrien
She is the monsters heed ywrien
As filth, ouer strowed with floures
Her most worship and her floures
To lien for that is her nature
Without faith, law, or mesure
She false is, and euer laughing
With one eie, and that other weping
That is brought vp, she set all downe
I liken her to the Scorpiowne
That is a false flatering beest
For with his heed he maketh feest
But all amid his flatering
With his taile he wil sting
And enuenim, and so wil she
She is the enuious charite
That is aie false, and semeth wele
So turneth she her false whele
About, for it is nothing stable
Now by the fire, now at table
Ful many one hath she thus ybrent
She is play of enchauntment
That semeth one, and is not so
The false theefe, what hath she do
Trowest thou, by our lord I wil the say
At the Chesse with me she gan to play
With her false draughts ful diuers
She stale on me, and toke my feers
And whan I saw my feers away
Alas I couth no lenger play
But said, farewel swete ywis
And farewel all that euer there is
Therwith fortune said, checke here
And mate in the mid point of the checkere
With a paune errant, alas
Ful craftier to play she was
Than Athalus that made the game
First of the Chesse, so was his name
But God wold I had ones or twise
Icond, and know the ieoperdise
That coud the Greke Pithagores
I shuld haue plaid the bet at ches
And kept my feers the bet therby
And though wherto, for trewly
I hold that wish not worth a stre
It had be neuer the bet for me
For fortune can so many a wile
There be but few can her begile
And eke she is the lasse to blame
My selfe I would haue do the same
Before God, had I ben as she
She ought the more excused be
For this I say yet more therto
Had I be god, and might haue do
My wil, whan we my feers caught
I would haue draw the same draught
For al so wise, God giue me rest
I dare wel swere, she toke the best
But through that draught I haue lorne
My blisse, alas that I was borne
For euermore I trow trewly
For all my will, my lust holly
Is turne, but ye, what to done
By our Lord, it is to die sone
For nothing I leaue it nought
But liue and die, right in this thought
For there nis planet in firmament
Ne in aire ne in erth none element
That they ne yeue me a yeft echone
Of weping whan I am alone
For whan that I aduise me wele
And bethinke me eueridele
How that there lieth in reckening
In my sorow for nothing
And how there liueth no gladnesse
May gladde me of my distresse
And how I haue lost sufficiaunce
And therto I haue no pleasaunce
Than may I say, I haue right nought
And whan all falleth in my thought
Alas, than am I ouercome,

For that is done, is not come
I haue more sorow than Tantale
And I herd him tel this tale
Thus pitously, as I you tell
Unneth might I lenger dwell
It did mine hert so moch wo
A good sir (qd. I) say nat so
Haue some pite on your nature
That fourmed you to creature
Remembreth you of Socrates
For he ne counteth not thre strees
Of nought that fortune coud do
No (qd. I) I can not so
Why good sir, yes parde (qd. I)
Ne say not so for truely
Though ye had lost the feeres twelue
And ye for sorow murdred your selue
Ye should be dampned in this case
By as good right as Medea was
That slough her children for Jason
And Phillis also, for Demophon
Hing her self, so welaway
For he had broke his terme day
To come to her: Another rage
Had Dido, the quene eke of Carthage
That slough her self, for Encas
Was false, which a foole she was
And Ecquo died, for Narcissus
Nold nat loue her, and right thus
Hath many an other foly done
And for Dalida died Sampsone
That slough himselfe with a pilere
But there is no man aliue here
Wold for his feeres make this wo
Why so (qd. he) it is not so
Thou wotest ful litel what thou menest
I haue lost more than thou wenest
How may that be (qd. I)
Good sir, tel me all holly
In what wise, how, why, and wherfore
That ye haue thus your blisse lore
Blithly (qd. he) come sir doun
I tel the vpon a condicoun
That thou shalt holly with all thy wit
Do thine entent to herken it
Yes sir: Swere thy trouth therto
Gladly do than hold here to
I shal right blithly, so God me saue
Holly with all the witte I haue
Here you as wel as I can
A goddes halfe (qd. he) and began
Sir (qd. he) sith first I couth
Haue any maner witte fro youth
Or kindly understanding
To comprehend in any thing
What loue was, in mine own witt
Dredeleslle I haue euer yet
Be tributary, and pene rent
To loue holly with good entent
And through plesaunce become his thrall
With good wil, body, hert, and all
All this I put in his seruage
As to my lord, and did homage
And ful deuoutly I praid him tho
He should beset mine hert so
That it plesaunce to him were
And worshipp to my lady dere
And this was long, and many a yere
(Er that mine hert was set o where)
That I did thus, and nist why
I trow it came me kindly
Peraunter I was therto most able
As a white wall or a table
For it is redy to catch and take
All men that wil therin make
Whether so men wil portrey or paint
Be the werks neuer so quaint.
And thilke time I fared right so
I was able to haue lerned tho
And to haue cond, as wel or better
Paraunter, either art or letter
But for loue came first in my thought
Therfore I forgate it nought
Ches loue to my first craft
Therfore it is with me laft
For why, I toke it of so yong age
That malice had my corage
Not that time, turned to nothing
Through to mokel knowleging
For that time, youth my maistresse
Gouerned me in idelnesse
For it was in my first youth
And tho ful litel good I couth
For all my werks were flutting
That time, and all my thought varying
All were to me ylich good
That knew I tho, but thus it stode.
It happed that I came on a day
Into a place, there that I say
Trewly the fairest companie
Of ladies, that euer man with eie
Had sene togithers in o place
Shal I clepe it happe, either grace
That brought me there, not but fortune
That is to lien ful comune
The false traitoresse peruerse
God would I could clepe her werse
For now she worcheth me ful wo
And I wol tel sone why so.
Amongs these ladies thus echone

Soth

Soth to saine, I saw one
That was like none of the rout
For I dare swere, without dout
That as the sommers sonne bright
Is fairer, clerer, and hath more light
Than any other planet in heuen
The moone, or the sterres seuen
For all the world so had she
Surmounten hem all of beaute
Of maner, and of comlinesse
Of stature, and of wel set gladnesse
Of goodly heed, and so wel besey
Shortly, what shal I more sey
By god and by his holowes twelue
It was my swete, right all her selue
She had so stedfast countenaunce
So noble port, and maintenaunce
And Loue, that wel hard my bone
Had espied me thus sone
That she ful sone in my thought
As help me God, so was I cought
So sodainly, that I ne toke
No maner counsaile, but at her loke
And at mine hart, for why her eyen
So gladly I trow mine hart seyen
That purely tho, mine owne thought
Said, it were better serue her for nought
Than with another to be wele
And it was soth, for euery dele
I wil anone right tel the why
I saw her daunce so comely
Carol and sing so sweetely
Laugh, and play so womanly
And loke so debonairly
So goodly speke and so frendly
That certes I trow that neuermore
Nas sene so blisful a treasore
For euery heer on her heed
Soth to say it was not reed
Ne neither yelow ne browne it nas
Me thought most like gold it was
And which eyen my lady had
Debonaire, good, glad, and sad
Simple, of good mokel, not to wide
Therto her loke nas not aside
Ne ouerthwart, but beset so wele
It drew and toke vp merydele
All that on her gan behold
Her eyen semed anone she wold
Haue mercy, folly wenden so
But it was neuer the rather do
It nas no counterfeted thing
It was her owne pure loking
That the goddesse dame Nature
Had made hem open by measure
And close, for were she neuer so glad
Her loking was not folish spread
Ne wildly, though that she plaid
But euer me thought her eyen said
By God my wrath is all forgeue
Therwith her list so wel to liue
That dulnesse was of her a dread
She nas to sober ne to glad
In all things more measure
Had neuer I trow creature
But many one with her loke she hert
And that sate her ful litel at hert
For she knew nothing of her thought
But whether she knew, or knew it nought
Algate she ne wrought of hem a stre
To get her loue no nere nas he
That woned at home, than he in Inde
The formest was alway behinde
But good folke ouer all other
She loued, as man may do his brother
Of which loue she was wonder large
In sulful places that bere charge
But which a visage had she therto
Alas my hert is wonder wo
That I ne can discriuen it
Me lacketh both English and wit
For to vndo it at the full
And eke my spirits ben so dull
So great a thing for to deuise
I haue no wit that can suffise
To comprehend her beaute
But thus moch I dare saine that she
Was white, rody fresh and lifely hewed
And euery day her beaute newed
And nigh her face was alderbest
For certes nature had soch lest
To make that faire, that trewly she
Was her chefe patron of beaute
And chefe enlample of all her werke
And mouster, for be it neuer so derke
Me thinketh I see her euer mo
And yet more ouer, though all tho
That euer lued, were now a liue
Ne wold haue found to discriue
In all her face, a wicked signe
For it was sad, simple, and benigne
And soch a goodly swete speech
Had that swete, my liues lech
So frendly, and so wel ygrounded
Upon all reason, so wel yfounded
And so tretable to all good
That I dare swere wel by the rood
Of eloquence was neuer found
So swete a sowning facound
Ne trewer tonged, ne scorned lasse

Ne bet could heale, that by the masse
I durst sweare though the Pope it song
That there was neuer yet through her tong
Man ne woman greatly harmid
As for her, was all harme hid
Ne lasse flatering in her word
That purely her simple record
Was found as trew as any bond
Or trouth, of any mannes hond
Ne chide she could neuer a dele
That knoweth all the world ful wele
But such a fairnesse of a necke
Had that swete, that bone nor brecke
Nas there none seen, that misse satte
It was white, smoth, streight, and pure flatte
Without hole, or canel bone
And by seming, she had none
Her throte, as I haue now memoire
Semed as a round tour of yuoire
Of good greatnesse, and not to grete
And Faire white she hete
That was my ladies name right
She was therto faire and bright
She had not her name wrong
Right faire sholdders, and body long
She had, and armes euer lith
Fattish fleshly, nat great therwith
Right white hands, and nailes rede
Round brests: And of good brede
Her hippes were, a streight flatte backe
I knew on her none other lacke
That all her limmes nere pure sewing
In as ferre as I had knowing
Therto she could so wel play
What that her list, that I dare say
That was like to torch bright
That euery man may take of light
Ynough, and it hath neuer the lesse
Of maner and of comlinesse
Right so fard my lady dere
For euery wight of her manere
Might catch ynough, if that he wold
Yf he had eyen her to behold
For I dare sweare wel, if that she
Had among tenne thousand be
She would haue be at the best
I cheke myrour of all the fest
Though they had stond in a row
To mennes eyen, that could haue know
For where so men had plaid, or waked
Me thought the felowshippe as naked
Without her, that I saw onces
As a crowne without stones
Trewly she was to mine eie
The solein Fenix of Arabie
For there liueth neuer but one
Ne such as she, ne know I none
To speke of goodnesse, trewly she
Had as much debonairte
As euer had Hester in the Bible
And more, if more were possible
And soth to saine, therwithall
She had a witte so generall
So hole enclined to all good
That all her witte was sette by the rood
Without malice, vpon gladnesse
And therto I saw neuer yet a lesse
Harmful, than she was in doing
I say not that she ne hadde knowing
What harme was, or els she
Had could no good, so thinketh me
And trewly, for to speake of trouth
But she had had, it had be routh
Therof she had so moch her dele
And I dare saine, and sweare it wele
That trouth him selfe, ouer all and all
Had chose his maner principall
In her, that was his resting place
Therto she had the most grace
To haue stedfast perseueraunce
And ease attempre gouernaunce
That euer I knew, or wist yet
So pure suffraunt was her wit
And reason gladly she vnderstood
It folowed wel, she could good
She vsed gladly to do wele
These were her maners euerydele
Therwith she loued so wel right
She wrong do would to no wight
No wight might do her no shame
She loued so wel her owne name
Her list to hold no wight in hond
Ne be thou siker, she wold not fond
To hold no wight in balaunce
By halfe word, ne by countenaunce
But if men wold vpon her lie
Ne send men into Walakie
To Pruise, and to Tartarie
To Alisaundry, ne into Turkie
And bidde him fast, anon that he
Go hoodlesse into the dry see
And come home by the Carrenare
And sir, be now right ware
That I may of you here saine
Worshippe, or that ye come againe
She ne vsed no such knackes smale
But therfore that I tel my tale
Right on this saine, I haue said
Was holly all my loue laid
For certes she was that swete wife

My lufficiaunce, my luft, my life
Mine hope mine heale, and all bleſſe
My worlds welfare, and my goddeſſe
And I holly hers, and euery dele
By our lord (qd. I) I trow you wele
Hardly your loue was wel beſet
I not how it might haue do bet
Bet, ne not ſo wel (qd. he)
I trow ſir (qd. I) parde.
Nay leue it wel: Sir ſo do I
I leue you wel, that trewly
You thought that ſhe was the beſt
And to behold, the alderfaireſt
Who ſo had loked her with your eyen
With mine, nay all that her ſeyen
Said and ſwore, it was ſo
And though they ne had, I would tho
Haue loued beſt my lady fre
Though I had had all the beaute
That euer had Alcipiades
And all the ſtrength of Hercules
And thereto had the worthineſſe
Of Aliſaunder, and all the richeſſe
That euer was in Babiloine
In Cartage, or in Macedoine
Or in Rome, or in Ninive
And therto alſo hardy be
As was Hector, ſo haue I ioy
That Achilles ſlough at Troy
And therfore was he ſlaine alſo
In a temple, for both two
Were ſlain, he and Antilegius
And ſo ſaith Dares Fregius
For loue of Polixena
Or ben as wiſe as Minerua
I would euer, without drede
Haue loued her, for I muſt nede
Nede: Nay trewly I gabbe now
Nought nede, and I wol tellen how
For of good wil mine hert it wold
And eke to loue her, I was hold
As for the faireſt and the beſt
She was as good, ſo haue I reſt
As euer was Penelope of Grece
Or as the noble wife Lucrece
That was the beſt, he telleth thus
The Romaine Titus Liuius
She was as good, and nothing like
Though her ſtories be autentike
Algate ſhe was as trew as ſhe
But wherfore that I tel the
Whan I firſt my lady ſey
I was right yong, ſoth to ſey
And ful great nede I had to lerne
Whan mine hert wold yerne
To loue it was a great empriſe
But as my witte would beſt ſuffiſe
After my yong childy wit
Without drede I beſet it
To loue her in my beſt wiſe
To do her worſhip, and the ſeruiſe
That I could tho, by my trouth
Without faining, either flouth
For wonder faine, I wold her ſe
So mokel it amended me
That whan I ſaw her amorow
I was wariſhed of all my ſorow
Of all day after, tei it were eue
Me thought nothing might me greue
Were my ſorows neuer ſo ſmert
And yet ſhe ſit ſo in mine hert
That by my trouth, I nold nought
For all this world, out of my thought
Leaue my lady, no trewly
Now by my trouth ſir (qd. I)
Me thinketh ye haue ſoch a chaunce
As ſhrift, without repentaunce
Repentaunce, nay fie (qd. he)
Shuld I now repent me
To loue, nay certes than were I wel
Worſe than was Achitofel
Or Antenor, ſo haue I ioy
The traitour that betraied Troy
Or the falſe Genellon
He that purchaſed the traiſon
Of Rouland, and of Oliuere
Nay, while I am a liue here
I nil forfet her neuer mo
Now good ſir (qd. I) tho
Ye haue wel told me here before
It is no nede to reherſe it more
How ye ſaw her firſt, and where
But wold ye tel me the manere
To her, which was your firſt ſpech
Therof I wold you beſech
And how ſhe knew firſt your thought
Whether ye loued her, or nought
And telleth me eke, what ye haue lore
I herd you tel here before
Ye ſaid, thou noteſt what thou meneſt
I haue loſt more than thou weneſt
What loſſe is that (qd. I tho)
Nil ſhe not loue you, is it ſo
Or haue ye ought done amiſs
That ſhe hath left you, is it this
For Goddes loue tel me all
Before God (qd. he) and I ſhall
I ſay right as I haue ſaid
On her was all my loue laid
And yet ſhe nift it not neuer a dele

Not long time, leue it wele
For be right siker, I durst nought
For all this world, tel her my thought
Ne I wold haue wrathed her trewly
For wost thou why, she was lady
Of the body that had the hert
And who so hath that may not asert
But for to kepe me fro ydlenesse
Trewly I did my busines
To make songs as I best coud
And oft time I song hem loud
And made songs, this a great dele
Although I coud nat make so wele
Songs ne knew the art all
As coud Lamekes son Tuball
That found out first the art of song
For as his brothers hamers rong
Upon his anuelt vp and downe
Therof he toke the first sownе
But Grekes saine of Pithagoras
That he the first finder was
Of the art, Auroa telleth so
But therof no force of hem two
Algates songs thus I made
Of my feling, mine hert to glade
And lo, this was al ther first
I not where it were the werst.
Lord it maketh mine hert light
Whan I thinke on that swete wight
That is to semely for to se
And wish to God it might so be
That she woid hold me for her knight
My lady, that is so faire and bright.
Now haue I told the, soth to say
My first song, vpon a day
I bethought me what wo
And sorow that I suffred tho
For her, and yet she wist it nought
Ne tel her durst I not my thought
Alas thought I, I can no rede
And but I tel her, I am but dede
And if I tel her, to say right soth
I am a dradde she wol be wroth
Alas, what shal I than do,
In this debate I was so wo
Me thought mine hert brast a twaine
So at the last, soth for to saine
I bethought me that Nature
Ne formed ne neuer in creature
So much beaute trewly
And bounty, without mercy
In hope of that, my tale I told
With sorow, as that I neuer shold
For nedes, and maugre mine heed
I must haue told her, or be deed
I not wel how that I began
Ful yuel reherce it I can
And eke as helpe me god withall
I trow it was in the dismall
That was the ten woundes of Egypt
For many a word I ouerskipt
In may tale for pure fere
Lest my words misset were
With sorowful hert, and wounds dede
Soft and quaking for pure drede
And shame, and stinting in my tale
For ferd, and mine hew all pale
Ful oft I wext both pale and reed
Bowing to her I hinge the heed
I durst not ones loke her on
For wit, maner, and all was gon
I said: mercy, and no more
It nas no game, it sate me sore.
So at the last, soth to saine
Whan that mine hert was come againe
To tel shortly all my spech
With hole hert, I gan her beseech
That she would be my lady, swete
And swore, and hertely gan her hete
Euer to be stedfast and trew
And loue her alway freshly new
And neuer other lady haue
And all her worship for to saue
As I best coud, I swere her this
For yours is all that euer there is
For euermore, mine hert swete
And neuer to false you, but I mete
I nil, as wise god helpe me so
And whan I had my tale ydo
God wote she acompted not a stre
Of all my tale, so thought me
To tel shortly, right as it is
Trewly her answere it was this
I can not now wel counterfete
Her words, but this was the grete
Of her answere, she said nay
All vtterly, alas that day
The sorow I suffred and the wo
That trewly Cassandra that so
Bewailed the distruction
Of Troy, and of Illion
Had neuer soch sorow as I tho
I durst no more say therto
For pure feare, but stale away
And thus I lined ful many a day
That trewly I had no nede
Ferther than my beddes hede
Neuer a day to seche sorow
I found it redy euery morow
For why, I loued her in no gere

So it befell an other yere
I thought ones I would fonde
To doe her knowe, and vnderstonde
My wo, and she well vnderstood
That I ne wilned thing but good
And worship, and to kepe her name
Ouer all things, and drede her shame
And was so bolde her to serue
And pitie were I should sterue
Sith that I wilned none harme ywis.
So when my Ladie knewe all this
My Ladie yaue me all wholly
The noble yeft of her mercie
Sauing her worship vp alwaies
Dredelesse, I mene none other waies
And therewith she yaue me a ring
I trowe it was the first thing
But if myne harte was ywaxe
Glad, that it is no neede to axe
As helpe me God, I was as blithe
Raised, as fro death to lithe
Of all happes the alderbest
The gladdest, and the moste at rest
For truely that swete wight
When I had wrong, and she the right
She would alway so goodly
Foryeue me so debonairly
In all my youth, in all chaunce
She tooke in her gouernaunce
Therewith she was alway so true
Our ioy was euer yliche newe
Our hartes werne so euen a paire
That neuer nas that one contraire
To that other, for no wo
For sothe yliche they suffred tho
O blisse, and eke o sorowe bothe
Yliche they were both glad and wrothe
All was vs one, without were
And thus we liued full many a yere
So well, I can not tell how.
Sir (qd I) where is she now
Now (qd he) and stint anone
Therwith he woxe as dedde as stone
And saied, alas that I was boxe
That was the losse, that here before
I tolde thee, that I had lorne
Bethinke thee how I saied here before
Thou woste full little what thou menest
I haue lost more then thou wenest.
God wot alas, right that was she
Alas sir how, what may that be
She is dedde: Naie, Yes by my trouthe
Is that your losse, by God it is routhe
And with that worde right anone
They gan to strake forth, all was done
For that time, the Harte hunting
With that me thought that this king
Gan homward for to ride
Unto a place was there beside
Which was from vs but a lite
A long castell with walles white
By saint John, on a riche hill
As me mette, but thus it fell.
Right thus me mette, as I you tell
That in the castell there was a bell
As it had smitte houres twelue
Therewith I awoke my selue
And found me lying in my bedde
And the booke that I had redde
Of Alcione, and Seis the king
And of the Goddes of sleping
I found it in myne hond full euen
Thought I, this is so queint a sweuin
That I would by processe of time
Fonde, to put this sweuin in rime
As I can best, and that anon
This was my sweuin, now it is doen.

Explicit.

Ma maister, &c. When of
Christ our king
Was asked, what is troth
or sothfastnesse
He not a worde answerde
to that asking
As who saieth, no man is
all true I gesse
And therefore, though I hight to expresse
The sorowe and wo that is in Mariage
I dare not writen of it no wickednesse
Lest I my selfe fall eft in such dotage.

I will not saie how that it is the chaine
Of Sathanas, on which he knaweth euer
But I dare saien, were he out of his paine
As by his will, he would be bounden neuer
But thilke doted foole, that eft hath leuer
Vnchained be, then out of prison crepe
God let him neuer fro his woe discreuer
Ne no man him bewaile, though he wepe

But yet leste thou do worse, take a wife
Bet is to wedde, then brenne in worse wise
but thou shalt haue sorow on thy flesh thy life
And ben thy wives thrall, as saith these wise
And if that holy write may not suffise
Experience shal thee teach, so may happe
Take the waie leuer to be taken in Frise
Then eft to fall of Wedding in the trappe.

This little writte, prouerbes or figures

I send you, take kepe of it I rede
Unwise is he, that can no wele endure
If thou be liker, put thee not in drede
The wife of Bathe, I pray you that ye rede
Of this matter, that we haue on honde
God graunt you your life freely to lede
In fredome, for foule is to be bonde.

Explicit.

The assemblie of Foules.

THE life so short, the craft so long to lerne
Thassaie so hard, so sharp the conquering
The dredefull ioy, alwaie that flit so yerne
All this meane I by loue, that my feling
Astonieth, with his wonderfull werking
So sore ywis, that when I on him thinke
Naught wete I well, whether I flete or sinke.

For all be that I, know not loue in dede
Ne wot how that he quiteth folke her hire
Yet happeth me full ofte in bookes rede
Of his miracles, and of his cruell ire
There rede I well, he woll be lorde and sire
I dare not saie, his strokes be sore
But God saue such a lorde, I can no more.

Of vsage, what for lust and what for lore
On bookes rede I oft, as I you tolde
But wherfore I speake all this, naught yore
Agon, it happed me to beholde
Upon a booke, was ywritte with letters old
And thereupon, a certain thing to lerne
The long daie, full fast I radde and yerne.

For out of the olde feldes, as men saieth
Cometh all this new corne, fro yere to yere
And out of old bookes, in good faieth
Cometh all this newe science, that men lere
But now to purpose, as of this mattere
To rede forthe, it gan me so delite
That all that day, me thought it but a lite.

This booke, of which I make mencion
Entitled was right thus, as I shall tell
Tullius, of the dreame of Scipion
Chapiters seuen it had, of heauen and hell
And earth, and soules that therein dwell
Of which, as shortly as I can it treate
Of this sentence, I woll you saine the greate.

First telleth it, when Scipion was come
In Affrike, how he meteth Massinisse
That him for ioye, in armes hath ynome
Then telleth he her speache, and all the blisse
That was betwixt hem, til ỹ day gan misse
And how his auncestre Affrikan so dere
Gan in his slepe that night till him appere

Then telleth it, that from a sterrie place
How Affrikan hath him Carthage shewed
And warned him before, of all his grace
And saied him what man, lered either leude
That loueth common profite, well ythewde
He should into a blissfull place wende
There as the ioy is without any ende.

Then asked he, if folke that here been dede
Haue life, and dwelling in another place
And Affrikan said yea, wit hout any drede
And how our present liues space
Wet but a maner death, what way we trace
And rightfull folke, shull gon after they die
To heauen, and shewed him the Galarie.

Then shewed he him, ỹ litle earth that here is
To regard of the heauens quantitie
And after shewed he him the nine speris
And after that the melodie heard he
That cometh of thilke speres thrise three
That welles of Musike been, and melodie
In this worlde here, and cause of armonie.

Then saied he him, sens earth was so lite
And full of torment, and of hard grace
That he ne should him in this world delite
Then tolde he him, in certain yeres space
That euery sterre should come into his place
There it was first, and all should out of minde
That in this world is doen, of all mankinde

Then praied him Scipion, to tell him all
The waie to come into that heauen blisse
And he saied: First know thy selfe immortall
And loke aie busely, that thou werche & wisse
To comon profite, and thou shalt not misse
To come swiftly, vnto that place dere
That full of blisse is, and of soules clere.

And breakers of the lawe, sothe to saine
And likerous folke, after that they been dede
Shull whirle about ỹ world, alway in paine
Till many a world be passed, out of drede

And

And then forgeuen all her wicked dede
Then shullen they come to that blisful place
To which to comen, God send thee grace.

The day gan failen, and the darke night
That reueth beastes from her businesse
Beraft me my booke for lacke of light
And to my bedde I gan me for to dresse
Fulfilled of thought, and busie heauinesse
For both I had thing, which that I nolde
And eke I ne had that thing that I wolde

But finally my spirite at laste
For wearie of my labour all that day
Tooke rest, that made me to slepe fast
And in my slepe I met, as that I lay
How Affrikan, right in the selfe araie
That Scipion him sawe, before that tide
Was come, and stode right at my beddes side

The wearie hunter, sleeping in his bedde
To wodde ayen his minde goeth anone
The Judge dremeth, how his plees be spedde
The Carter dremeth, how his cartes gone
The rich of gold, ỹ knight fight with his fone
The sicke mette he drinketh of the tonne
The louer mette, he hath his ladie wonne.

Can I not saine, if that the cause were
For I had radde of Affrikan before
That made me to mete that he stoode there
But thus said he: thou hast thee so wel borne
In looking of mine old booke all to torne
Of which Macrobie raught not a lite
That somedeale of thy labour would I quite.

Cithera, thou blisfull Ladie swete
that with thy fire brond, dauntst whē the lest
That madest me this swouen for to mete
Be thou my help in this, for thou maist best
As wisely as I seigh the North Northwest
When I began my swouen for to write
So yeue me might, to rime it and endite.

This forsaid Affrikan me hent anone
And forthwith him to a gate brought
Right of a Parke, walled with grene stone
And ouer ỹ gate, with letters large ywrought
There were verse ywritten, as me thought
On either halfe, of full great difference
Of which I shal you say, the plaine sentence.

Through me men gon into that blisful place
Of hartes heale, and dedly wounnds cure
Through me men gon into the well of grace
There grene & lustie Maie, shal euer endure
This is the way to all good auenture
Be glad thou reader, and thy sorow off cast
All open am I, passe in and spede thee fast

Through me mē gon, then spake thother side
Unto the mortall strokes of the speare
Of which disdaine and danger is the gide
There neuer tree shall fruit, ne leaues beare
This streme you ledeth to ỹ sorowfull were
There as the fish in prison is all drie
The eschewing is onely the remedie.

These verses of gold & Azure ywritten weare
Of which I gan astonied to beholde
For with that one, encreased all my feare
And with that other gan my hart to bolde
That one me het, that other did me colde
No wit had I for errour for to chese
To entre or flie, or me to saue or lese.

Right as betwene Adamants two
Of euen weight, a pece of yron set
Ne hath no might to moue to ne fro
For what that one may hale, that other let
So fared I, that I nist where me was bet
To entre or leaue, till Affrikan my gide
Me hent and shoue in, at the gates wide.

And said, it standeth written in thy face
Thine errour, though thou tell it not me
But dread thee not, to come into this place
For this writing is nothing meant by thee
Ne by none, but he loues seruaunts be
For thou of Loue hast lost thy tast I gesse
As sicke man hath, of swete and bitternesse.

But natheles, although thou be dull
That thou canst not do, yet maist thou see
For many a man, that may not stand a pull
Yet liketh it him, at the wrestling for to be
And demeth yet, whether he do bet, or he
And if thou haddest cunning for tendite
I shall thee shewe matter of to write.

And with that my hād in his he tooke anon
Of which I comfort caught, & went in fast
But Lord so I was glad, and well begon
For ouer all where I mine eyen cast
Were trees clad with leaues, that aie shal last
Eche in his kind, with colour fresh & grene
As Emeraude, that ioy it was to seene.

The bilder Oke, and eke the hardie Asshe
The pillar Elme, the coffer vnto caraine

The

The Box pipe tree, Holme to whippes lash
The sailing Firre, the Cipres death to plaine
The shoter Ewe, the Aspe for shaftes plaine
The Olive of peace, and eke the dronken vine
The victor Palme, the Laurer to divine.

A gardein saw I, full of blosomed bowis
Upon a Riuer, in a grene Mede
There as swetenesse, euermore inough is
With floures white, blew, yelow, and rede
And cold Welle streames, nothing dede
That swommen ful of smale fishes light
With finnes rede, and scales siluer bright.

On euery bough the birds heard I sing
With voice of angell, in her ermony
That busied hem, her birds forth to bring
The litle pitey Conies, to her play gan hie
And further all about, I gan espie
The dredeful Roe, the Buck, the Hart, & Hind
Squirels, and beasts, small of gentle kind.

Of instruments, of strings in accord
Heard I so play, a ravishing swetnesse
That God, that maker is of all and Lord
Ne heard neuer better, as I gesse
Therewith a wind, vneth it might be lesse
Made in the leaues grene, and noise soft
Accordant to the foules song on loft.

The aire of the place, so attempre was
That neuer was ther grevaunce of hot ne cold
There was eke euery holsome spice and gras
Ne no man may there waxe sicke ne old
Yet was there more ioy a thousand fold
Then I can tel, or euer could or might
There is euer clere day, and neuer night.

Under a tree, beside a well I sey
Cupide our lord, his arrowes forge and file
And at his feet, his bow all ready lay
And wel his doughter tempred all the while
The heddes in the wel, with her wile
She couched hem after, as they should serue
Some to slea, and some to wound and carue.

Tho was I ware of pleasaunce anon right
And of array, lust, beauty, and curtesie
And of the craft, that can & hath the might
To doen by force, a wight to doen foly
Disfigured was she, I will not lie
And by himselfe, vnder an Oke I gesse
Saw I delite, that stood with gentilnesse.

Then saw I beauty, with a nice atire
And youth, full of game and iolitie
Foolehardinesse, flatterie, and desire
Messagerie, mede, and other three
Her name shall not here be tolde for me
And vpon pilers great of Jaspar long
I sawe a temple of Brasse ifounded strong.

And about the temple, daunced alway
Women ynow, of which some there were
Faire of himself, and some of hem were gaie
In kirtils all disheueled went they there
That was their office euer, fro yere to yere
And on the temple, sawe I white and faire
Of Doues sitting, many a thousand paire.

And before the temple doore full soberlie
Dame Peace sat, a curtaine in her honde
And her beside, wonder discretely
Dame Pacience, sitting there I fonde
With face pale, vpon an hill stonde
And all her next, within and without
Behest and Arte, and of her folke a rout.

Within the temple, of sighes hote as fire
I heard a swough, that gan about ren
Which sighes were engendred with desire
That made euery harte for to bren
Of newe flambe, and well espied I then
That all the cause of sorowes, that they drie
Come of the bitter Goddes ialousie.

The God Priapus, sawe I as I went
Within the temple, in soueraine place stonde
In such arraie, as when the Asse him shent
With crie by night, and with ceptre in honde
Full busilie men gan assay and fonde
Upon his hedde to set of sundrie hewe
Garlandes, full of fresh floures newe.

And in a priuie corner in disport
Found I Venus, and her porter Richesse
That was full noble, and hauten of her port
Darke was that place, but after lightnesse
I sawe a lite, vnnethes it might be lesse
And on a bed of golde, she lay to reste
Till that the hote Sonne gan to weste.

Her gilte heres, with a gold threde
Ybound were, vntressed as she laie
And naked from the brest vnto the hede
Men might her see, and sothly for to saie
The remenaunt, couered well to my paie
Right with a little kerchefe of Valence
There was no thicker cloth of defence.

The place gaue a thousand sauours soote
And Bacchus God of Wine, sate her beside
And Ceres next, that doth of hunger boote
And as I saied a middes lay Cupide
To whom on knees, the yong folkes cride
To be their helpe, but thus I let her lie
And farther in the temple, I gan espie

That in dispite of Diane the chaste
Ful many a bowe ybroke, hing on the wall
Of maidens, such as gane her tunes waste
In her seruice, and painted ouer all
Of many a storie, of which I touche shall
A fewe, as of Calixte and Athalante
And many a maid, of which the name I want

Semyramus, Candace, and Hercules
Biblis, Dido, Tisbe, and Piramus
Tristram, Isonde, Paris, and Achilles
Helaine, Cleopatre, and Troilus
Silla, and eke the mother of Romulus
All these were painted on that other side
And all her loue, & in what plite they dide.

When I was comen ayen into the place
That I of spake, that was so soote and grene
Forth walked I tho, my seluen to solace
Tho was I ware, where ther sate a Quene
That as of light, the Sommer Sunne shene
Passeth the Sterre, right so ouer measure
She fairer was than any creature.

And in a launde, vpon an hill of floures
Was set this noble Goddesse Nature
Of braunches were her halles & her boures
Ywrought, after her craft and her measure
Neither nas foule, ỳ cometh of engendrure
That there ne were prest, in her presence
To take her dome, and yeue her audience,

For this was on saint Valentines daie
When euery foule cometh to chese her make
Of euery kinde, that men thinke may
And that so huge a noise gan they make
The earth, sea, and tree, and euery lake
So full was, that vnneth there was space
For me to stand, so full was all the place.

And right as Alaine, in the plaint of kinde
Deuiseth Nature of such aray and face
In such aray, men might her there finde
This noble Empresse full of all grace
Bad euery foule take her owne place
As they were wont alway, fro yere to yere
On saint Valentines day, standen there.

That is to saie, the foules of rauine
Were highest set, and then the foules smale
That eaten, as that Nature would enclune
As worme or thing, of which I tell no tale
But water foule, sate lowest in the dale
And foules ỳ liueth by seede, sat on the grene
And that so many, that wonder was to sene.

There might men the royall Egle finde
That with his sharpe looke, perseth the sonne
And other Egles of a lower kinde
Of which that clerkes well deuisen conne
There was the tirant with his fethers dun
And grene, I mean ỳ goshauke that doth pine
To birdes, for his outragious raume.

The gentle faucon, ỳ with his fete distreineth
The kings hand, the hardie Sperhauke eke
The Quales foe, the Merlion that peineth
Himselfe full oft, the Larke for to seke
There was the Doue, with her eyen meke
The ielous Swan, ayenst his deth ỳ singeth
The Oule eke, that of deth the bode bringeth

The Crane, the Geant, with his trõpes soune
The theef the Chough, and the chattring Pie
The scorning Iaie, the Ẽles foe the Heroune
The false Lapwing, full of trecherie
The Stare, that the counsaile can bewrie
The tame Ruddocke, and the coward Kite
The Cocke, that horologe is of thropes lite.

The Sparow Venus son, & ỳ Nightingale
That clepeth forth the fresh leaues newe
The Swalowe murdrer of the Bees smale
That maken honie, of floures fresh of hewe
The wedded Turtell, with his harte true
The Pecock, with his angell fethers bright
The Fesaunt, scorner of the Cocke by night.

The waker Gose, the Cuckowe euer vnkind
The Popingeie, full of delicasie
The Drake, stroier of his owne kinde
The Storke, wreker of aduoutrie
The hote Cormeraunt, full of glotonie
The Raum & ỳ Crowe, with her voice of care
The Throstell olde, and the frostie Feldefare

What should I saie, of foules of euery kind
That in this worlde haue fethers & stature
Men might in that place assembled finde
Before that Goddes of Nature
And eche of them did his busie cure
Benignely to chese, or for to take
By her accord, his formell or his make.

But

But to the point, Nature held on her hond
A formall Egle, of shape the gentillest
That euer she among her works fond
The most benigne, and eke the goodliest
In her was euery vertue, at his rest
So farforth, that nature her self had blisse
To looke on her, and oft her beke to kisse.

Nature, the vicare of the almightie Lorde
That hote, cold, heuie, light, moist, and drie
Hath knit, by euen number of accord
In easie voice, began to speake and saie
Foules take hede of my sentence I praie
& for your own ease, in fordring of your nede
As fast as I may speake, I wil me spede.

Ye know wel, how on S. Valentines day
By my statute, and through my gouernance
Ye do chese your makes, and after flie away
With hem, as I prick you with pleasance
But natheless, as by rightfull ordinance
May I not let, for all this world to win
But he that most worthiest is, shall begin.

The tercell Egle, as ye know full wele
The foule royall, aboue you all in degre
The wise and worthie, the secret true as stele
The which I haue formed, as ye may see
In euery parte, as it best liketh me
It needeth not his shape you to deuise
He shal first chese, and speaken in his gise.

And after him, by order shall ye chese
After your kinde, euerich as you liketh
And as your hap is, shal ye win or lese
But which of you, that loue most entriketh
God send him her, that sorest for him siketh
And therewithall, the Tercell can she call
And saied, my sonne the choise is to thee fall.

But natheless, in this condicion
Must be the choice, of euerich that is here
That she agree to his election
Who so he be, that should been her fere
This is our vsage alwaie, fro yere to yere
And who so may at this time haue his grace
In blissfull time he came into this place.

With hed enclined, & with ful humble chere
This roial Tercell spake, and taried nought
Unto my soueraine Ladie, and nat my fere
I chose and chese, with wil, hart, & thought
The formell on your hand, so well ywrought
Whose I am all, and euer will her serue
Do what her lust, to do me liue or sterue.

Beseching her of mercie, and of grace
As she that is my Ladie souerain
Or let me die, here present in this place
For certes, long may I not liue in pain
For in my hart is corven euery vain
Hauing regard onely to my trouth
My dere hart, haue on my wo some routh.

And if I be found to her vntrue
Disobeisant, or wilfull negligent
Auauntour, or in proces loue a newe
I pray to you this be my iudgement
That with these foules I be all to rent
That ilke day, that she me euer finde
To her vntrue, or in my gilte vnkinde.

And sith that none loueth her so well as I
Although she neuer of loue me beket
Then ought she be mine, through her mercie
For other bonde, can I none on her knet
For well nor wo, neuer shall I let
To serue her, how farre so that she wende
Say what you list, my tale is at an ende.

Right as the fresh redde Rose newe
Against the Sommer Sunne coloured is
Right so for shame, all waxen gan the hewe
Of this formell, when she heard all this
Neither she answerde well, ne saied amis
So sore abashed was she, till that Nature
Saied, doughter drede you not, I you assure.

An other Tercell Egle spake anon
Of lower kinde, and saied that should not be
I loue her better then ye doe, by saint John
Or at the least, I loue her as well as ye
And lenger haue serued her in my degree
And if she should haue loued for long louing
To me alone had be the guerdoning

I dare eke saie, if she me finde false
Unkinde, iangler, or rebell in any wise
Or ielous, do me hang by the halse
And but I beare me in her seruise
As well as my wit can me suffise
Fro point to point, her honour for to saue
Take she my life, and all the good I haue

The third Tercell Egle answerd tho
Now lirs, ye see the little leaser here
For euery foule crieth out to be ago
Forth with his make, or with his Lady dere
And eke nature her selfe, ne will not here
For tarying her, not halfe that I would seie
And but I speake, I must for sorowe deie.

Of

Of long seruice, auaunt I me nothing
But as possibles is me to die to day
For wo, as he that hath be languishing
This twenty winter, and wel it happen may
A man may serue better, and more to pay
In halfe a yere, although it were no more
Than some man doth, þ hath serued full yore

I ne say not this by me, for I ne can
Do no seruise, that may my lady please
But I dare say, I am her trewest man
As to my dome, and fainest wold her please
At short words, til that death me cease
I will be hers, whether I wake or winke
And trew, in all that hert may bethinke

Of all my life syth that day I was borne
So gentle plee, in loue or other thing
Ne herd neuer no man me before
Who so that had leiser and conning
For to rehersle their chere, and their speaking
And from the morow gan this spech last
Till downward went the sonne wonder fast

The noise of foules for to be deliuerd
So loud rang, haue done and let vs wend
That wel wend I, the wood had al to shiuerd
Come off they cried, alas, ye wil vs shend
When shal your cursed pleding haue an end
How should a iudge, either party leue
For yea or nay, without any preue

The goos, the ducke, and the cuckow also
So cried kekе, kekе, cuckow, quekе quekе hie
Through myn eares, the noise went tho
The goos said than, all this nis worth a flie
But I can shape hereof a remedy
And wil say my verdite, faire and swith
For water foule, who so be wroth or blith

And I for worm foule, said the fole cuckow
For I wil of mine own authorite
For comon spede, take on me the charge now
For to deliuer vs, it is a great charite
Ye may abide a while, yet perde
(Qd. the turtel) if it be your will
A wight may speke, it were as good be still

I am a seed foule, one the vnworthiest
That wote I wel, and least of conning
But better is, that a wights tong rest
Than entermete him of soch doing
Of which he neither rede can nor sing
And who so it doth, full foule him self acloyeth
For office vncommitted, oft anoyeth

Nature, which that alway had an eare
To murmure of the lewdnesse behind
With facond voice said, hold your tongs there
And I shal soone, I hope a counsaile find
You for to deliuer, and fro this noise vnbynd
I charge of euery flock ye shal one call
To say the verdite of you foules all

Assented were, to this conclusion
The birds all, and foules of rauine
Haue chosen first, by plaine election
The Tercelet of the faucon to define
All her sentence, and as him list to termine
And to Nature, him they did present
And she accepteth him with glad entent

The Tercelet said than, in this manere
Ful hard it were, to preue it by reason
Who loueth best, this gentle formel here
For euerich hath soch replication
That by skilles may none be brought adoun
I cannot se, that arguments auaile
Than semeth it there must be battaile

Alredy qd. these Engle tercels tho
Nay sirs (qd. he) if that I durst it say
Ye do me wrong, my tale is not ydo
For sirs, taketh nat a grefe I pray
It may not be as ye wold, in this way
Ours is the voice, þ haue the charge in hand
And to the Iudges dome, ye must stand

And therfore peace I say, as to my wit
Ye wold thinke, how that the worthiest
Of knighthood, and lengest had vsed it
Most of estate, of blood the gentilest
Were sitting for her, if that her lest
And of these three, she wote her selfe I trow
Which that he be, for it is light to know

The water fooles, haue their heddes laid
Together, and of short auisement
When euerich had his verdite said
They said sothly, all by one assent
How that the goos, with the facond gent
That so desireth, to pronounce our nede
Shal tel her tale, and praied to God her spede

And for these water foules, tho began
The goos to speke, and in her cakeling
She said, peace now, take kepe euery man
And herken which a reason I shall forth bring
My witte is sharpe, I loue no tarying
I say I rede him, tho he were my brother
But she wil loue him, let him loue another

Lo here a parfite reason of a gose
(Qd. the sperhauke) neuer mote she the
Lo soch a thing it is to haue a tong lose
Now parde foole, yet were it better for thee
Haue hold thy peace, than shewed thy nicete
It lieth nat in his wit, nor in his will
But soth is said, a foole cannot be still

The laughter arose, of gentil foules all
And right anone, the seed foules chosen had
The Turtel trew, and gan her to hem call
And praied her to say, the soth sad
Of this mater, and asked what she rad
And she answerd that plainly her entent
She wold shew, and sothly what she ment

Nay, God forbede a louer should chaunge
The Turtel said, and wexe for shame all reed
Though that his lady, euer more be straunge
Yet let him serue her alway, til he be deed
For soth, I praise not the gooses reed
For tho she died, I wold none other make
I wil be hers, till that the death me take

Wel yhourded (qd. the duck) by my hat
That men should loue alway causeleese
Who can a reason find or wit in that
Daunceth he mery, that is mirthlees
Who should reck, of that is retchlesse
Ye quecke yet (qd. the ducke) ful wel and faire
There be mo sterres in the sky than a paire

Now lie churle (qd. the gentel Tercelet)
Out of the dounghil, came that word aright
Thou canst not see, which thing is wel beset
Thou farest by loue, as owles do by light
The day hem blindeth, ful wel they se bynight
Thy kind is of so low wretchednesse
That what loue is, thou canst not se nor gesse

Tho gan the cuckow put him forthe in preace
For foule that cateth worme, and said bliue
So I (qd. he) may haue my make in peace
I retch nought, how long that ye striue
Let ech of hem be soleine all her liue
This is my rede, sens they may nat acord
This short lesson, nedeth not record

Ye, haue the glutton fild his paunch
Than are we wel, said the Emerlon
Thou murdrer of the heilugge, on the branch
That brought the forth, thou ruful glutton
Liue thou solein, worms corrupcion
For no force is, of lack of thy nature
Go leud be thou, while the world may dure

Now peace (qd. Nature) I commaund here
For I haue herd all your opinion
And in effect, yet be we neuer the nere
But finally, this is my conclusion
That she her selfe, shal haue her election
Of whom her list, who so be wroth or blith
Him that she chese th, he shal her haue as swith

For sith it may not here discussed be
Who loueth her best, as said the Tercelet
Than wol I done this fauour to her, that she
Shal haue right him, on whom her hert is set
and he her, that his hert hath on her knet
This iudge I nature, for I may not lye
To none estate, I haue none other eye

But as for counsaile, for to chose a make
Yf I were reason, than would I
Counsaile you, the royal Tercel take
As said the Tercelet, ful skilfully
As for the gentillest, and most worthy
Which I haue wrought so wel to my plesance
That to you it ought ben a suffisaunce

With dredful voice, the formel her answerd
My right lady, goddesse of Nature
Soth is, that I am euer vnder your yerd
As is euerich other creature
And must be yours, while my life may dure
And therfore graunt me my first boon
And myne intent, you wol I say right soon

I graunt it you (qd. she) and right anon
This formel Egle spake in this degre
Almighty Quene, vnto this yere be don
I ask respite for to auisen me
And after that to haue my choice all fre
This all and some, that I would speke and sey
Ye get no more, although ye do me dey

I wol not seruen Venus, nor Cupide
For soth as yet, by no maner way
Now sens it may none other waies betide
(Qd. Nature) here is no more to say
Than wold I that these foules were away
Ech with his make, for tarying lenger here
And said hem thus, as ye shal after here

To you speke I, ye Tercelets (qd. Nature)
Beth of good hert, and serueth all thre
A yere is not so long to endure
And ech of you pain him in his degre
For to do wel, for God wot quit is she
For you this yere, what after so befall
This entremes, is dressed fro you all

And

And whan this werk brought was to an end
To euery foule, Nature yaue his make
By euen acord, and on her way they wend
And lord the bliſſe and ioy that they make
For ech of hem gan other in his wings take
And with her neckis, ech gan other wind
Thanking alway, the noble goddeſſe of kind

But firſt were choſen foules for to ſing
As yere by yere, was alway her plaunce
To ſing a roundel at her departing
To do Nature honour and pleſaunce
The note I trow, maked was in Fraunce
The wordis were ſoch, as ye may here find
The next vers, as I now haue in mind
Qui bien ayme tard oublye.
Now welcome ſomer, with thy ſonnes ſoft
That haſt this winter wethers ouerſhake
Saint Valentine, thou art ful hie on loft
Which driueſt away, the long nights blake
Thus ſingen ſmale foules for thy ſake
Wel haue they cauſen for to gladen oft
Sens ech of hem recouered hath his make
Ful blisful may they ſing when they awake

And with the ſhouting whē her ſong was do
That the foules made, at her flight away
I woke, and other bokes toke me to
To rede vpon, and yet I rede alway
I hope ywis to rede ſo ſome day
That I ſhal mete ſome thing for to fare
The bet, and thus to rede I nil not ſpare.

Explicit.

The Floure of Curteſie,

made by Iohn Lidgate.

IN Feuerier, whan the froſty Moone
Was horned, full of Phebus firy light
And that ſhe gan to reyſe her ſtreams ſoone
Saint Valentine, vpon thy bliſful night
Of duty, whan glad is euery wight
And foules cheſe to void her old ſorow
Euerich his make, vpon the next morow

The ſame time I herd a larke ſing
Ful luſtely, againe the morow gray
Awake ye louers, out of your ſlombring
This glad morow, in all the han ye may
Some obſeruaunce doth vnto this day
Your choiſe ayen of hert to renew
In confirming, for euer to be trew

And ye that be of choſing at your large
This luſty day, by cuſtome of nature
Take vpon you the bliſful holy charge
To ſerue loue, whyle your life may dure
With hert, body, and all your buſy cure
For euermore, as Venus and Cipride
For you diſpoſeth, and the God Cupide

For ioy owe we plainly to obey
Vnto this lords mighty ordinaunce
And mercieſſe rather for to dey
Than euer in you be founden variaunce
Though your life be medled with greuaunce
And at your hert cloſet be your wound
Beth alway one, there as ye are bound

That whan I had herd and liſted long
With deuout hert, the luſty melodie
Of this heauenly comfortable ſong
So agreable, as by ceremony
I roſe anon, and faſt gan me hie
Toward a groue, and the way take
Foules to ſene, euerich choſe his make

And yet I was full thirſty in languiſhing
Myne ague was ſo feruent in his hete
Whan Aurora, for diery complaining
Can diſtil her chriſtal teeres wete
Upon the foule, with ſiluer dew ſo ſwete
For ſhe durſt for ſhame not apere
Under the light of Phebus beames clere

And ſo for anguiſh of my paines kene
And for conſtraint of my lighes ſore
I ſet me downe, vnder a laurer grene
Ful pitouſly, and alway more and more
As I beheld into the holts hore
I gan complaine mine inward deedly ſmert
That ayer ſo ſore crampeth at mine hert

And while that I in my diery paine
Sate, and beheld about on euery tre
The foules ſitte alway twaine and twaine
Thē thought I thus, alas what may this be
That euery foule hath his liberte
Freely to chooſe, after his deſire
Euerich his make, thus fro yere to yere

The ſely wrenne: the tytemoſe alſo
The litel redbreſt, haue free election
To ſitten yfere, and togither go
Where as hem liſt, about enuiron

As they of kind haue inclination
And as Nature, empreſſe and gide
Of euery thing liſt to prouide

But man alone, alas the hard ſtound
Ful cruelly, by kinds ordinaunce
Conſtrained is, and by ſtatute bound
And debarred from all ſuch pleſaunce
What meneth this what is this purueiaunce
Of God aboue, againe all right of kind
Without cauſe, ſo narow man to bind

Thus may I ſene and plaine, alas
My woful houre, and my diſauenture
That dolfully ſtond in the ſame caas
So ferre behind, from all helth and cure
My wound abideth like a ſurſaure
For me fortune ſo felly liſt diſpoſe
My harme is hid, that I dare not diſcloſe

For I my hert haue ſet, in ſoch a place
Where I am neuer likely for to ſpede
So ferre I am hindred from her grace
That ſaue daunger, I haue none other mede
And thus alas, I not who ſhal me rede
Ne for mine helpe ſhape remedy
For male bouch, and for falſe enuy

The which twain, aye ſtondeth in my wey
Malicioully, and falſe ſuſpection
Is very cauſe alſo that I dey
Ginning and rote of my diſtruction
So that I feie, in concluſion
With her traines, that they wol me ſhend
Of my labour, that deth mote make an end

Yet or I die, with hert, wil, and thought
To god of loue, this auow I make
As I beſt can, how dere that it be bought
Where ſo it be, that I ſlepe or wake
While Boreas doth the leaues ſlake
As I haue height, plainly til I ſterue
For wele or wo, that I ſhal her ſerue

And for her ſake, now this holy time
Saint Valentine, ſomwhat ſhal I write
Although ſo be, that I can nat rime
Nor curiouſly by no craft endite
Yet leuer I haue, that ſhe put the wite
In vnconning, than in negligence
What euer I ſay, of her excellence

What euer I ſar, it is of dute
In ſothfaſtneſſe, and no preſumption
This I enſure to you that, ſhal it ſe
That it is all vnder correction
What I reherſe in commendacion
Of her, that I ſhal to you as blue
So as I can, her vertues here diſcrive

Right by example, as the ſomer ſonne
Paſſeth the ſterre, with his beams ſhene
And Lucifer, among the ſkies donne
A morow ſheweth, to void nights tene
So verily, withouten any wene
My lady paſſeth, who ſo taketh hede
Al tho aliue, to ſpeke of womanhede

And as the Ruby hath the ſouerainte
Of rich ſtones, and the regalie
And the roſe of ſwetneſſe and beaute
Of freſh floures, without any lie
Right ſo in ſoth, with her goodly eie
She paſſeth all, in bounte and faireneſſe
Of maner eke, and of genteineſſe

For ſhe is both the faireſt and the beſt
To reken all, in very ſothfaſtneſſe
For euery vertue is in her at reſt
And furthermore, to ſpeake of ſtedfaſtneſſe
She is the roote, and of ſemeineſſe
The very mirrour, and of gouernaunce
To all example, withouten variaunce

Of port benigne, and wonder glad of chere
Hauing euermore her trew aduertence
Alway to reaſon, ſo that her deſire
Is brideled aie, by wit and prouidence
Thereto of witte, and of hie prudence
She is the welle, aie deuoid of pride
That vnto vertue, her ſeluen is the gide

And ouer this, in her daliaunce
Lowly ſhe is, diſcrete and wiſe
And goodly gladde, by attemperaunce
That euery wight, of high and low degre
Are glad in hert, with her for to be
So that ſhortly, if I ſhal not lie
She named is, the Floure of curteſie

And there to ſpeake of feminite
The leſt mannish in compariſon
Goodly abaſhed, hauing aie pite
Of hem that ben in tribulacion
For ſhe alone is conſolacion
To all that arne in miſchefe and in nede
To comfort hem, of her womanhede

And aye in vertue is her buſie charge
Sad and demure, and but of words few

Dredfull

Dredful also of tongs that ben large
Eschewing aie hem, that listen to hewe
Aboue her heed, her wordes for to shewe
Dishonestly to speake of any wight
She deadly hateth, of hem to haue a sight

The hert of whom, so honest is and cleane
And her entent, so faithful and entere
That she ne may, for all the world sustene
To suffer her eares any word to here
Of frend nor foe, neither ferre ne nere
Amisse resowning that hinder shuld his name
And if she do, she weyeth reed for shame

So trewly in mening she is in sette
Without chaunging, or any doublenesse
For bounty and beauty, are togither knet
In her person, vnder faithfulnesse
For void she is of newfanglenesse
In hert aie one, for euer to perseuer
There she is sette, and neuer to disseuer

I am to rude, her vertues euerichone
Conningly to discriue and write
For wel ye wote, colour haue I none
Like her discrecion, craftely to endite
For what I say, all it is to lite
Wherfore to you, thus I me excuse
That I aquainted am not with no muse

By Rhetorike, my stile to gouerne
In her preise and commendacion
I am too blind, so hily to discerne
Of her goodnes, to make discription
Saue thus I say in conclusion
If that I shal shortly commend
In her is nought, that nature can amend

For good she is, like to Policene
And in fayrenesse, to the quene Helaine
Stedfast of hert, as was Dorigene
And wefely trouth, if I shal nat faine
In constaunce eke and faith, she may attaine
To Cleopatre, and therto as setrone
As was of Troy, the white Antigone

As Hester meke, like Judith of prudence
Kind as Alcest, or Marcia Catoun
And to Griselid like in pacience
And Ariadne of discrecioun
And to Lucrece, that was of Rome toun
She may be likened as honeste
And for her faith, vnto Penelope

To faire Phillis, and to Hipsiphile
For innocence, and for womanhede
For semelinesse vnto Canace
And ouer this, to speake of goodlihede
She passeth all that I can of rede
For word and dede, that she naught ne fail
Accord in vertue, and her werkes all

For though that Dido with wit sage
Was in her time stedfast to Enee
Of hastinesse yet she did outrage
And so for Jason did also Medee
But my lady is so auisee
That bounty and beauty, both in her demain
She maketh bounty alway souerain

This is to mean, bounty goth afore
Lad by prudence, and hath the soueraunte
And beaute followeth, ruled by her lore
That she ne fend her in no degre
So that in one, this goodly fresh fre
Surmounting all, withouten any were
Is good and faire, in one person yfere

And though that I for very ignoraunce
Ne may discrive her vertues by and by
Yet on this day for a remembraunce
Only supported vnder her mercy
With quaking hond, I shal ful humbly
To her hinesse, my rudenesse for to quite
A litel balade, here beneth endite

Euer as I can suppryse in mine hert
Alway with feare, betwixt drede and shame
Lest out of lose, any word astert
In this mitre, to make it seme lame
Chaucer is deed, that had such a name
Of faire making, that without wene
Fairest in our tong, as the Laurer grene

We may assay for to counterfete
His gay stile, but it wol not be
The well is dry, with the licour swete
Both of Clye, and of Caliope
And first of all, I wol excuse me
To her that is ground of goodlihede
And thus I say, vntill her womanhede

¶ Balade simple,

WIth all my might, and my best entent
With all the faith that mighty God of kind
Me yaue, sith he me soule and knowing sent
I chese, and to this bond euer I me bind
To loue you best, while I haue life in mind
Thus herd I foules in the dauning
Upon the day of saint Valentine sing

Yet chese I at the beginning, in this entent
To loue you, though I no mercy find
And if you list I died, I wold assent
As euer twinne I quicke of this line
Sufficeth me to sene your fethers ynd
Thus herd I foules in the morning
Upon the day of saint Valentine sing

And ouer this, mine herts lust to bent
In honour only of the woodbind
Holy I yeue, neuer to repent
In ioy or wo, where so that I wind
Coforce Cupide, with his eyen blind
The foules all, whan Titan did spring
With deuout hert, me thought I herd sing.

Lenuoy.

¶ Princesse of beauty, to you I represent
This simple dyte, rude as in making
Of hert and wil, faithful in mine entent
Like as this day, foules herd I sing.

¶ Here endeth the Floure of Curtesie, and hereafter foloweth, how pite is deed, and buried in gentil hert.

PYte that I haue I soughte so yore ago
With hert sore, and full of bely paine
That in this world was neuer wight so wo
Without death, and if I shal nat saine
My purpose was, pite to complaine
Upon the cruelty and tyrannie
Of loue, that for my trouth doth me die

And that I by length of certaine yeres
Had euer in one, sought a time to speke
To Piteran I, all bispreint with teres
To prayen her on Cruelte me awreke
But or I might with any word out breke
Or tel her any of my paines smert
I found her deed, and buried in an hert

Adowne I fel, whan I saw the herse
Dead as a stone, while that ỹ swoune me last
But vp I rose, with colour ful diuerse
And pitously on her mine eien I cast
And neuer the corse I gan preasen fast
And for the soule, I shope me for to pray
I was but lorne, there was no more to say

Thus am I slaine, sith that Pite is deed
Alas that day that euer it should fall
What maner man dare now hold vp his heed
To whom shal now any sorowful hert call
Now Cruelte hath cast to slee vs all
In idle hope, folke redelesse of paine
Sith she is deed, to whom shall we complain

But yet encreaseth me this wonder new
That no wight wote that she is deed but I
So many men as in her time her knew
And yet she died so sodainly
For I haue sought her euer ful besily
Sith I had first witte or mind
But she was deed her I could her find

About her herse there stoden lustely
Withouten any mo, as thought me
Bounty, perfitely wel ermed and richely
And fresh Beaute, Lust, and Jolite
Allured maner, Youth, and Honeste
Wisdome, Estate, Drede, and Gouernaunce
Confedred both by bond and aliaunce

A complaint had I writen in my hond
To haue put to Pite, as a bill
But I there all this company fond

That

That rather would all my cause spill
Then doe me help, I held my plaint still
For to those folke withouten faile
Without pitie, there may no bill auaile.

Then leaue all vertues, saue only pitie
Keping the corse, as ye haue heard me saine
Confedred by bond of Crueltie
And be assented when I shal be slaine
And I haue put my complaint vp againe
For to my foes, my bill I dare not shewe
The effect, which saith thus in wordes fewe

Humblest of harte, hiest of reuerence
Benigne floure, croune of vertues all
Sheweth vnto your royall excellence
Your seruaunt, if I durst me so call
His mortall harme, in which he is yfall
And nought all onely for his wofull fare
But for your renome, as he shall declare.

It standeth thus that your cõtrary crueltie
Alied is ayenst your regalie
Under colour of womanly beautie
For men should not know her tyrannie
With Bountie, Gentillesse, and Curtesie
And hath depriued you of your place
That is hie beautie, apertenant to your grace

For kindly, by your heritage right
Ye be annexed euer vnto bountie
And verely ye ought doe your might
To helpe trouth in his aduersitie
Ye be also the croune of beautie
And certes if ye want in these twaine
The world is lore, there is no more to saine

Eke what auaileth maner and gentillesse
Without you, benigne creature
Shall crueltie be your gouernesse
Alas, what hart may it long endure
Wherefore but ye rather take cure
To breake that perillous aliaunce
Ye sleen hem that been in your obeisaunce

And further, if ye suffre thus
Your renome is fordoe in a throwe
There shall no man wete what pitie is
Alas, that euer your renome is fall so lowe
Ye be also fro your heritage ythrowe
By crueltie, that occupieth your place
And we dispaired that seken your grace.

Haue mercie on me, thou Hercnus Queene
That you haue sought, so tenderly and sore
Let some streame of light on me be seene
That loue & dread you euer longer the more
For sothly to saine, I beare so sore
And though I be not conning for to plaine
For Goddes loue haue mercie on my paine.

My paine is this, that what so I desire
That haue I not, ne nothing like thereto
And euer letteth desire mine hart on fire
Eke on that other side where that I go
What maner thing that may comfort me vnto
That haue I ready vnsought euery where
Me lacketh but my death, and that in my bere.

What nedeth to shewe parcel of my paine
Sith euery wo, that hart may bethinke
I suffer, and yet I dare not to you plaine
For well I wote, though I waake or winke
Ye recke not whether I flete or sincke
And natheless yet my trouth I shall sustaine
Unto my death, and that shall well desteine

This is to saine, I will be yours euer
Though ye me slea by crueltie your for
Algate my spirite shal neuer discrener
Fro your seruice, for any paine or woe
Sith ye be yet dedde alas that it is so
Thus for your death, I may wepe and plaine
With hart sore, and full of busie paine.

Explicit.

La belle Dame sans Mercie.

Alse in a dreame, not fully well awaked
The golden sleepe mee wraped vnder his wig
Yet not for thy I rose, I well nigh naked
Al sodainly my selfe remembring
Of a matter, leauing all other thing
Which I must doe withouten more delaie
For hem, which I durst not disobaie.

My charge was this, to translate by & by
All thing forgiue as parte of my penaunce
A booke, called La belle Dame sans mercie
Which maister Aleine made of remembrance
Chefe secretarie with the king of Fraunce
And herevpon a while I stoode musing
And in my selfe greatly imagening,

What wise I shuld perfoꝛme the said pꝛoces
Considering by good aduisement
My vnconning, and my great simplenes
And ayenward, the straite commaundement
Which that I had, and thus in mine entent
I was vexed and turned vp and doune
And yet at last, as in conclusioun.

I cast my clothes on, and went my waie
This foꝛesaid charge hauing in remẽbꝛance
Till I came to a lustie grene valaie
Full of flowres, to see a great pleasance
And so boldly with their beningne suffraunce
Which rede this boke, touching this matere
Thus I began, if it please you to here.

NOT long a go, ryding an easie paas
I fell in thought of ioyful desperate
With great disease and pain, so that I was
Of all louers the most vnfoꝛtunate
Sith by his darte, most cruell full of hate
The death hath take my Ladie & maistresse
And left me sole, thus discomfite and mate
Soꝛe languishing, and in way of distresse.

Then saied I thus, it falleth me to cesse
Either to rime, oꝛ ditees foꝛ to make
And I surely to make a full pꝛomesse
To laugh no moꝛe, but wepe in clothes black
My ioyfull time (alas) now doeth it slake
Foꝛ in my self I feele no maner of ease
Let it be writteu, such foꝛtune (as I take)
Which neither me, noꝛ non other doth please

If it were so, my will oꝛ mine entent
Constrained were, a ioyful thing to wꝛite
My penne coud neuer know, what it ment
To speak thereof, my tongue hath no delite
Tho with my mouth I laugh, much oꝛ lite
Mine eyen shuld make a countenance vntrue
My hart also, would haue therof dispite
The weping teares, haue so large issue.

These sick louers I leue, that to hem longes
Which lede their life in hope of alegeaunce
That is to saie, to make Balades and songs
Euery of hem, as they feele their greuaunce
Foꝛ she that was my ioy, and my pleasaunce
Whose soule I pꝛay God, of his mercie saue
She hath my will, mine hartes oꝛdinaunce
Which lieth here within this tombe ygraue.

Fro this time foꝛth, time is to hold my pees
It werieth me, this matter foꝛ to treate
Let other louers put them self in pꝛees
Their season is, my time is now foꝛgeate
Foꝛtune by strength, the foꝛcer hath vnsheate
Wherin was sperde all my woꝛldly richesse
And all the goods, which that I haue geate
In my best time of youth, and lustinesse.

Loue hath me kept vnder his gouernance
If I mis did, God graunt me foꝛgiuenesse
If I did well, yet felt I no pleasance
It caused neither ioy noꝛ heauinesse
Foꝛ when she died, that was my maistres
My welfare then made the same purchase
The death hath shette my bondes of witnes
Which foꝛ nothing mine hart shal neuer pase

In this great thought, soꝛe troubled in mind
Alone thus rode I, all the moꝛowe tide
Til at the last it happed me to finde
The place, wherein I cast me to abide
When that I had no further foꝛ to ride
And as I went, my lodging to puruay
Right sone I heard, a little me beside
In a garden, where minstrels gan to play.

With that anone, I went me backer moꝛe
My self and I, me thought we were ynow
But twaine that were my frends here befoꝛe
Had me espied, and yet I wot not how
They came foꝛ me, awaiward I me dꝛowe
Somwhat by foꝛce, somwhat by her request
That in no wise, I coud my self reskowe
But needes I must come in and see the feast.

At my comming the Ladies euerychone
Bad me welcome, God wote right gentillie
And made me chere, euery one by one
A great deale better than I was woꝛthie
And of their grace, shewed me great curtesie
with good dispoꝛt, bicause I shuld not mourn
That day I bode stil in their company
Which was to me a gracious soiourne.

The boꝛdes were syzed, in right litle space
The Ladies sat, eche as hem semed best
There were no deedly seruants in the place
But chosen men, right of the goodliest
Some there were, peraventure most freshest
That saw their Judges full demure
Without semblant, either to most oꝛ lest
Notwithstanding, they had hem vnder cure

Emong all other, one I gan espie

Which

Which in great thought, ful oftē cam & went
As one that had been rauished vtterly
In his language, not greatly diligent
His countenāce he kept with great turment
But his desire farre passed his reason
For euer his eye, went after his entent
Full many a time, when it was no season

To make cheere, fore himselfe he pained
And outwardly he fained great gladnesse
To sing also, by force he was constrained
For no pleasance, but verie shamefastnesse
For the complaint of his most heuinesse
Came to his voice, alway without request
Like as the soune of birdes doeth expresse
When they sing loud, in frith and in forest.

Other there were, that serued in the hall
But lone like him, as after mine aduise
For he was pale, and somwhat leane withall
His speach also trembled in fearfull wise
And euer alone, but when he did seruise
All blacke he ware, and no deuise but plain
Me thought by him, as my witt coud suffise
His hart was nothing in his owne demain.

To feast hem all, he did his diligence
And well he coud, right as it semed me
But euermore, when he was in presence
His chere was done, it nolde none other be
His Schole master had such authoritie
That all the while he bode still in the place
Speake could he not, but vpon her beautie
He looked still, with a right pitous face.

With that his hedde he tourned at the last
For to beholde the Ladies euerichone
But euer in one, he set his eye stedfast
On her, which his chought was most vpon
For of his eyen, the shot I knewe anone
which fearful was with right hūble requests
Then to my self I saied, by God alone
Such one was I, or that I saw these ieftes.

Out of the prease he went full easely
To make stable his beauie countenance
And wote ye well, he sighed wonderly
For his sorowes and wofull remembrance
Then in himselfe, he made his ordinance
And forthwithall came to bring in the messe
But for to iudge, his most wofull penance
God wote it was a pitous entremesse.

After diner anone, they hem auanced
To daunce aboue the folke euerychone
And forthwithal, this beauie mā he daunced
Somtime with twaine, & somtime with one
Unto hem all, his chere was after one
Now here now there, as fell by aucnture
But euer emong, he dread to her alone
Which he moste dread, of liuing creature.

To mine aduise, good was his puruciance
When he her chose, to his maistresse alone
If that her hart were set to his pleasance
As much as was her beauteous person
For who so euer setteth his trust vpon
The report of the eyen, withouten more
He might be dedde, and grauen vnder stone
Or euer he should, his hartes ease restore.

In her failed nothing, that I coud gesse
One wise nor other, priuie nor perte
A garison she was, of all goodlinesse
To make a frounter for a louers herte
Right yong and fresh, a woman full coucrte
Assured wele of porte, and eke of chere
Wele at her ease, withouten wo or smerte
All vnderneath the standerde of dangere.

To see the feast, it wericd me full sore
For heauie ioy doth sore the harte trauaile
Out of the prease, I me withdrawe therefore
And set me doune alone behinde a traile
Ful of leaues, to see a grear meruaile
With greene wrethes yhounden wonderly
The leaues were so thicke withouten faile
That throughout, no man might me espie.

To this Ladie he came full curtesly
Whē he thought time to dance with her a trace
Set in an herber, made full pleasantly
They rested hem fro thens but a little space
Neigh hem were none, of a certain compace
But onely they, as farre as I coud see
Saue the traile, there I had chose my place
There was no more bitwen hem two and me

I heard the louer sighing wonder sore
For aye the more, the sorer it him sought
His inward pain he coud not kepe in store
Nor for to speake, so hardie was he nought
his leche was nere, ỳ greter was his thought
He mused sore, to conquere his desire
For no mā may to more penance be brought
Then in his heate, to bring him to the fire.

The hart began to swell within his chest
So sore strained, for anguish and for paine
That all to peces almoste it to brest

When

When both at ones, so sore it did constrain
Desire was bold, but shame it gan refrain
That one was large, the other was ful close
No little charge was laied on him certain
To kepe such werre, and haue so many fose.

Ful oftē times to speak, himselfe he pained
But shamefastnesse and dred, saied euer nate
Yet at the last, so sore he was constrained
When he full long had put it in delay
To this Ladie, right thus then gan he say
With dredfull voice, weping, halfe in a rage
For me was purueied, an vnhappie daie
When I first had a sight of your visage

I suffer pain God wot, full hote brenning
To cause my death, all for my true seruise
And I see well, ye recke therof nothing
Nor take no hede of it, in no kinde wise
But when I speake after my best aduise
Ye set it at nought, but make therof a game
And though I sewe, so great an enterprise
Yet peireth not your worship nor your fame.

Alas, what should it be to you preiudice
If that a man do loue you faithfully
To your worship, eschewing euery vice
So am I yours, and will be verely
I chalenge nought of right, and reason why
For I am whole submit vnto your seruice
Right as you list it be, right so will I
To bind my self, where I was in fraunchise.

L'amant.

Though it be so, that I can not deserue
To haue your grace, but alway liue in dred
Yet suffer me, you for to loue and serue
Withouten maugre of your most goodlihede
Both faith & trouth I giue your womanhede
And my seruice without any calling
Loue hath me bound, without wage or mede
To be your man, and leue all other thing

La dame.

When this lady had heard al this lāguage
She gaue answere, ful soft and demurely
Without changing of colour or courage
Nothing in hast, but mesurably
Me thinketh sir, your thought is great foly
Purpose ye nought your labour for to ceasle
For thinketh not, whiles ye liue and I
In this matter, to set your harte in peasle.

L'amant.

Ther may none make the peace, but only ye
Which are the ground & cause of al this warr
For with your eyen, the letters writen be
By which I am defied and put a farre
Your pleasant looke, my very lode starre
Was made heraude, of thilke same defiance
Which vtterly behight me for to barre
My faithfull trust, and all mine affiaunce.

La dame.

To liue in wo, he hath great fantasie
And of his harte also slipper holde
That only for beholding of an eye
Can not abide in peace, as reason wolde
Other or me, if ye list ye may beholde
our eyen ar made to loke, why should we spare
I take no kepe, neither of yong ne olde
Who feleth smart, I counsaile him beware.

L'amant.

If it be so, one hurte an other fore
In his defaute, that feleth the greuaunce
Of verie right, a man may do no more
Yet reason would it were in remembraunce
And sith fortune onely by her chaunce
Hath caused me to suffer all this pain
By your beautie, with all the circumstaunce
Why list ye haue me, in so great disdain.

La dame.

To your person, ne haue I no disdain
Nor neuer had truely, ne nought will haue
Nor right great loue, nor hatred in certain
Nor your counsaile to know, so God me saue
If such loue be in your minde ygraue
That little thing, may do you displeasaunce
You to begile, or make you for to raue
I will not cause, no such encombraunce

L'amant.

What euer it be, ỳ me hath thus purchased
Wening hath not deceiued me certain
But feruent loue so sore hath me ychased
That I vnware, am casten in your chaine
And sith so is, as fortune list ordaine
All my welfare, is in your handes fall
In eschewing of more mischeuous paine,
Who soonest dyeth, his care is least of all.

La dame.

This sickneslle is right easie to endure
But fewe people, it causeth for to die
But what they meane, I know it verie sure
Of more comfort, to draw we the remedie
Such be there now, plaining ful pitouslie

That

That kele God wote, not alther greatest pain
And if so be, loue hurt so greuously
Lelle harme it wer, one sorowful then twain.

L'amant.

Alas Madame, if that it might you please
Much better it were, by way of gentilnelle
Of one sorie, to make twaine well at ease
Then him to destroy that liueth in distresse
For my desire is, neither more nor lesse
But my seruice to doe for your pleasance
In eschewing all maner doublenesse
To make two ioies, in stede of one greuance

La dame.

Of loue I seke, neither pleasance nor ease
Nor haue therein no great affiaunce
Though ye be sick it doeth me nothing please
Also I take no hede of your pleasance
Chese who so will, her hartes to auaunce
Free am I now, and free will I endure
To be ruled by mannes gouernaunce
For earthly good, Naye, that I you ensure.

L'amant.

Loue, which that ioy & sorow doeth depart
Hath set the Ladies out of all seruage
And largely doth graunt hem for her part
Lordship and rule of euery maner of age
The poore seruant, nought hath of auantage
But what he may get onely by purchesse
And he that ones, to loue doth his homage
Full often times, dere bought is the richesse.

La dame.

Ladies be not so simple, thus I meane
So dull of witte, so slotted in folie
That for wordes, which said be of the splene
In faire language, painted full pleasantly
Which ye and mo, holde scholes of daily
To make hem all, great wonders to suppose
But sone they can away their heddes wrie
And to faire speach, lightly their eares close

L'amant.

There is no man that iangleth busilie
And setteth his hart, & al his munde therfore
That by reason may plain so pitously
As he that hath much heauinesse in store
Whole hed is hole, and saieth that it is sore
His fained chere, is hard to kepe in mewe
But thought, which is vnfained euermore
The wordes preueth, as the workes shewe.

La dame.

Loue is subtil, and hath a great awaite
Sharpe in working, in gabbing gret pleasace
And can him venge, of such as by disceite
Would seele & know, his secrete gouernance
And maketh hem to obey his ordinance
By cherefull wates, as in hem is supposed
But when they fall into repentance
Then in a rage, her counsaile is disclosed.

L'amant.

Sith for as much, as God and eke nature
Hath auaunced loue, to so hie degree
Much sharpe is the point, thus am I sure
Yet greueth more the faute, where euer it be
Who hath no cold, of heate hath no deintie
The one for that other, asked is expresse
And of pleasaunce, knoweth none certaintie
But it be one, in thought and heaunesse.

La dame.

As for pleasance, it is not alway one
That you thinke swete, I think it bitter pain
Ye may not me constrain, nor yet right none
After your lust to loue, that is but vain
To challenge loue by right, was neuer sein
But harte assent, before bond and promise
For strength and force, may not attain
A will that standeth enfeffed in franchise.

L'amant.

Right faire lady, god mote I neuer please
If I seeke other right in this case
But for to shewe you plainly my disease
And your mercie to abide, and eke your grace
If I purpose your honour to deface
Or euer did, God and fortune me shende
And that I neuer vnrightfully purchace
One onely ioy, vnto my liues ende.

La dame.

Ye and other, that sweare such othes fast
And so condemne, and curse to and fro
Full sikerly ye wene your othes laste
No lenger then the wordes been ago
And God, and eke his saints laugh also
In such swearing, there is no stedfastnesse
And these wretches that haue ful trust therto
After they wepe and waile in distresse.

L'amant.

He hath no courage of a man truely
That secheth pleasance, worship to dispise
Nor to be called forth, is not worthie
The earth to touch, the aire in no kinde wise
A trustie harte, a mouth without feintise

Thus

Thus be the strength of euery maner name
And who that laieth his faith for litle prise
He leseth both his worship and his fame.

La dame.

A cursed hart, a mouth that is curteise
Full well ye wote they be not according
Yet fained there, right sone may hem apeise
Where of malice is set all her working
Full false semblant they bere, & true seming
Her name, her fame, her tongues but fained
Worship in hem is put in forgetting
Nought repented, nor in no wise complained.

L'amant.

Who thinketh yll, no good may him befall
God of his grace graunt eche man his desart
But for his loue, among your thoughts all
As think vpon my wofull sorowes smart
For ok my paine, whether your tender hart
Of swete pitie, be not therewith agreued
And of your grace, to me were discouart
That by your mean, sone should I be releued

La dame.

A lightsome harte, a follie of pleasance
Aré much better, the lesse while they abide
Thei make you think, & bring you in a trance
But that sickenesse will sone be remedide
Respite your thought, and put all this aside
Full good disport wearieth me all day
To helpe nor hurt, my will is not aplide
Who troweth me not, I let him passe away.

L'amant.

Who hath a birde, a faucon, or a hound
That foloweth him for loue in euery place
He cherisheth him, & kepeth him full sound
Out of his sight, he will not him enchace
And if that set my wittes in this cace
On you alone, withouten any chaunge
Am put vnder, much farther out of grace
And lesse set by, then other that be straunge.

La dame.

Though I make chere to euery man about
For my worship, & for mine owne franchise
To you I will do so, withouten doubt
In eschewing all maner prejudise
For wote ye well, loue is so little wise
And in bileue, so lightly will be brought
That he taketh all at his owne deuise
Of thing God wot, ỹ serueth him of nought

L'amant.

If I by loue, and by true seruise
Lese the good chere ỹ strangers haue alway
Whereof shall serue my trouth in any wise
Lesse then to him, that cometh & goeth alday
Which holdeth of you nothing, ỹ is no nay
Also in you is lost, as to my semning
All curtesie, which of reason will say
That loue for loue, were lawfull desyring.

La dame.

Curtesie is alied wonder nere
To worship, which him loueth tenderly
And he will not be bound for no prayer
Nor for no giftes, I say you verely
But his good chere, depart full largely
Where him liketh, as his conceipt will fall
Guerdon constrained a gift doen thankfully
These twain can neuer accord nor neuer shall

L'amant.

As for guerdon I seeke none in this cace
For that desert, to me it is to hie
Wherfore I aske your pardon and your grace
Sith me behoueth death, or your mercie
To giue the good where it wanteth truly
That were reason, and a curtise mancre
And to your own much better were worthy
Then to strangers, to shewe hem loucly chere

La dame.

What call ye good, fain would I that I wist
That pleaseth one, an other smerteth sore
But of his owne, to large is he that list
Giue much, and lese his good name therfore
One should not make a graunt, little ne more
But the request were right well according
If worship be not kept and set before
All that is left, is but a little thing.

L'amant.

Into this world was founden neuer none
Nor vnder heauen creature yborne
Nor neuer shall, saue onely your persone
To whō your worship toucheth halfe so sore
But me which haue no season lesse ne more
Of youth ne age, but still in your seruice
I haue no eyen, ne wit, nor mouth in store
But all be guen to the same office.

La dame.

A ful great charge hath he withouten faile
That his worship kepeth in sikernesse
But in daunger he setteth his trauaile
That feffeth it with others busynesse
To him that longeth honour and noblesse

Upon

Upon none other should not be await
For of his owne, so much hath he the lesse
That of other, much foloweth the conceit.

L'amant.

Your eyen hath set the print, which that I sele
Within my hart, that where so euer I go
If I do thing, that souneth vnto wele
Nedes must it com from you, and fro no moe
Fortune wil this, that I for wele or wo
My life endure, your mercy abiding
And very right wil, that I thinke also
Of your worship, aboue all other thing.

La dame.

To your worship see wel, for that is nede
That ye spend not your season all in vain
As touching mine, I rede you take no hede
By your foly to put your selfe in pain
To ouercome is good, and to restrain
An hart, which is deceiued follily
For worse it is to breake then bow certain
Better bow, then to fal sodainly.

L'amant.

Now fair Lady thinke, sith it first began
That loue hath set mine hart vnder his cure
It neuer might ne truly I ne can
None other serue, while I shall here endure
In most free wise, therof I make you sure
Which may not be withdraw, this is no nay
I must abide all maner aduenture
For I may neither put to nor take away.

La dame.

I hold it for gilt in stedfastnesse
That one offereth, where it is forsake
For such a gift is abandoning expresse
That with worship ayen may not be take
He hath an hart ful fel that list to make
A gift lightly, that put is to refuse
But he is wise, that such conceit wil slake
So that hym nede, neither to study ne muse

L'amant.

He should not muse, ý hath his seruice spent
On her, which is a Lady honourable
And if I spend my time to that entent
Yet at the least, I am not reprouable
Of fained hart, to think I am vnable
Or I mistooke, when I made this request
By which loue hath of enterprise notable
So many harts gotten by conquest.

La dame.

If that ye list do after my counsaile
Serche a fairer, and of more higher fame
Which in seruice of loue, wil you preuaile
After your thought, according to the same
He hurteth both his worship and his name
That follily, for twain himself wil trouble
And he also leseth his after game
That surely cannot set his points double.

L'amant.

This your counsaile, by ought that I can see
Is better said then doen, to my aduise
Though I beleue it not, forgiue it me
Mine hart is such, so hole without feintise
That I ne may giue credence in no wise
To thing, which is not souning vnto truth
Other counsaile I see, be but fantasise
Saue of your grace, to shew pity and ruth.

La dame.

I hold him wise that worketh no foly
And when him list, can leaue and part therfro
But in conning, he is to learn truly
That would himselfe conduit, and can not so
And he that wil not after counsaile do
His suite he putteth into disperaunce
And all the good that should fal him to
Is lost and dedde, clene out of remembraunce

L'amant.

Yet wol I shew this matter faithfully
Whyles I liue, what euer be my chaunce
And if it hap, that in my truth I die
Then death shal do me no displeasaunce
But when that I, by your hard sufferaunce
Shal die so true, and with so great a paine
Yet shal it do me much the lesse greuaunce
Then for to liue a false louer certain.

La dame.

Of me get ye right nought, this is no fable
I wil to you be neither hard nor straut
And right wil, not no man customable
To thinke ye should, be sure of my conceit
Who secheth sorow, his be the receit
Other counsaile can I not feele nor see
Nor for to learn, I cast me not to awaut
Who will therof, let him assay for me.

L'amant.

Ones must it be assaied, that is no nay
With such as be of reputacion
And of true loue, the right honour to pay

Of free harts gotten by due raunsome
For frewil holdeth this opinion
That it is great duresse and discomfort
To keps a hart in so strait a prison
That hath but one body for his disport.

La dame.

I know so many causes marueilous
That I must nede of reason thinke certain
That soch auenture is wonder perilous
And yet wel more, the coming back again
Good or worship, thereof is seldome sene
Where I ne wil make soch aray
As for to find a pleasaunce, but a baraine
When it shal cost so dere the first assay

L'amant.

Ye haue no cause to doubt of this matter
Nor you to meue with no such fantasies
To put me farre all out as a straunger
For your goodnesse can thinke and wel aduise
That I haue made a prise in euery wise
By which my truth sheweth open euidence
My long abiding, and my true seruice
May wel be knowen by plain experience

La dame.

Of very right he may be called true
And so must he be take in euery place
That can discerne, and let as he ne knew
And kepe the good, if he it may purchase
For who that praieth, or sweareth in any case
Right wel ye wote, in ỹ no trouth is preued
Soch hath there been, & are, that getten grace
And lese it sone, when they haue it acheued

L'amant.

If truth me cause, by vertue souerain
To shew good loue, and alway find contrary
And cherish ỹ, which sleeth me with the pain
This is to me a louely aduersary
When ỹ pity, which long on slepe doth tary
Hath set the fine of all my heuinesse
Yet her comfort to me most necessary
Shal set my wil more sure in stablenesse.

La dame.

The wofull wight, what may he think or say
The contrary of all ioy and gladnesse
A sick body, his thought is alway
From hem that felen no sore nor sickenesse
Thus hurts been of diuers businesse
Which loue hath put to great hindraunce
And truth also, put in forgetfulnesse
When they ful sore begin to sigh askaunce.

L'amant.

Now God defend, but he be harmelesse
Of all worship or good that may befall
That to werst tourneth by his leudnesse
A gift of grace, or any thing at all
That his Lady vouchsafe vpon him call
Or cherisheth him in honourable wise
In that defaut, what euer he be that fall
Deserueth more then death to suffre twise

La dame.

There is no iudge yet on soch trespace
By which of right, loue may recouered be
One curseth fast, an other doth manace
Yet dieth none, as farre as I can see
But kepe her course alway in one degree
And euermore their labour doth encrease
To bring Ladies by their great subteltee
For others gilt, in sorow and disease

L'amant.

All be it so, one doth so great offence
And is not dedde, nor put to no iustice
Right wel I wote him gaineth no defence
But he must end in ful mischeuous wise
And all euer sated, God wil him dispise
For falshed is ful of cursednesse
That his worshib may neuer haue enterprise
Where it reigneth, and hath the wilfulnesse

La dame.

Of that haue they no great fere now a daise
Soch as wil say and maintain it therto
That stedfast truth is nothing for to praise
In hem that kepe it long in wele or wo
Their busie harts passen to and fro
They be so wel reclaimed to the lure
So wel learned hem to withhold also
And al to change, when loue should best endure

L'amant.

When one hath set his hart in stable wise
In such a place, as is both good and true
He should not flit, but do forth his seruice
Alway withouten chaunge of any new
As sone as loue beginneth to renew
All pleasaunce goeth anon in little space
As for my party that shal I eschue
While the soule abideth in his place

La dame.

To loue truely, there as it ought of right
Ye may not be mistaken doubtlesse
But ye be foule disceiued in your sight

By light vnderſtanding, as I geſſe
Yet may we well repele your buſineſſe
And to reaſon haue ſome attendaunce
Moch better than to abide by foly ſimpleneſſe
The feble ſoccour of diſperaunce.

L'amant.

Reaſon, counſaile, wiſdome, and good aduiſe
Been vnder loue areſted euerichone
To which I can accord in euery wiſe
For they been not rebell, but ſtill as a ſtone
Their wil and mine, be medled all in one
And therwith bounden with ſo ſtrong a chain
That as in hem, departing ſhal be none
But pity breake the mighty bond atwain

La dame.

Ye loue not your ſelf, what euer ye be
That in loue ſtand forgette in euery place
And of your wo, if ye haue no pite
Others pite bileue ye not to purchace
But be fully aſſured, as in this cace
I am alway vnder one or maunce
To haue better truſt not after grace
And all that leueth, take to your pleaſaunce

L'amant.

I haue my hope ſo ſure and ſo ſtedfaſt
That ſoch a Lady ſhould not lack pity
But now alas, it is ſhut vp ſo faſt
That danger ſheweth on me his cruelty
And if ſhe ſe the vertue faile in me
Of true ſeruice, though ſhe do faile alſo
No wonder were, but this is my ſurete
I muſt ſuffer, which way that euer it go

La dame.

Leaue this purpoſe I rede you for the beſt
For the lenger ye kepe, it is in vain
The leſſe ye get, as of your harts reſt
And to reioice it ſhal you neuer attain
When ye abide good hope to make you fain
Ye ſhall be found aſotted in dotage
And in the end, ye ſhal know for certain
Hope ſhal pay the wretches for her wage

L'amant.

Ye ſay as falleth moſt for your pleaſaunce
And your power is great, all this I ſee
But hope ſhal neuer out of my remembraunce
By which I fele ſo great aduerſitee
For when nature hath ſet in you plenty
Of all goodneſſe, by vertue and by grace
Ye neuer aſſembled hem, as ſemed me
To put pity out of his dwelling place,

La dame.

Pity of right ought to be reaſonable
And to no wight do no great diſauantage
There as is nede, it ſhould be profitable
And to the pitous ſhewing no domage
If a Lady will do ſo great outrage
To ſhew pity and cauſe her own debate
Of ſoch pity cometh diſpitous rage
And of ſoch loue, alſo right dedly hate

L'amant.

To comfort hem that liue all comfortleſſe
That is no harme, but comfort to your name
But ye that haue a hart of ſoch dureſſe
And a fair Lady I muſt affirme the ſame
If I durſt ſay, ye winne all this defame
By cruelty, which ſitteth you ful ill
But if pity, which may all this attain
In your high hart may reſt and tary ſtill

La dame.

What euer he be that ſaith he loueth me
And paraunenture I leue wel it be ſo
Ought he be wroth, or ſhould I blamed be
Though I did not as he would haue me do
If I medled with ſoch or other mo
It might be called pity mercileſſe
And afterward if I ſhould liue in wo
Then to repent, it were to late I geſſe

L'amant.

O marble hart, and yet more hard parde
Which merey may not pierce for no labour
More ſtrong to bow then is a mighty tree
What auaileth you to ſhew ſo great rigour
Pleaſeth it you more to ſee me die this hour
Before your eyen, for your diſport and play
Then for to ſhew ſome comfort and ſuccour
To reſpite death, which chaſeth me alway.

La dame.

Of your diſeaſe, ye may haue allegeaunce
And as for mine, I let it ouer ſlake
Alſo ye ſhal not die for my pleaſaunce
Nor for your heale, I can no ſurety make
I wil not hurt my ſelfe for others ſake
Wepe they, laugh they, or ſing they, I warant
For this matter, ſo will I vndertake
That none of hem ſhal make therof auaunt

L'amant.

I cannot ſkil of loue by God alone
I haue more cauſe to wepe in your preſence
And wel ye wote, auauntour am I none
For certainly, I loue better ſilence
One ſhould not loue by his harts credence

But he were sure to kepe it secretly
For a vauntour is of no reuerence
When that his tongue is his most enemy.

La dame.

Male bouch in court, hath great cómaundmẽt
Ech man studieth to say the worst he may
These false louers, in this time now present
They serue best to tangle as a Jay
The most secret wis, yet some men say
How he mistrusted is in some partise
Wherfore to ladies when so men speake or say
It should be bileued in no wise.

L'amant.

Of good and ill shal be, and is alway
The world is soch, the yearth is not all plain
They that be good, ỹ profe sheweth euery day
And other wise great billony certain
It is reason, though one his tong distain
With cursed speach, to do himselfe a shame
That soch refuce, should wrongfully remain
Upon the good renomed in their fame.

La dame.

Such as be nought, whether i here tidings new
That ech trespas shal lightly haue pardon
They that pursuen to be good and true
Will not set by none ill disposicion
To continue in euery good condicion
They are the first that fallen in domage
And ful frely the harts habandon
To little faith, with soft and faire language

L'amant.

Now know I wel of very certainte
If one do truly, yet shal he be shent
Sith all maner of iustice and pite
Is banished out of a Ladies entent
I can not see, but all is at one stent
The good, the ill, the vice, and eke the vertue
Such as be good, soch haue the punishment
For the trespace of hem that liue vntrue.

L'amant.

I haue no power you to do greuaunce
Nor to punish none other creature
But to eschew the more encombraunce
To kepe vs from you all, I hold it sure
False semblaunce, hath a face ful demure
Lightly to catch these Ladies in a wait
Wherfore we must, if we wil here endure
Make right good watch, lo this is my conceit

L'amant.

Sith that of grace, a goodly word not one
May now be had, but alway kept in store
I appeale to God, for he may heare my mone
Of the duresse, which greueth me so sore
And of pite, I complain furthermore
Which he forgate, in all his ordinaunce
Or els my life to haue ended before
Which so sone am put out of remembraunce

La dame.

My hart nor I, haue doen you no forfeit
By which ye should complain in any kind
Nothing hurteth you, but your own conceit
Be iudge your selfe, for so ye shal it find
Thus alway let this sinke in your mind
That your desire shal neuer recouered be
Ye noy me sore, in wastyng all this wind
For I haue said inough, as semeth me.

L'amant.

This woful man rose vp in all his pain
And so departed with wepyng countenaunce
His woful hart, almost to brast in twain
Ful like to die, walking forth in a traunce
And said death come forth, thy selfe auaunce
Or that myne hart forgete his property
And make shorter all this woful penaunce
Of my poore life, ful of aduersity.

Fro thens he went, but whither will I nought
Nor to what part he drew in sothfastnesse
But he no more was in his ladies thought
For to the daunce anon she gan her dresse
And afterward, one told me thus expresse
He rent his heer, for anguish and for pain
And in himselfe toke so great heauinesse
That he was dedde within a day or twain.

Lenuoy.

THE true louers thus I be-
seech you all
Such aduentures flie hem
in euery wise
And as people defamed ye
hem call
For they truly do you great
prejudice
His castels strong stuffed with ordinaunce
For they haue had long time by their office
The whole countrey of loue in obeisaunce.

And ye Ladies, or what estate ye be (place
Of whom worship hath chose his dwelling

For

For Goddes loue do no ſoch cruelty
Nor in no wiſe ne foule not the trace
Of her: hat here is named rightwiſely
Which by reaſon me ſemeth in this cace
May be called, La belle Dame ſans mercy.

Go little boke, God ſend thee good paſſage
Theſe wel thy way, be ſimple of manere
Look thy clothing be like thy pilgrimage
And ſpecially let this be thy praiere
Unto hem all, that they wil rede or here
Where thou art wrong after her help to call
Thee to correct in any part or all

Pray hem alſo with thine humble ſeruice
Thy boldneſſe to pardon in this cace
For els thou art not able in no wiſe
To make thy ſelf appere in any place
And furthermore beſech hem of her grace
By her fauour and ſupportacion
To take in gree this rude tranſlacion

The which God wot ſtandeth ful deſtitute
Of eloquence, of metre, and coulours
Like as a beaſt naked without refute
Upon a plain to abide all maner ſhours
I can no more, but aſk of hem ſocours
At whoſe requeſt thou were made in this wiſe
Commaunding me with body and ſeruice

Right thus I make an end of this proſſes
Beſeching him, that all hath in balaunce
That no true man be vexed cauſeleſſe
As this man was, which is of remembrance
And all that doen her faithful obſeruance
And in her trouth purpoſe him to endure
I pray God ſend hem better aenture.

Explicit.

Of Quene Annelida and falſe Arcite.

O Thou ſters God of armes Mars ỳ rede
That in thy frosty coũtrey called Thrace
Within thy griſly temples ful of drede
Honoured art as patrone of that place
With the Bellona Pallas ful of grace
Be preſent, and my ſong continue and gie
At my beginning thus to thee I crie.

For it ful depe is ſonken in mind
With pitous hart in Engliſh to endite
This old ſtory, in Latine which I find
Of Quene Annelida and falſe Arcite
That eld, which all can frete and bite
And it hath freten many a noble ſtory
Hath nigh deuoured out of our memory

Be fauourable eke thou Polimnia
On Pernaſo that hath thy ſiſters glade
By Elicon, not farre from Cirſa
Singeſt with voice memoriall in the ſhade
Under the Laurer, which that may not fade
And do that I my ſhip to hauen winne
First follow I Stace, and after him Lorinne

Iamq; domos patrias Cithie poſt aſpera gẽtis. Prelea laurigero ſuburente Theſea curru Letifice plauſus miſſuſq; ad ſidera vulgi.

When Theſeus with warres long & great
The aſpre folke of Cithe hath ouercome
The Laurer crouned in his chair gold beat
Home to his countre houſes is ycome
For which the people all and ſome
So criden, that to the Sterres it went
And him to honouren did all her entent

Before this Duke, in ſign of victory
The Trompes come, and in his baner large
The Image of Mars, and in token of glory
Men might ſee of treaſure many a charge
Many a bright helm, & many a ſpere & targe
Many a freſh knight, and many a blithful rout
On horſe and on foot, in all the field about

Ipolita his wife, the hardy Quene

Of Cithia, that he conquered had
With Emely her young suster shene
Faire in a chaire of gold he with him lad
That al the ground about her chare she spread
With brightnesse of beauty in her face
Fulfilled of largesse and of grace

With his triumph & laurer corouned thus
In all the floure of Fortunes yeuing
Let I this noble prince Theseus
Toward Athens in his way riding
And fond I wol in shortly to bring
The slie way of that I gan to write
Of Quene Annelida and false Arcite

Wars that through his furious course of ire
The old wrath of Juno to fulfill
Hath set the peoples harts both on fire
Of Thebes and Grece, & euerich other to kill
With bloody speres rested neuer still
But thrõg now here now there amõg hẽ both
That euerich other slue, so were they wroth

For when Amphiorax and Tideus
Ipomedon, and Partinope also
Were dedde, and slain proud Campaneus
And whẽ the wretched Thebans brethẽ two
Were slain and king Adrastus home ago
So desolate stood Thebes and so bare
That no wight could remedy of his care

And when the old Creon gan espy
How that ỳ blood roial was brought adoun
He held the citee by his tyranny
And bid the gentils of that regioun
To ben his frends, and dwel in the toun
So what for loue of him, and what for awe
The noble folke wer to the toun ydraw

Emong all these Annelida the Quene
Of Ermony, was in that toun dwelling
That fairer was then the Sonne shene
Throughout ỳ world so gan her name spring
That her to see had euery wight liking
For as of trouth is there none her lich
Of all the women in this world rich

Long was this quene, of twenty yere old
Of middle stature, and of soch fairnesse
That nature had a ioy her to behold
And for to speaken of her stedfastnesse
She passed hath Penelope, and Lucresse
And shortly if she shal ben comprehended
In her might nothing ben amended

This Theban knight eke soth to sain
Was yong, and therto withall a lusty knight
But he was double in loue, and nothing plain
And subtil in that craft ouer any wight
And with his conning wan this lady bright
For so ferforth he gan her trouth assure
That she him trusteth ouer any creature

What should I sain, she loueth Arcite so
That when that he was absent any throw
Anon her thought her hart brast a two
For in her sight to her he bare him low
So that she wend haue all his hart yknow
But he was false, it nas but fained chere
As nedeth not soch craft men to lere

But neuertheless ful mikel businesse
Had he, er that he might his Lady winne
And swore he would dien for distresse
Or from his witte he said he would twinne
Alas the while, for it was routh and sinne
That she vpon his sorows would rue
But nothing thinketh ỳ false as doth ỳ true

Her fredome found Arcite in soch manere
That all was his, that she hath moch or lite
Ne to no creature made she chere
Further then it liked to Arcite (wite
There was no lack, with which he might her
She was so ferforth peuen him to please
That all that liked him, did her ease.

There nas to her no maner letter sent
That touched loue, from any maner wight
That she ne shewed him or it was brent
So plain she was, and did her ful might
That she nill hide nothing from her knight
Lest he of any untrouth her vpbreid
Without bode his hart she obeid.

And eke he made him ialous ouer her
That what that any man had to her saied
Anon he would praien her to swere
What was ỳ word, or make him yuell apaied
Then wend she out of her witte haue braied
But all was but sleight and flattery
Without loue he fained iealousy.

And all this tooke she so debonairly
That all his will, her thought it skilfull thing
And euer the lenger she loued him tenderly
And did him honour as he were a king
Her hart was to him wedded with a ring
For so ferforth vpon trouth is her entent
That where he goeth, her hart with him went

when

Whā she shal eat, on him is so her thought
That wel vneth of meate toke she kepe
And whan she was to her rest brought
On him she thought alway till that she slepe
Whan he was absent, pitiuely doth she wepe
Thus liueth faire Annelida the quene
For false Arcyte, that did her all this tene

This false Arcyte, of his newfanglenesse
For she to him so lowly was and trewe
Toke lesse deintie for her stedfastnesse
And sawe another lady proud and newe
And right anon he clad him in her hewe
Wote I not whether in white, red, or greene
And falsed faire Annelida the queene.

But neuertheless, great wonder was it none
Though he wer false, for it is ỳ kinde of man
Sith Lameth was, that is so long agone
To be in loue as false as euer he can
He was the first father that began
To louen two and was in bigamie
And he found tentes first, but if men lye

This false Arcite, som what must he saine
Whan he was false, to couerē his traitourie
Right as an horse, ỳ can both bite & plaine
For he bare her in honde of trecherie
And swore he could her doublenesse espye
And al was falsenesse that she to him ment
thus swore this theef & forth his way he wēt

Alas what hart might endure it
For routh or wo, her sorow for to tel
Or what man hath the conning or the wit
Or what man might within the chābre dwel
If I to him rehersen shall the hell
That suffreth faire Annelida the quene
For false Arcite, that did her al this tene

She wepeth, waileth, & swoundeth pitously
To ground dead she falleth as a stone
Crampisheth her lymmes crokedly
She speketh as her witte were all agone
Other colour than asshen hath she none
Ne none other word speketh she much or lite
But mercy cruel hart mine Arcite

And thus endureth, til that she was so mate
ỳ she ne hath foote, on which she may sustene
But forth languishing euer in this estate
Of which Arcite hath neither rothe ne tene
His hart was els where newe and grene
That on her wo, ne deineth him not to think
Him reketh neuer whether she flete or sinke

This newe lady holdeth him so narowe
Up by the bridel, at the staues ende
That euery worde he dred it as an arowe
Her danger made him both bowe & bende
And as her lust, made him turne or wende
For she ne graunted him in her liuing
No grace, why that he hath to sing

But droue him forth, vneth list her knowe
That he was seruant vnto her ladiship
But leste he were proud, she held him lowe
Thus serueth he, without meat or sip
She sent him now to land, & now to ship
And for she paue him daunger all his fill
Therfore she had him at her owne will.

Ensample of this, ye thriftie women all
Take hede of Annelida and false Arcite
That for her list him, her dere hart call
And was so meke, therfore he loued her lite
The kinde of mannes hart is to delite
On thing that strange is, allo God me saue
For what they may not get, ỳ wold thei haue

Now turne we to Annelida ayen
That pineth day by day in languishing
But whan she saw, that her ne gate ne geyn
Upon a day ful sorowfully weping
She cast her for to make a complaining
And with her own hand she gan it write
And sent it to her Theban knight Arcyte.

The complaint of Annelida to false Arcyte.

SO thirled with the point of remembrance
The swerde of sorow, whette with false plesance
Mine harte bare of blisse, and black of hewe
That turned is to quaking all my daunce
My sewertie in waped countenance
Sens it auaileth nought to ben trewe
For who so trew is, it shall her rewe
That serueth loue, & doth her obseruaunce
Alway to one, and changeth for no newe

I wote my selfe as well as any wight
For I loued one, with al mine hart and might
More than my self, an hundred thousand sith
And called him my hartes life, my knight
And was all his, as ferre as it was right
And whan ỳ he was glad, than was I blithe

And his diſeaſe was my death as ſwythe
And he ayen, his trouth he hath me plight
For euermore his lady me to kithe.

Now is he falſe alas, and cauſeles
And of my wo he is ſo routhles
That with a word him liſt not ones daine
To bring ayen my ſorowful hart in pees
For he is caught vp in another lees
Right as him liſt he laugheth at my paine
And I ne can mine hart not reſtraine
For to loue him yet alway neuertheles
And of all this I not to whom to plaine

And ſhould I plaine, alas the hard ſtounde
Vnto my foe, that yaue mine hart a wound
And yet deſireth that mine harme be more
Now certes ferther woll I neuer be found
None other helpe, my ſores for to ſound
My deſteny hath ſhaped ſo full yore
I wot none other medicine ne lore
I wot ben aye there I was ones bound
That I haue ſaid, be ſaid for euermore,

Alas, where is become your gentilneſſe
Your words ful of pleaſance & humbleneſſe
Your obſeruaunce in ſo lowe manere
Your awaityng, and your beſineſſe
On me, that ye called your mauſtreſſe
Your ſoueraine lady in this world here
Alas, is there neither word ne chere
Ye vouchſafe vpon mine heuineſſe
Alas your loue, I buy it al to dere.

Now certes ſwete, though that ye
Thus cauſeleſſe the cauſe be
Of my deedly aduerſitie
Your manly reaſon ought it to reſpite.
To flee your frende, and namely me
That neuer yet in no degre
Offended you, as wiſely he
That al wote, of wo my ſoule quite

But for I was ſo plaine Arcite
In all my workes much and lite
And was ſo buſy you to delite
Mine honour ſaue, meke, kinde, and free
Therefore ye put in me this wite
Alas, ye recche not amiſſe
Though that the ſwerde of ſorowe byte
My wofull hart, through your cruelte.

My ſwete ſo, why do ye ſo for ſhame
And thinke ye that furthered be your name
To loue a newe, and ben vntrewe aye
And put you in ſlaunder newe and blame
And do to me aduerſitie and grame
That loue you moſt, God thou woſt alway
Yet turne ayen, and yet be plaine ſome day
And than ſhal this ỹ now is mis ben gaine
And al forgeue, while I liue may

Lo hart mine, al this is for to ſaine
As whether ſhal I praie or els plaine
Which is the way to done you to be trewe
For either mote I haue you in my chaine
Or with the death ye mote depart vs twaine
There be the none other meanes waies newe
For God ſo wiſely on my ſoule rewe
As verily ye ſlaine me with the paine
That mow ye ſee vnfained on mine hewe

For thus forſoth haue I my deth ſought
My ſelfe I murder with my priuie thought
For ſorowe and routh of your vnkindneſſe
I wepe, I waile, I faſt, all helpeth naught
I voide ioy that is to ſpeake of aught
I voide company, I flye gladneſſe
Who may auaunt her better of heuineſſe
Than I, & to this plite haue ye me brought
Without gilt, me nedeth no witneſſe

And ſhould I pray, & weiuen womanhede
Nay rather deth, than do ſo foule a dede
And aſke mercy and giltleſſe, what nede
And if I plaine what life I lede
You recketh not, that know I out of drede
And if I vnto you mine othes bede
For mine excuſe, a ſcorne ſhal be my mede
Your chere floureth, but it wol not ſede
Full long agon I might haue taken hede

For though I had you to morow againe
I might as wel holde April from raine
As hold you to maken ſtedfaſt
Almightie God, of trouth the ſoueraine
Wher is ỹ trouth of man, who hath it ſlaine
She that hem loueth, ſhall hem finde as faſt
As in a tempeſt is a rotten maſt
Is that a tame beeſt, that is aye faine
To renne away, whan he is leſt agaſt

Now mercie ſwete, if I miſſay
Haue I aught ſaid out of the way
I not, my witte is al away
I fare as doth the ſong of chaunteplcure
For now I plaine, and now I plcy
I am ſo maſed that I dey
Arcite hath borne away the key
Of al my world, and my good auenture

For

For in this world there nis no creature
Walking in more discomfiture
Than I, ne more sorrowe endure
For if I slepe a furlong way or twey
Than thinketh me that your figure
Before me stant clad in asure
Left to profer a newe assure
For to ben trewe, and mercy me to prey

The long night, this wonder sight ydrie
That on the day for such affray I dye
And of al this right naught pwis ye retche]
Ne neuermore mine eyen two ben drye
And to your routh, & to your trouth I crye
But welaway, to ferre ben they to fetche
Thus holdeth me my destenye a wretch
But me to rede out of this drede or gye
Ne may my wit (so weake is it) not stretch.

Than end I thus, sith I may do no more
I pleue it vp for now and euermore
For I shal neuer efte putten in balaunce
My sikernesse, ne lerne of loue the lore
But as the swan, I haue herde say ful yore
Ayenst his deth wol sing in his penaunce
So sing I here the destenie and chaunce
How that Arcite Annelida so sore
Hath thrilled with the point of remembrance

When that Annelida this woful quene
Hath of her hand written in this wise
With face dead, betwixt pale and grene
She fel a swoune, & sith she gan to rise
And vnto Mars auoweth sacrifise
Within the temple, with a sorowfull chere
That shapen was, as ye may plainly here.

Explicit.

The assemblie of Ladies.

In September at the falling of the leke
The fresbe season was altogider done
And of the corne was gathered the sheke
In a gardine about twain after none
Therwer ladies walking, as was her wone
Foure in nombre, as to my minde doth fall
And I the fifth, the simplest of hem all

Of gentilwomen faire there were also
Disporting hem, euerich after her gise
In crosse alcies walking by two and two
And some alone, after her fantasies
Thus occupied we were in diuerse wise
And yet in trouth we were not all alone
There were knights and squires many one

Whereof I serued, one of hem asked me
I said ayen, as it fell in my thought
To walke about the mase in certaintie
As a woman that nothing rought
He asked me ayen whom that I fought
And of my colour, why I was so pale
For sothe (qd I) and thereby lithe a tale

That must me wete (qd he) and that anone
Tel on let see, and make no tarying
Abide qd I, ye ben a haltie one
I let you wete it is no little thing
But for because ye haue a great longing
In your desire, this processe for to here
I shal you tell the plaine of this matere

It happed thus, that in an after noone
My felauship and I by one assent
When al other besinesses were doone
To passe our time, into this mase we went
And tooke our waies, eche after our entent
Some wēt inward, & went they had gon out
Some stood in the mid, & loked all about

And soth to say, some were ful ferre behind
And right anon as ferforth as the host
Other there were so mased in her minde
Al waies were good for hem host Est & West
Thus went they forth, and had but little rest
And some her courage did hem fore assaile

For

For very wrathe, they did step ouer the raile

And as they sought hem selfe to and fro
I gate my selfe a little auantage
Al forweried, I might no further go
Though I had won right great for my viage
So came I forth into a straite passage
Which brought me to an herber faire & grene
Made with benches ful craftie and cleane

That as me thought, there mist no creature
Deuise a better, by dewe proporcioun
Safe it was closed wel I you ensure
With masonry, of compace enuiroun
Ful secretly with staires going down
In middes ỳ place, with turning whele cer-
And vpon that a pot of Margelaine (tain

With margarets growing in ordinance
To shewe hem selfe, as folke went to and fro
That to behold it was a great pleasance
And how they were accompanied with mo
Ne mombliesnesse and souenesse also
The poure penses were not disloged there
Ne god wote her place was euery where

The floze & bench was paued faire & smothe
With stones square, of many diuers hewe
So wel ioyned, that for to say the soth
Al semed one, that none other knewe
And vnderneth the streames new and new
As siluer bright, springing in such a wise
That whence it came, ye could it not deuise.

A little while was I all alone
Beholding wel this delectable place
My felawship were coming euerychone
So must we needes abyde for a space
Remembring of many diuers cace
Of time passed, with sighes depe
I set me downe, and there I fell aslepe

And as I slept, me thought there came to me
A gentil woman, metely of stature
Of great worship she semed for to be
Atyred wel, not high but by measure
Her countenance full sad and demure
Her colours blewe, all that she had vpon
There came no mo but her selfe alone

Her gowne wel was embraudred certainly
With stones after her own deuise
In her purfil, her worde by and by
Bien & loyalment as I could deuise
Than praide I her in any maner wise
That of her name I might haue remẽbrance
She said she was called Perseuerance.

So furthermore to speak was I bolde
Where she dwelled, I prayed her for to say
And she againe full curtesly me tolde
My dwelling is, and hath be many a day
With a lady: what lady I you pray?
Of great estate, thus warne I you (qd she)
What cal ye her? Her name is Loyaltie.

In what office stand ye, or in what degree
(Qd I to her) that would I wete right faine
I am (qd she) vnworthie though I be
Of her chamber her vsher in certaine
This rodde I beare, as for a token plaine
Like as ye know the rule in such seruice
Apertaining is to the same office.

She charged me by her commaundement
To warne you, and your felawes euerichone
That ye should come there as she is present
For a counsaile, which shal be now anone
Or seuen dayes be comen and gone
And furthermore, she bad that I should say
Excuse there might be none nor delay

Another thing was not forget behinde
Which in no wise I woulde but ye knewe
Remembre wel, and beare it in your minde
Al your felawes and ye must come in blewe
Euerliche able, your maters for to sewe
With more, which I pray you thinke vpon
Your wordes on your selues euerychon

And be not abashed in no maner wise
As many ben, in such an high presence
Make your request, as ye can best deuise
And she gladly woll yeue you audience
There is no grefe, nor no maner offence
Wherin ye fele that your hart is displeased
But with her help, right sone ye shal be eased.

I am right glad (qd I) ye tell me this
But ther is non of vs that knoweth the way
As of your way (qd she) ye shal not mis
Ye shal haue to guyde you day by day
Of my felawes, I cannot better say
Such one as shal tel you the way full right
And Diligence this gentil woman hight

A woman of right famous gouernance
And wel cherished, I tel you in certaine
Her felauship shal do you great pleasance
Her port is such, her maners trewe & plaine

She

Shе with glad chere would do her bely pain
To bring you there, now farewel I haue don
Abyde said I, ye may not go so sone.

Why so (qd she) and I haue ferre to go
To yeue warning in many diuers place
To your felawes, and so to other mo
And wel ye wote I haue but little space
Nowe yet (qd I) ye must tell me this cace
If we shall any men vnto vs call
Not one (qd she) may come amonges you all.

Not one than said I, eigh Benedicite
What haue I done, I pray you tel me that
Now by my life, I trowe but wel (qd she)
But euer I can beleue there is somwhat
And for to say you trouth more can I not
In questions I may nothing be to large
I meddle no further than my charge

Than thus (qd I) do me to vnderstande
What place is there this lady is dwelling
Forsoth (qd she) and one sought al this lande
Fairer is none, though it were for a king
Deuised wel, and that in euery thing
The toures hie ful pleasant shal ye finde
with phanes fresh, turning with euery winde

The chambers & parlers of a sorte
with bay windows, goodly as may be thought
Is for daunsing, and other wise disport
The galeries right well ywrought
That wel I wot, if ye were thider brought
And take good hede therof in euery wise
Ye wol it thinke a very paradise

what hight the place (qd I) now say me that
Pleasant regard (qd she) to tel you plaine
Of very trouth (qd I) and wote ye what
It may right wel be called so certain
But furthermore this wold I wit right fain
what I should do as sone as I come there
And after whom I may best enquere.

A gentil woman, a porter of the yate
Ther shal ye finde, her name is Countenance
If ye so hap ye come erely or late
Of her wer good to haue some acquaintance
She can you tel how ye shal you auaunce
And how to come to her ladies presence
To her wordes I rede ye geue credence

Now it is time I parte you fro
For in good faith I haue great business
I wote right wel (qd I) that it is so
And I thank you of your great gentilnesse
Your comfort hath yeuen me hardinesse
That now I shal be bolde without faile
To do after your aduise and good counsaile.

Thus parted she, and I left all alone
With that I sawe (as I beheld aside)
A woman come a verie goodly one
And forth withal as I had her aspide
Me thought anone it should be the gide
And of her name anon I did enquere
Ful womanly she gaue me this answere

I am (qd she) a simple creature
Sent from the court, my name is Diligence
As sone as I might come I you ensure
I taried not after I had licence
And now that I am come to your presence
Loke what seruice I can do or may
Commaund me, I can no further say.

I thanked her, & prayed her to come nere
Because I would see how she was araide
Her gown was blew dressed in good manere
With her deuise, her word also that saide
Tant que ie puis and I was wel apaide
And than wist I without en any more
It was ful true that I had herde before

Though we toke now before a little space
It were ful good (qd she) as I coud gesse
How farre (qd I) haue we vnto the place.
A daies iourney (qd she) but little lesse
Wherefore I rede that we outward dresse
For I suppose our felawship is past
And for nothing I would not we wer the last

Than depart we at the springing of the day
And forth we went soft and easie pace
Til at the last we were on our iourney
So far outward, that we might see the place
Now let vs rest (qd I) a little space
And say we as deuoutly as we can
A Pater noster for saint Julian

With al my hart I assent with good will
much better shal we spede, whã we haue don
Than taried we, and said it euery dyll
And whan the day was past farre after none
We sawe a place, and thider came we sone
Which round about was closed with a wall
Seming to me ful like an hospitall

There found I one had brought all min aray
(A gentil woman of mine acquaintance)

I haue

I haue mervaile (qd I) what maner way
Ye had knowledge of all this ordinance
Yes yes (qd she) I heard Perfecurance
How she warned her felowes everychone
And what aray ye should haue vpon

Now for my lone (qd I) this I you pray
Sith ye haue take vpon you all the paine
That ye would helpe me on with mine aray
For wit ye wel I would be gone right faine
All this prayer nedeth not certaine
(qd she) againe, come of and hye you fone
And ye shall see anon it shall be done

But this I doubt me greatly, wote ye what
That my felawes be passed by and gone
I warne you (qd she, that are they nat
For here they shall assemble everychone
Notwithstanding I counsaile you anone
Make you redy, and tary you no more
It is no harme though ye be there before.

So than I dressed me in mine araye
And asked her whether it were wel or no
It is right well (qd she) vnto my pay
Ye nede not care to what place euer ye go
And whiles that she and I debated so
Lane Diligence and saw me all in blewe
Sister (qd she) right wel broke ye your new.

Discrecion purveiour.

Than went we forth and met at auenture
A yong woman, an officer seeming
What is your name (qd I) good creature
Discrecion (qd she) without leasing
And where (qd I) is your most abiding
I haue qd she) this office of purchace
Chefe purueyour that longeth to this place.

Acquaintance herbyger.

Faire loue (qd I) in all your ordenance
What is her name that is the herbigere
Forsothe (qd she) her name is Acquaintance
A woman of right gracious manere
Then thus (qd I) what stragers haue ye here
But fewe (qd she) of high degre ne lowe
Ye be the first, as ferforth as I knowe.

Countenance porter.

Thus with tales we came streight to ỹ yate
This yong woman departed was and gone
Lane Diligence and knocked fast thereat
Who is without (qd Countenance) anone
Truely (qd I, faire sister here is one
Which one (qd she) ⁊ therwithall she lough
Diligence, ye know me wel ynough

Than opened she the gate, and in we go
With words faire she saied ful gentily
Ye are welcome ywis, are ye no moe
Not one (qd she) fane this woman and I
Now than (qd she) I pray you hertely
Take my chaumber for a while to rest
Til your felawes come, I holde it best.

I thanked her, and forth we go everichone
Til her chamber without words mo
Lane Diligence and toke her leaue anone
Where euer ye list (qd I) now may ye go
And I thanke you right hartely also
Of your labour, for which god do you mede
I can no more, but Jesu be your spede.

Than Countenance asked me anone
Your felaushp, where be they (qd she)
Forsothe (qd I) they be coming everichone
But where they are I know no certaintie
Without I may hem at this window see
Here wil I stand a waiting euer among
For wel I wote they wil not be long.

Thus as I stode musing full busily
I thought to take good hede of her aray
Her gowne was blewe, this wote I verely
Of good fashion, and furred wel with gray
Upon her sleue her worde this is no nay
Which said thus, as my penne can endite
A moy, qui voy written with letters white.

Than forthwithal she came streight to me
Your words (qd she) fain wold I ỹ I knewe
Forsoth (qd I) ye shal wel know and see
And for my word I haue none, this is trewe
It is ynough that my clothing be blewe
As here before I had commaundement
And so to do, I am right wel content.

Largesse stewarde.

But tel me this I pray you hartely
The steward here fay me, what is her name
She hight Largesse I fay you furely
A faire lady and of right noble fame
When ye her see ye will report the same
And vnder her to bid you welcome all
There is Beichier marshall of the hall.

Now al this while that ye here tary still
Your own matters ye may wel haue in mind
But tel me this, haue ye brought any bill
Yea yea qd I) and els I were behinde
Wher is there one tel me that I may finde
To whom ỹ I may shew my maters plaine

Surely

Surely (qd. she) vnto the chamberlaine

Remembraunce chamberlaine.

The chamberlaine (qd. I) say ye trew
Ye verely (said she) by mine aduise
Ben nat aferd, vnto her lowly sew
It shal be done (qd. I) as ye deuise
But ye must know her name in any wise
Trewly (qd. she) to shew you in substaunce
Without en fayning her name is Remẽbraũce

The secretary she may not yet be forget
For she doth right much in euery thing
Wherfore I rede, whan ye haue with her ymet
Your mater hole tel her without fayning
Ye shal her find ful good and ful louing
Tel me her name (qd. I) of gentilnesse
By my good soth (qd. she) Auisenesse

That (qd. I) for her is passing good
For euery bill and sedule she must se
Now good (qd. I) come stand there as I stood
My felaws be comming, ponder they be
Is it iape, or say ye soth (qd. she)
In iape, nay nay, I say you for certaine
See how they come togither twain & twayne

Ye say ful soth (qd. she) that is no nay
I see comming a goodly company
They ben soth folke (qd. I) dare I say
That list to loue, thinke it verely
And for my loue I pray you faithfully
At any time, whan they vpon me call
That ye wol be good frend to hem all

Of my frendship (qd. she) they shal not misse
And for their ease to put therto my paine
God yeld it you (qd. I) but take you this
How shal we know who is the chamberlaine
That shal ye wel know by her word certaine
What is her word sister, I pray you say
(Plus ne pourroye) thus writeth she alway

Thus as we stood togider she and I
Euen at the yate my felawes were echone
So met I hem (as me thought was goodly)
And bade hem welcome all by one and one
Than came forth Countenaunce anone
Ful hertely, faire sisters al (qd. she)
Ye be right welcome into this countre

I counsaile you to take a litel rest
In my chambre, if it be your plesaunce
Whan ye be there, me thinke it for the best
That I go in, and cal Perseueraunce
Byeause she is of your acquaintaunce
And she also wil tel you euery thing
How ye shal be ruled of your comming

My felawes all and I, by one aduise
Were wel agreed, to do like as she said
Than we began to dresse vs in our gise
That folke should say we were nat vnpurueid
And good wagers among vs there we laid
Which of vs was atired most goodlest
And of vs all which should be praised best

The porter came and brought Perseueraunce
She welcommed vs in curteise manere
Thinke ye not long (qd. she) of your attẽdaunce
I wil go speke vnto the herbigere
That she puruey for your lodging here
Than wil I go vnto the chamberlaine
To speke for you, and come anon againe

And whan she departed was and gone
We saw folks comming without the wal
So great people, that number could we none
Ladies they were, and gentelwomen all
Clothed in blew echone her word wothall
But for to know her word or her deuise
They came so thick, that I ne might in no wise.

With that anon came in Perseueraunce
And where I stood, she came streight to me
Ye ben (qd. she) of mine old aquaintaunce
You to enquere the bolder would I be
What word they bere eeh after her degre
I you pray tel it me in secret wise
And I shal kepe it close on warrantise

We ben fiue ladies (qd. I) al in fere
And gentilwomen foure in company
When they begin to open her matere
Than shal ye know her words by and by
But as for me I haue none verely
And so I told Countenaunce here before
All mine aray is blew, what nedeth more

Now then (qd. she) I wol go againe
That ye may haue knowledge, what ye should
In soth (qd. I) if ye would take the paine (do
Ye did right much for vs, if ye did so
The rather spede, the soner may we go
Great cost alway there is in tariyng
And long to sew it is a wery thing

Than parted she, and came again anone
Ye must (qd. she) come to the chamberlaine
We be now redy (qd. I) euerichone

To folow you, whan euer ye list certaine
We haue none cloquence to tel you plaine
Beseching you we may be so excused
Our trew meaning, that it be not refused

Than went we forth after Perseueraunce
To see the prees it was a wonder cace
There for to passe it was great combraunce
The people stood so thick in euery place
Now stand ye stil (qd. she) a litel space
And for your ease somewhat I shal assay
yf I can make you any better way

And forth she goeth, among hem euerichone
Making a way, that we might through passe
More at our ease, and whan she had so done
She beckened vs to come, where as she was
So after her we folowed more and las
She brought vs streight vnto ỹ chamberlaine
There left she vs, and than she went againe

We salued her as reason would it so
Ful humbly beseching her great goodnesse
In our matters that we had for to do
That she would be good lady and maistresse
Ye be welcome (qd. she) in sothfastnesse
And se what I can do, you for to please
I am redy, that may be to your ease

We folowed her vnto the chamber dore
Sisters (qd. she) come ye in after me
But wete ye wel, there was a paued flore
The goodliest, that any wight might se
And furthermore about than loked we
On eth corner, and vpon euery wall
Which was made of Burel and Cristall

Wherin was grauen of stories many one
First how Phillis, of womanly pite
Died pitously for loue of Demophone
Next after was the story of Thisbe
How she slew her selfe vnder a tre
yet saw I more, how in a right pitous caas
For Antony was slaine Cleopatras

That other syde was Hawes the shene
Ful vntrewly disceiued in her paine
There was also Annelida the quene
Upon Arcite how sore she did complaine
All these stories were graued there certaine
And many mo, than I reherse you here
It were to long to tel you all in fere

And bicause the walles shone so bright
With fine vmple they were all ouer spred
To the entent folke should not hurt her sight
And through it the stories might be rad
Than furthermore I went, as I was lad
And there I saw without any faile
A chaire set, with ful rich aparaile

And fiue stages, it was set fro the ground
Of Cassidony ful curiously wrought
With foure pomelles of gold, and very round
Set with saphirs, as good as coud be thought
That wot ye what, if it were through sought
As I suppose, fro this countre to finde
Another soch it were right farre to finde

For wete ye wel, I was right nere that
So as I durst, beholding by and by
Aboue there was a rich cloth of estate
Wrought with the nedle ful straungely
Her word theron, and thus it said truely
I endure to tel you in words few
With great letters, the better I hem knew

Thus as we stood, a dore opened anone
A gentilwoman, semely of stature
Bearing a mace, came out her selfe alone
Sothly me thought a goodly creature
She speake nothing to loud, I you ensure
Nor hastely, but with goodly warning
Make rome (qd. she) my lady is comming

With that anon I saw Perseueraunce
How she held vp the tapet in her hand
I saw also in right goodly ordinaunce
This great lady within the tapet stand
Comming outward, I wol ye vnderstand
And after her a noble company
I coud not tel the nombre liberly

Of their names I wold nothing enquere
Further than such as we would sew vnto
Saue a lady which was the chauncellere
Attemperaunce sothly her name was so
For vs nedeth with her haue moch to do
In our matters, and alway more and more
And so forth to tel you furthermore

Of this lady, her beaute to discrine
My conning is to simple verely
For neuer yet the daies of my line
So inly faire I haue sene none trewly
In her estate assured vtterly
There wanted nought, I dare wel assure
That longed to a goodly creature

And furthermore to speake of her aray
I shall you tel the manner of her gowne

Of

Of cloth of gold, ful rich it is no nay
The colour blew of right goodly factoun
In taberd wise, the sleues hanging adoun
And what purfil there was, and in what wise
So as I can I shal it you deuise

After a sort, the coller and the bent
Like as Armine is made in purfeling
With great perles ful fine and orient
They were couched all after one worching
With diamonds in stede of powdering
The sleues and purfell of assise
They were made like in euery wise

About her necke a sort of faire rubies
In white floures of right fine enamaile
Upon her heed set in the faircst wise
A cercle of great balais of entaile
That in erncst to speke without faile
For yong and old, and euery maner age
It was a world to loken on her visage

Thus comming forth to sit in her estate
In her presence we kneled down euerichone
Presenting our billes, and wote ye what
Ful humbly she toke hem by one and one
Whan we had done, than came they all anone
And did the same ech after her manere
Kneling at ones, and rising all in fere

And whan this was done, she set in her place
The chamberlaine she did vnto her call
And she goodly comming vnto her a pace
Of her entent knowing nothing at all
Void back the preasse (qd. she) vp to the wall
Make large rome, but loke ye do not tary
And take these billes to the secretary

The chamberlaine did her commaundement
And came again, as she was bid to do
The secretary there being present
The billes were deliuered her also
Not only ours, but many other mo
Than the lady with good aduise againe
Anon with all, called her chamberlaine

We wol (qd. she) the first thing that ye do
The secretary ye do make come anone
With her billes, and thus we wil also
In our presence she rede hem euerichon
That we may take good aduise theron
Of the ladies that ben of our counsaile
Loke this be done, withouten any faile

Whan the chamberlaine wist of her entent
Anon she did the secretary call
Let your billes (qd. she) be here present
My lady it will: Madame (qd. she) I shall
And in presence she wil ye hem call
With good wil I am redy (qd. she)
At her pleasure, whan she commaundeth me

And vpon that was made an ordinaunce
They that came first her billes should hered
Ful gentelly than said Perseuerance
Reason it wil they were soonest sped
Anon withall, vpon a tapet spred
The secretary laid hem down echone
Our billes first she redde one by one

The first lady bearing in her deuise
Sans que iamays, thus wrote she in her bill
Complaining sore, and in ful pitous wise
Of promesse made, with faithful hert and will
And so broken ayenst all maner skill
Without desert, alwaies on her party
In this mater, desiring a remedy

Her next folowing, her word was in this wise
Vn sans changer, and thus she did complaine
Though she had be guerdoned for her seruice
Yet nothing like as she that toke the paine
Wherfore she coud in no wise her restraine
But in this case sew vntil her presence
As reason would to haue recompence

So further more, to speke of other twaine
One of hem wrote after her fantasy
Onques puis leuer, and for to tel you plaine
Her complaint was ful pitous verely
For as she said, there was great reason why
As I can remembre this matere
I shal you tel the processe all in fere

Her bil was made complaining in her gise
That of her ioy, her comfort and gladnesse
Was no surete, for in no maner wise
She said therin no point of stablenesse
Now ill now wele, out of all sikernesse
Ful humbly desiring of her high grace
Soone to shew her remedy in this case,

Her felaw made her bill, and thus she said
In plaining wise there as she loued best
Whether she were wroth or wel apaid
She might not see whan she wold fainest
And wroth she was in very ernest
To tel her word, as ferforth as I wote
Entierement vostre, right thus she wrote

And vpon that she made a great request
With hert and will, & all that might be done
As vntil her that might redresse it best
For in her mind there might she find it soone
The remedy of that which was her boone
Rehersing that she had said before
Beseeching her it might be so no more

And in like wise as they had done before
The gentilwomen of our company
Put her billes, and for to tell you more
One of hem wrote (C'est sans dire) verely
And her matere hole to specify
Within her bill she put it in writing
And what it said, ye shal haue knowing

It said God wote, and that ful pitously
Like as she was disposed in her hert
No misfortune that she toke greuously
All one to her was the ioy and smert
Sometime no thanke for all her good desert
Other comfort she wanted none comming
And so vsed, it greued her nothing

Desiring her, and lowly beseeching
That she would for her seke a better way
As she that had ben her daies liuing
Stedfast and trew and wil be alway.
Of her felaw, somwhat I shal you say
Whose bill was red next forth withall
And what it ment, rehersen you I shall.

En Dieu est, she wrote in her deuise
And thus she said without en faile
Her trouth might be take in no wise
Like as she thought, wherfore she had merualle
For trouth somtime was wont to take auaile
In euery mattere, but all that is ago
The more pite that it is suffred so

Much more there was, wherof she should com-
But she thought it to great encombraūce (plain
So much to write, and therfore in certain
In God and her she put all her affiaunce
As in her word is made a remembraunce
Beseeching her, that she would in this cas
Shew vnto her the fauor of her grace

The third she wrote rehersing her greuance
Ye, wote ye what, a pitous thing to here
For as me thought she felt great displesaunce
One might right wel perceiue it by her chere
And no wonder, it sat her passing nere
Yet loth she was to put it in writing
But need wol haue course in euery thing

Soyes asseuré, this was her word certain
And thus she wrote in a litel space
There she loued, het labor was in vaine
For he was set all in another place
Ful humbly desiring in that cace
Some good comfort her sorow to appease
That she might liue more at herts ease

The fourth surely me thought she liked wele
As in her port, and in her behauing
And Bien moneste, as ferre as I could sele
That was her word til her wel belonging
Wherfore to her she prayed above all thing
Ful hertely to say you in substaunce
That she wold send her good countenaunce

Ye haue rehersed me these billes all
But now let see somwhat of your entent
It may so hap, parauenture ye shall
Now I pray you while I am here present
Ye shal haue knowledge parde what I ment
But thus I say, in trouth and make no fable
The case it selfe is inly lamentable

And wel I wote ye wol thinke the same
Like as I say, whan ye haue herd my bill
Now good tel on, I hate you by saint Jame
Abide a while, it is not yet my will
Yet must ye wete by reason and by skill
Sith ye haue knowledge of ꝑ was done before
And thus it is said without words more

Nothing so leke as death to come to me
For finall end of my sorows and paine
What should I more desire as seme ye
And ye knew all afore it for certaine
I wote ye would, and for to tel you plaine
Without her help that hath all thyng in cure
I can nat thinke that it may long endure

As for my trouth it hath be proued wele
To say the soth, I can say no more
Of ful long time and suffred euery dele
In pacience, and kepe it all in store
Of her goodnesse, beseching her therfore
That I might haue my thanke in soch wise
As my desert serueth of iustise

When these billes were rad euerychone
The lady tooke a good aduisement
And hem to answere by one and one
She thought it was to much in her entent
Wherfore she gaue hem commaundement
In her presence to come both one and all
To geue hem her answere in generall

What

What did she than suppose ye verely?
She spake her selfe, and said in this manere
We haue wel sene your billes by and by
And some of hem pitous for to here
We wol therfore ye know all this in fere
Within short time, our court of parliment
Here shal be hold in our palais present

And in all this, wherin you find you greued
There shal ye find an open remedy
In such wise as ye shal be releued
Of all that ye rehersed here thrroughly
As for the date ye shall know verely
That ye may haue a space in your comming
For Diligence shal it tel you by writting

We thanked her in our most humble wise
Our felawship, ech one by one assent
Submitting vs lowly til her seruice
For as we thought, we had our trauaile spēt
In such wise as we held vs content
Than ech of vs toke other by the sleue
And forthwithall, as we should take our leue

All sodainly the water sprang anone
In my visage, and therwithal I woke
Where am I now thought I, all this is gone
All mased, and vp I gan to loke
With that anon I went and made this boke
Thus simply rehersing the substaunce
Because it shuld not be out of remembraunce

Now verely your dreame is passing good
And worthy to be had in remembraunce
For though I stand here as long as I stood
It should to me be none encombraunce
I toke therin so inly great pleasaunce
But tel me now what ye the boke do cal
For I must wete: With right good wil ye shal

As for this boke, to say you very right
Of the name to tel you in certainte
Lassemble de dames. thus it hight
How thinke ye, that name is good parde
Now go farwel, for they cal after me
My felawes all, and I must after sone
Rede wel my dreme, for now my tale is done.

Finis.

The conclusions of the *Astrolabie.*

LYtel Lowis my son, I perceiue well by certaine euidences thyne abilite to learne sciences, touching nōbres & proporcions and also well consider I thy besy praier in especiall to learne the treatise of the Astrolabie. Than for as much as a Philosopher saith, he wrapeth him in his frend, ỹ condiscendeth to the rightfull praiers of his frend: Therfore I haue giuen thee a sufficient Astrolabye for our Orizont, compouned after the latitude of Oxenford: Upon the which by mediacion of this litle treatise, I purpose to teach thee a certain nombre of conclusions, pertainyng to this same instrument. I say a certaine of conclusions for three causes, the first cause is this. I trust well that all the conclusions that haue ben founden, or elles possibly might be found in so noble an instrument as is the Astrolaby, ben vnknown perfitely to any mortal man in this region, as I suppose. Another cause is this, that sothly in any cartes of the Astrolaby that I haue seen, there ben some conclusions, that wol not in all thyngs performe her behestes: and some of hem been too hard to thy tender age of ten yere to conceiue. This treatise deuided in fiue parts wil I shew the wonder light rules and naked wordes in English, for Latine ne canst thou yet but small, my litle sonne. But neuertheles suffiseth to thee these trew conclusions in English, as well as suffiseth to this noble clerkes Grekes these same conclusions in Greke, & to the Arabines in Arabike. And to Jewes in Hebrew, and to the latin folke in Latine: which Latine folke had hem first out of other diuers languages, and write hem in her owne tongue, that is to saine in Latine.

And God wote that in all these languages and in many mo, haue these conclusions been sufficiently learned and taught, and yet by diuers rules, right as diuers pathes leaden diuers folke the right way to Rome.

Now wol I pray mekely euery person discreet, that redeth or heareth this litel treatise to haue my rude ententing excused, and my superfluitie of wordes, for two causes. The

first cause is, for that curious enditing & hard sentences is ful heauy at ones, for soth a child to lerne: And the second cause is this, ỳ soothly me seemeth better to writen vnto a childe twise a good sentence, than he forȝete it ones. And Lowis if it so be that I shewe thee in my lithe English, as trew conclusions touchyng this mater, and not onely as trew but as many and subtil conclusions, as bene ỳshewed in latin in any common treatise of the Astrolaby, conne me the more thank, and pray God saue the king, that is lord of this language, and al that him faith beareth, and obeieth euerich in his degre, the more and the lasse. But consydereth well, that I ne vsurpe not to haue founden this werk of my labour or of mine engin. I nam but a leude compilatour of the labour of old Astrologiens, and haue it translated in mine englih only for thy doctrine: and with this swerd shal I slene enuy.

The first party.

THe firste partye of this Treatise shall rehearse the figures, and the membres of thyne Astrolaby, bycause that thou shalt haue the greater knowing of thyne owne instrument.

The second party.

THe second party, shall teach thee to werken the very practike of the forsaid conclusions, as ferforth and also narrow as may be shewed in so small an instrument portatike, about. For wel wote euery Astrologien, that smallest fractions ne woll not be shewed in so small an instrument, as in subtil tables calculed for a cause.

The third party.

THe third party shal containe diuers tables, of longitudes & latitudes of sters, fixe in the Astrolabie. And tables of the declinacions of the Sonne, and tables of the longitude of cities and townes. And tables as wel for the gouernacion of the clock, as for to find the altitude meridian, and many another notable conclusion after the kalenders of the reuerent clerkes frere Johon Som, and frere N. Lenne.

The fourth party.

THe fourth party shall bee a theorike, to declare the meaning of the celestiall bodies, with the causes, the which ỳ fourth party in speciall shal shew in a table of the very meuing of the Moone, from one to one, euery day & euery signe, after thine alminacke. Upō the which table there folowyth a canon, sufficient to teach as wel in manner of woorking in the same conclusions, as to know in our orizont, with which degre of zodiacke the moone ariseth in any latitude, and the arising in any planet after his latitude fro the ecliptike line.

The fifte party.

THe fift party shal been an introductory, after the statutes of our doctours, vpon which thou mayest learn a great part of the generall rules of theorike in Astrologie. In which fifth party thou shalt find tables of equacions of houses, after ỳ latitude of Oxenforde, and tables of dignitees of planets, and other notefull thinges, if God vouchsafe and his mother the mayden, more than I behete.

The ring.

THy Astrolabie hath a ring to putten on thy thombe on thy right hond, in taking of the hight of thinges. And take keepe, from hence forward I wol clepe the height of heuy thing, ỳ is take by the rule, the altitude without mo wordes.

The turet.

THis ring renneth in a manner of a turet, fastened to the moder of thine Astrolaby, in a roume a space that it distroubleth not the instrument to hangen after his right centure. The moder of thine Astrolaby is thickest by the brinkes, that is the vtmost ring with degrees: and all the middle within the ring shall be thinner, to receiue the plates for diuers climates, and also for the rethe, that is shape in maner of a net, or els after the webbe of a loppe.

The moder.

THe moder of thine Astrolabye is the thickest plate perced with a large hole, that receiueth in her woombe the thinne plates cōpowned of diuers clymates, and thy reet shapen in maner of a net or of a web of a loppe.

Of the foure lines.

THis moder is deuided on the backehalfe with a line, that commeth discendynge fro the ring downe to the nethereste bordure, the which line, fro the forsaid ring vnto the centre of the large hole amidde, is cleaped South

South line, or els the line Meridionall: and the remnant of this line downe to the bordure is cleaped the North line, or all the line of the Midnight.

Of foure lines, East, West, North, and South.

OVerthwart this forsaide long line, there crosseth him an other line of the same length, fro Easte to West, of the which line, from a little crosse in the bordure vnto the centure of the large hole, is cleaped the East line, or els the line Oriental: and the remnant of the line, fro the forsaid Oriental vnto the bordure, is ycleaped the Weste line, or the line Occidentall.

Now hast thou here the foure quarters of thin Astrolabie, deuided after the foure principall plages or quarters of the firmament.

Which is the right side, and which is the left.

THE Easte side of the Astrolabie, is cleaped the right side, and the West side is cleaped the left side. Forȝet not this little Lowis. But the ring of thine Astrolabie, vpon the thombe of thy right hand, and then woll his right side be toward thy left side, and his left side woll be towarde thy right side. Take this rule generall, as well on the backe, as on the wombe side. Upō the ende of this East line (as I first saide) is ymarked a little crosse, where as euer more generally is cōsidered, the entring of the East degree, in the which the Sunne ariseth.

The degrees from the East line to the South.

AND the little crosse, vp to the ende of the Meridionall line vnder the ryng F shalt thou finde the bordure, deuided with xc. degrees, and by that same proporcion is euery quarter of thine Astrolabie deuided, ouer the which degrees, ther ben nombers of Augrim, that deuiden thilk same degrees fro fiue to fiue, as sheweth by longe strikes between: of the which by long strikes the space betweene containeth a mile waye, & euery degree of thilke bordure, containeth foure Minutes, that is to say, foure minutes of an houre.

Of the twelue signes, Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, and the other.

VNder the Compasse of thilke degrees, ben writen the names of the twelue signes, as Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricornus, Aquarius, and Pisces. And the nombers of the degrees of the signes, been written in Augrime aboue, and with long diuisions, from fiue to fiue, deuideth from the time that the signe entreth vnto the last end. But vnderstād well, that these degrees of signes, ben euerich of hem considered of lx. Minutes, and euery Minute of lx. secondes, and so forth into smal fractions infinite, as saieth Alcabucius. And therefore know well, that a degree of the bordure, containeth foure Minutes, and a degree of a signe, containeth lx. Minutes, and haue this in minde.

The circle of the dayes.

NExt this followeth the circle of the daies that been figured in maner of the degrees that conteinē in nomber three hundred, three score and fiue, deuided also with long strikes, from fiue to fiue, and the nombers of Augrim, writen vnder the circle.

The circle of the twelue Monethes.

NExt the circle of daies, followeth the Circle of the twelue names of the Moneths, that is to say, Januarius, Februarius, Marcius, April, Maius, Junius, Julius, August, September, October, Nouember, December.

The names of these Monethes taken her names, some for properties, and some by statutes of Emperours, & some by other Lordes of Rome. Eke of these Monethes, as liked to Julius Cesar, and Cesar Augustus, some wer ycompouned of diuers nombers of daies, as July and August. Then hath Januarius xxxi. daies, Februarius, xxviii. Marcius xxxi. April thirtie, Maie xxxi. Junius xxx. August xxxi. September thirtie, October thirtie and one. Nouember thirtie. December xxxi. Natheless although that Julius Cesar toke two daies out of Februarie, and put hem in his Moneth of July, and Augustus Cesar cleaped the Monethe of August after his name, and ordained it of one and thirtie daies yet trust wel that ȳ Sunne dwelleth therfore neuer

neuer the more, ne the lasse in one signe, then in another.

The names of the holie daies.

THen folowethy names of the holy daies in the Kalender, and next hem the letters A.B.C. on which they fallen.

The scale of the Astrolobie.

NExt the forsaid circle of the A.B.C. vnder the crosse line is marked the scale, in maner of two Squires, or els in maner of ledders, that serueth by his xrii. pointes, and his diuisions of full many a subtill conclusion of this forsaide scale: For the crosse line vnto the verie angle, is cleaped Vmbra recta, or els Vmbra extensa, and the neather partie Vmbra versa.

The Rule.

THen hast thou a broade rule, that hath on euery end a square plate, parted with certaine holes, some more, and some lesse, to receiuen the stremes of the sonne by day, and eke by mediacion of thine eye, to know the altitude of the sterres by night.

The pin, which is imagined to be pole artike and the horse.

THen is there a large pin, in maner of an exiltre, that goeth through the hole that halte the tables of the climathes in the reeth, in the wombe of the moder, through which pin there goeth a little wedge, ỳ which is cleped the horse, that straineth al these partes togither. This forsaid great pin, in maner of an exiltre, is imagined to be the pole artike in thine Astrolabie.

For lines on the wombe side.

THE wombe side of thine Astrolabie is also diuided, with a long crosse in foure quarters, from the East to West, & from the South to Northe, from right side to left side, as is the backeside.

The degrees of the wombe side.

THE border of which wombe side, is deuided fro the point of the East line, vnto the poinct of the South line, vnder the ring in xc. degrees, and by the same proporcion, is euery quarter deuided, as is the backside, that amounteth three hundred lx. degrees. And vnderstande well, that the degrees of this border, been aunswering and consenting to the degrees of Equinoctiall, that is deuided in the same number, as euery other circle is in the hie heauen.

This border is deuided also with xxiii. letters, & a small crosse aboue the South line that sheweth the xxiiii. houres equales of the clocke. And I haue saied fine of these degrees maken a mile waie, and three mile waie maken an houre, and euery degree of this border containeth foure Minutes, & euery Minute lx secondes. Now haue I told thee twise and for the more declaration.

Of the principall circles.

THE plate vnder the reete is deserued with three circles, of which the least is cleped the circle of Cancer, because that the hed of Cancer tourneth euermore concentrike, vpon the same circle. In this halfe of Cancer is the greatest declination Northwarde of the Sunne, and therfore is he cleped Solsticium of Sommer, which declination after Ptholome is xxiii degrees and fiftie Minutes, as well in Cancer, as in Capricorne. This signe of Cancer is cleped the Tropike of Sommer, of Tropos, that is to saine, ayenwarde. The middle circle in widnesse of this three, is cleaped the circle Equinoctiall, vpon which turneth euermore the heddes of Aries and Libra. And vnderstand well, that euermore this circle Equinoctiall tourneth iustly fro verye East, to very West, as I haue shewed in the sphere solid. This same circle is cleped also the wayer of the day. For when the Sunne is in the head of Aries and Libra, then been daies and nightes like of length, in all the worlde, and therfore beene these two signes called Equinoctis. And al that moueth within these heds of Aries and Libra, is ycalled Northwarde and all that meueth without these heddes, his meuing is cleped Southward, as for the Equinoctiall, take kepe of ỳ latitudes North and South, and forget it not: by this circle Equinoctial ben considered the xxiiii. houres of the clocke. For euermore the aryling of xv. degrees of the Equinoctial, maketh an houre equal of the clocke. This Equinoctiall is cleped the midwaie of the first meuinge, or els of the Sunne. And note that the firste meuinge is cleaped meuinge of the first mouable of the eight Sphere, which meuing is fro East to West, & againe into East. Also it is cleped girdell of the first meuing. For it departeth the first meuable, that is to saine, ỳ sphere in two

like

like parties, euen distant from the Poles of this world. The widest of these three circles principall, is cleaped the circle of Capricorne, & tourneth euermore concentrike, vpon the same circle. In the hedde of this forclaied Capricorne, is the greatest declination Southward of the Sunne. And therefore it is cleped Solsticium of Winter. This signe of Capricorne, is also cleaped the Tropike of Winter. For then beginneth the Sunne to come againe to vswarde.

Of the almicanteras, the signet, and what is thine Orizont.

VPon this forclaid plate ben compassed certain circles, that highten almicanteras: of which some of hem semen parfite circles, and some semen imparfite. The centure that standeth amiddest the narowest circle, is cleped the signet. And the netherest circle, that deuideth the two emisperies, that is the partie of the heauen aboue the earth, and the partie beneath. These almicanteras been compouned by two and two, albeit so that on diuers Astrolabies, some almicanteras been deuided by one, and some by two, and some by three, after the quantitie of the Astrolabie. This forclaide signet is ymagined to bee the very poinct ouer the croune of thy hedde, and also this signet is the very Pole of the Orizont in euery region.

What bene thine Azimutes.

FRom this signet (as it semeth) there comen croked strikes, like to the clawes of a loppe, or els like to ỳ werke of a womans call, in keruing ouerthwart ỳ almicanteras, & these same strikes or diuisions, been cleaped Azimutes, and they deuiden the Orizontes on thine Astrolabie in xxiiii. diuisions. And these Azimutes serue, to knowe the costes of the firmament, & to other conclusions, as for to knowe the signet of the Sunne, and of euery starre.

Of the xij. houres of the Planettes.

NExt these Azimutes, vnder the circle of Cancer, been the twelue diuisions embolike, much like to the shape of the Azimutes, that shewen the spaces of houres of Planettes.

Thy reete or els thy Zodiake.

THy Reete of thine Astrolabie, which is thy zodiake shapen in maner of a Net, or of a lop webb, after the olde discriptiõ, which thou maist turne vp & doune, as thy selfe liketh, contayneth certain nomber of Sterres fixe, with her longitudes & latitudes determinate, if so be that the maker haue not erred. The names of the sterres ben writte in the margin of thy Reete, there they sit, of the which sterres the small point is cleaped the Centure. And vnderstãd, that all the sterres sitting within the zodiake of thine Astrolabie, been cleped sterres of the North, for they arisen by ỳ North East line, & al the remenant fixes out of the zodiake, been ycleped Sterres of the South, but I say not that they arisen all by the South East line, witnesse of Aldeberan and also Algomisa. Generally vnderstonde this rule, that thilke Sterres, that been cleaped Sterres of the North, arisen rather then the degree of her longitude, and all the Sterres of the South, arisen after the degree of her longitude, that is to sain, Sterres in thine Astrolabie.

The measure of longitude of Sterres, ytaken in the line ecliptike of heauen, vnder the which line, when the Sonne and the Moone been line right, els in the superficie of this line, then is the eclips of the Sonne or of the Moone, as I shall declare and eke the cause why: but sothely the Ecliptike line of the zodiake, is the vtterest bordure of the zodiake, there thy degrees ben marked. The zodiake of thy Astrolabie is shapen as a Compasse, whych that contayneth a large brede, as after the quantity of thy Astrolaby, in ensample that the zodiake of heauen is ymagined to be a superficies, conteyning the latitude of twelue signes, where as all the remenaunte of cercles in heauen, been ymagined very lines, withouten any latitude. amiddes the celestiall zodiake is imagined a line, which that is cleaped the Ecliptike line, vnder the which line, is euermore the way of the sonne. Thus been there fixe degrees of the zodiake, of that one side of the line, and fixe degrees on that other. The zodiake is deuided in twelue principall deuisions, that departen the xii. signes, and for the straitnesse of thine Astrolaby, then is euery small deuision in a signe yparted by two

two degrees and two, I meane degrees conteyning lx. Minutes, and this forsaid heuenish zodiake, is cleped ỳ circle of the Signes, or the circle of beastes. For zodiake in language of Greeke, soumeth beasties in the latine tongue, & in the zodiake beene the xii. Signes that haue names of beasties, because when ỳ Sunne entreth in any of the Signes, he taketh the property of suche beasties, or els for that the sterres that been there, ben fixed, ben disposed in signe of beasts, or shape like beasts or els when Planets ben vnder the Signes, they transmute vs by her influence, operations, & effects, like to operations of beasts. And vnderstand also, ỳ when an hote Planet cometh into a hote Signe, then entereth his heat, & if a Planet be cold, then amenuseth his coldnesse, because of the hote Signe. And by this conclusion, maiest thou taken ensample in all Signes, be they moyst or drie, mouable or fix, reckening the quality of the Planets, as I first saied. And euerich of these xii. signes, hath respect to a certain parcell of ỳ bodie of a man, and hath it in gouernaunce: as Aries hath thine head, and Taurus thy necke and thy throat, Gemini thine arme holes and thine armes, and so forth, as shall be shewed more plainly, in the fifth party of this treatise. The zodiake, the which is partie of the eight Sphere, ouerkerueth the Equinoctiall, and he ouerkerueth him againe in euen partes, and that one halfe declineth Southwarde, & that other Northwarde, as plainly declareth the treatise of the Sphere.

The Labell.

When hast thou a Labell, that is shapen like a rule, saue that it is straight and hath no plates on either end, but with the small poynct of the forsaide Labell, shalt thou calcule the equacions in the bordure of thine Astrolabie, as by thine almurie.

The Almurie, the denticle of Capricorne, or els the calculere.

Thine Almurie is cleped, the denticle of Capricorne, or els the calculere, this same Almurie set fixe in the hed of Capricorne, and it serueth of many a necessarie conclusion in equacion of thinges, as shall be shewed.

Here beginneth the conclusions of thine Astrolabie, to find the degree in the which the Sonne is day by day, after his course about.

Reckon and know, which is the day of the month, and lay thy rule vppon the same day, and then woll the very poinct of thy rule, verely sitten on the bordure, vpon the degre of the Sonne. Ensample as thus. The yere of our Lord a thousand thre hundred, ninetie and one, the xii. day of Marche at midday, I would know the degree of the Son, I sought in the backe halfe of myne Astrolabie & found the circle of the daies, the which I knewe by the names of the Monthes, written vnder the same Circle: Tho laied I my Rule ouer the forsaied day, and found the point of my Rule in the bordor, vppon the first degree of Aries, a little within the degree: and thus knew I this conclusion.

Another daie I would know the degree of my Sonne, and this was at Midday in the xiii. day of December, I found the day of the month in manner as I saied: tho laied I my Rule vpon the forsaid xii. day, and found the point of my Rule, vpon the first degree of Capricorne, a little within the degree, & then had I of this conclusion the very experience.

To know the altitude of the Sonne either of celestiall bodies.

Nota.

Put the ring of thine Astrolaby, vpō thy right thomb, and turn thy lift side again the light of the Son, & remeue thy Rule vp & doune, til the streame of the Son, shine throughe both holes of the Rule: look then how many degrees, this Rule is areised fro the little crosse vpon the East line, and take ther the altitude of thy Sonne: and in this same wise maist thou know by night, the altitude of the Moon, or of the bright Sterres. This Chapiter is so generall euer in one, that there needeth no more declaracion, but forget it not.

To know the degree of the Sonne, and of thy Zodiake, by the daies in the backside of Astrolabie.

Then

THen if thou wilt wete the rekeninge to know, which is the day in thy kalender of the moneth that thou art in, laye thyne Astrolabie, that is to saye, the alidatha, vpon the day in the kalender of thyne Astrolabie, and he shall shew thee thy degree of the Sonne.

To knowe euery time of the daie, by light of the Sunne, and euery time of the night, by the Steries fixe, and eke to know by night or by day, the degree of the signe that alcendeth on the East Orizont, which is cleped comonly ascendent. Nota

TAke the altitude of the Sunne, when thee list, as I haue laid, & set the degre of the Sunne (in case that it be before the middle of ỳ daie) among thine almecanteras, on the East side of thine Astrolabie: and if it be after the middle of the daye, set the degree of the Sunne, vpon the Weest side. Take this manner of setting for a generall rule ones for euer.

And when thou hast yset the degree of the Sunne, vpõ as many almicanters of height, as was the Sunne, taken by thy rule, laie ouer thy Labell, vpon the degree of ỳ sunne, and then woll the point of the Labell, sitten in the bordure, vpon the very tide of the daye. Enlample of this.

The yere of our Lorde a thoulande, three hundred, ninetie and one, the twelue daye of Marche, I would know the tyde of the day, I tooke the altitude of my sunne, and founde that it was xxb. degrees, and xxx. Minutes of height of the bordure in the backeside, tho tourned I myne Astrolabie, and because it was before middaie, I turned my reete, and set the degree of the Sunne, that is to saie, the firste degree of Aries, in the right side in myne Astrolabie, vpon the xxb. degree, and xxx. minutes of height, among my almicanteras: Tho laied I my label, vpon the degree of my Sunne, and found the pointe of my label in the bordure, on the capital letter, that is cleaped an E. Tho reckened I al the capitall letters, fro the line of Midnight, vnto the forsaied letter E. and founde it was nyne of the clocke of the daye. Tho looked I ouer my East Orizone, and found there the twelue degree of Geminius ascending, which that I tooke for myne ascendent, and in this wise had I the experience for euermore, in whiche maner I should know the tide of the day, and eke mine ascendent. Tho would I wete that same night following, the houre of the night, & wrought in this wise: amonge an heape of sterres, it liked me to take the altitude, of the faire white sterre, that is cleaped the Alhabor, and found her sitting on the Weest side of the line of Midday, eighten degrees of height taken by my rule on the backside. Tho set I the Centure of this Alhabor, vpon xviii. degrees, among my almicanteras, vpon the Weest side, because that he was founde vppon the Weest side: tho laid I my Labell ouer the degree of the Sunne that was descended vnder ỳ west Orizont, & reckened all the letters capitals, fro the line of Midday vnto the poinct of my Label in the bordure, & founde that it was after noone, passed seuen of the clocke, the space of a leuen degrees. Tho looked I doune vpon my Easte Orizont, and founde there twentie degrees of Libra ascending, whome I tooke for mine ascendent, and thus learned ones for euer, to knowe in whiche maner I should come to the houre of the night, and to myne ascendent, as verily as may be taken, by so small an instrument. But natheless, this rule in generall will I warne thee for euer: ne make thou neuer none ascendent at noone of the daye. Take a iuste ascendent of thine Astrolabie, and haue set iustly a clocke, when any celestiall bodie, by the which thou weneste gouerne thilke thynges, been nie the South line, for trust well, when the Sonne is neere the Meridionall line, the degree of the Sonne remaineth, so long concentrike vpon thyne almicanteras, that sothly thou shalt erre fro the iust ascendent. The same conclusion say I, by my centure of the Sterre fixe by the night, and moreouer by experience, I wote wel that fro our Orizont, fro enleuen of the clocke, vnto one, in taking of the iust ascendent, in a portatife Astrolabie, it is to hard to know, I meane from enleuen of the cloke before noone, till one of the clock next folowing: and for the more declaracion, lo here thy figure next after this rule that foloweth.

To know the degree of the Sonne in thy Zodiake, by the daies, in the backside of thine Astrolabie.

Then

THen thou wolt weten, to recke & knowe, which is the day of ỹ moneth, that thou art in, & lay the rule of thy Astrolaby, that is to say, the alidatha vpō the day, in the Kalender of thyne Astrolabie, & he shal shewe thee thy degree of the Sunne.

Speciall declaration of the ascendent.

THE ascendent soothly, is as well in all Natiuities, as in questions, & as in elections of times is a thig which that these Astrologiens greatlye obseruen, wherfore me seemeth conuenient, sens I speake of ỹ ascendent, to make of it a speciall declaration. The ascendent soothly, to take it at the largest, is thilk degree that ascendeth at any of these forsaid times, on the East Orizon: and therfore, if that any Planet ascend at thilk same time, in the forsaid same gree of his longitude, men say that thilke Planet is in Horoscopo, but soothely ỹ hous of that ascendent, that is to say, the first hous of the East angle, is a thing more broad & large, for after the statutes of Astrologiens, what celestiall body, that is v. degrees aboue thilke degree, that ascendeth on the Orizont, or within that nomber, that is to saine, nere ỹ degree that ascendeth, yet recken they thilke planet in the ascendent, & what Planet that is vnder thilk degree, that ascendeth the space of xv. degrees, yet saine they that Planet is like to him, that is the houre of the ascendent. But soothly, if he passe the boundes of the forsaid spaces, aboue or beneath, they saine that thilke Planet is falling fro the ascendent: yet sain these Astrologiens, that the ascendent, & eke the Lord of the Ascendent, may be shapen for to be fortunate, or infortunate: as thus. A fortunate ascendent clepen they, when that no wicked Planet of Saturne or Mars, or elis the taile of the Dragon, is in the house of the ascendent, ne that no wicked Planet haue no aspect of enmitie vpon the ascendent: But they woll cast, that they haue fortunate Planet in her ascendent, & yet in his felicitie, and then say they that it is well. Furthermore, they saine that fortune of an ascendent, is the contrary of these forsaid things. The lord of the ascendent sain they, that he is fortunate, when he is in good place for the ascendent, & eke the Lorde of the ascendent, is in an angle or in a succedent, where he is in his dignitie, and comforted with frendly aspectes receiued, and eke that he may seene the ascendent not retrograde ne combust, ne ioyned with no shrewe in the same signe, ne that he be not in his discencion, ne reigned with no Planet in his discentions, ne haue vppon him none aspect infortunate, and then they saine that he is well.

Natheless, these been obseruances of iudiciall matter, & rites of Painimes, in which my spirite hath no faith, ne knowing of her Horoscope, for they saine, that euery signe is departed in three euen partes, by x. degrees & the like porcion they cleapen a face. And although a Planet haue a latitude from the Ecliptike, yet sain some folke, so that the Planet arise in that same signe, with any degree of the forsaid face, is which his longitude is reckened. And yet in the Planet in horoscopo, be in natuities or in election.

To know the verie equacion of the degrees of the Sunne, if it so be that it fall betwixt ij. almicanteras.

FOR as much as the almicanteras of thine Astrolabie, been compouned by two and two, where as some almicanteras in sundry Astrolabies, bee compouned by one, or els by two, it is necessarie to thy learning, to tearhe thee firste to knowe, and wirche with thine instrumente: wherefore, when that the degree of the Sunne, falleth betweene two almicanteras, or elles if thine almicanteras, been grauen with ouer greate a pointe of a Compace, for bothe these thinges maye cause errour, as well in knowinge of the tyde of the daye, as of the verie ascendent. Thou must werken in this wise: set the degree of the Sunne, vpon the higher almicanteras as of bothe. And waite well, where the almurie toucheth the bordure, and set there a pricke of ynke, set adoun againe the degree of the Sonne, vppon the neather almicanteras of bothe, and set there an other pricke: remeue then thy almurie in the bordure, euen amiddes both prickes and this woll leaden iustly the degree of the Sunne, to sit betwene bothe the almicanteras in his right place. Lay then the label on the degree of the Sunne, and finde in the bor-

dure

dure the very tyde of the day or of the night. And also verely shalt thou find vpon thy East orizont thine ascendent.

To know the spring of the dawning & the end of the euening, the which ben cleped the two Coepusculis.

SEt the nadire of thy sonne vpon xviii. degrees of height among thine almicanteras on the west side, & lay thy labell on the degree of the Sonne, and than shall the point of the label shew the spring of the day: also set the nadire of the sonne vpon the xviii. degrees of height among thine almicanteras on the east side, and lay ouer thy labell vpon the degree of the sonne, and with the point of thy label find in the bordure the end of thine euening, that is very night. The nadire of the son is thilke degre ỹ is oppolyte to the degree of the son in ỹ xxiii. signe, as thus. Euery degre of Aries by order, is nadire to euery degre of Libra by order, & Taurus to Scorpion, Gemini to Sagitarius, Cancer to Capricorn, Leo to Aquary, Virgo to Pisces. And if any degree in thy zodiake be dark, his nadire shall declare him.

To know the arch of the day, that some folke callen the day artificiall, fro the sonne arising til it go downe.

SEt the degree of the son vpon thine East orizont, and lay thy label on the degree of the sonne, and at the point of thy label in the bordure set a pricke: turne than thy reete about, til the degree of the sonne sit vpon the west orizont, and lay the label vpon the same degree of the sonne, and at the point of the label set another pricke. Reeken than the quantity of time in ỹ bordure betwixe both prickes, and take there thine arch of thy day: the remnaunt of the bordure vnder the orizont, is the arch of the night. Thus maist thou reken both arches of euery portion where that thou liuest, and by this manner of working mayest thou se how long that any sterre fixe dwelleth aboue the earth, fro the time that he riseth till he go to rest. But the day naturell, that is to sayne xxiiii. houres, is the reuolucion of the equinoctiall, with as moch party of the zodiake, as the son of his proper mouinge passeth in the meane while.

To turne the houres inequalles, and the houres equalles.

KNowe the noumbre of the degrees in the houres inequals, and depart hem by xv. and take there thine houres equalles.

To know the quantity of the day vulgare, that is to say, fro spring of the day vnto the very night.

KNow the quantitie of thyne coepuscu-lis, as I haue it taught in the chapiter before, and adde hem to the arche of the day artificial, and take there thy space of all ỹ whole day vulgare vnto the very night. In the same manner maiest thou werk to know the vulgar night.

To know the houres inequals by day.

VNderstonde well that these houres inequals ben cleaped houres of the planettes: And understond wel ỹ somtime ben they longer by day than they be by night, and somtime contrarie. But vnderstand thou well, that euermore generally the houres inequall of ỹ day, with the houres inequall of the night, conteineth xxx. degrees of the bordure, the which bordure is euermore answering to ỹ degrees of the equinoctial, wherefore depart the arch of the day artificiall in xii. and take there the quantity of the houre inequall by day, and if thou abate the quantity of the houre inequall by day out of CCCl degrees, then shall the remnaunt that leaueth performe the houre inequall by night.

To know the quantity of houres equals.

THe quantities of houres equals, that is to saine, the houres of the clock, ben departed by xv. degrees alreby in ỹ bordure of thy Astrolabie, as well by night as by day, generally for euermore. What needeth any more declaracion: wherefore whā thee list to know how many houres of the clock ben passed, or any party of any of these houres ben to comē, fro such a time to such a time, by day or by night, know ỹ degree of thy Sonne, & lay thy label on it: than

turne thy reet about ioyntly with thy label and with the poynt of it reckon in the bozder fro the Sonne arisyng, into the same place there thou desirest by day as by night. This conclusion woll I declare in the fourth party of the last chapiter of this treatise, so openly that there shall lacke no word that nedeth declaracion.

Speciall declaracion of the houres of the planets.

VNderstand wel that euermore fro the arising of the Sonne til it go to rest, the nadire of the Sonne shall shew the houre of the planet, and fro that tyme forward all the nyght tyll the Sonne arise, than shall the very degre of the Sonne shew the houre of the planet. Ensample as thus. The xiii. day of March fel vpon a saturday parauenture, & at the arising of the Sonne I found the second degre of Aries sitting vpon mine East orizont, al be it was but litle. Than found I the second degree of Libra nadire of my Sonne, discending on my west Orizont, vpon which west orizont euery day generally at the Sonne arising, entreth the hour of any planet, vnder the forsaid west orizont, after the which planet the day beareth his name, and endeth in the next strike of the planet, vnder the forsaid west Orizont: & euer as the Sonne climbeth vpper & vpper, so goeth his nadire downer and downer, and eching fro soch strikes the houres of planets by order, as they sitten in heauen. The first hour inequall of euery saturday is Saturne, and the second to Jupiter, the third to Mars the fourth to the Sonne, the fifth to Uenus, the sixt to Mercurius, the seuenth to the Mone, & than ayen the eight to Saturne, the ninth to Jupiter, the tenth to Mars, the eleuenth to the Sonne, the twelft to Uenus. And now is my Sonne gon to rest as for that saterday, than sheweth the very degree of the Sonne the houre of Mercury, entring vnder my west Orizont at euen. And next him succedeth the Moone, and so forth by order planet after planet, in houre after houre all the night long till the Sonne arise. Now riseth the Sonne the sonday by the morow, and the nadyre of the Sonne vpon the west Orizont, sheweth me the entryng of the houre of the forsaid Son. And in this manner succedeth planet vnder planet from Saturne vnto the moone, and fro the Moone vp agame to Saturne, houre after houre generally, and thus know I this conclusion.

To know with which degree of the Zodiake any sterre fixe in thine Astrolaby ariseth vpō the East orixont, although the orizont be in another sign.

SEt the centure of the sterre vpon the East orizont, and loke what degree of any signe that sitteth vpon the same orizont at the same time: And vnderstand wel that with the same degree ariseth ȳ same sterre. And this merualous arising with a strong degree in another signe, is bicause that the latitude of the sterre fixe is either North or South fro the equinoctiall. But sothly the latitudes of planets ben comonly reckened fro the ecliptike, bycause that none of hem declineth but fewe degrees out fro the brede of the zodiake. And take good kepe of this chapiter of arising of celestial bodies, for there trusteth wel, that neither moon neither sterre in our ambolike orizont, that ariseth with the same degree of his longitude, saue in one case, and that is whan they haue no longitude fro the ecliptike line. But neuer the lesse sometime is euerych of these planets vnder the same line.

To know the declinacion of any degre in the zodiake, fro the equinoctial cercle.

SEt the degree of any sign vpon the line meridionall, & reken his altitude in the almicanteras, fro ȳ East orizont vp to the same degre set in the forsaid line, & set there a pricke: Turne vp than thy reet and set the hed of Aries or Libra in the same meridional line, and set there another prick. And whan that this is done, cōsider ȳ altitudes of hem both: for sothly the difference of thilke altitude is the declinacion of thilk degre fro the equinoctiall. And if it so be that thilke degree be northward fro ȳ equinoctial, than is his declinacion North, and if it be southward, than it is south.

To know for what latitude in any region the almicanteras in my tables been compowned.

REken howe many degrees of almicanteras in the meridionall line, be from the cercle equinoctiall, vnto the signet or elis from the pole artike vnto the North Orizont, and for so great a latitude or so small a latitude, is the table compouned.

To

To know the latitude of the Sonne, in the middes of the day, that is cleaped the altitude meridian.

SEt the degree of the Sonne vpon thy line meridionall, and reken how many degrees of almicanteras ben betwix thine east orizont, and the degree of thy Sonne, and take there thine altitude meridian, that is to sain, the highest degree of the Sonne, as for that day. So mayest thou knowe in the same line the highest line that any starre fixe clymbeth by night, this is to saine, that whan any Starre fixe is passed the line meridionall, than begynneth it to discend, and so dooth the Sonne.

To know the degree of the Sonne, by the reet for a maner conioustie.

SEke busily with thy rule the highest of the Sonne in middes of the day, tourne than thine Astrolabye, and with a pricke of inke marke the number of the same altitude, in the line meridionall. Tourne than thy reet about till thou finde a degree of thy zodiake, accordyng with the pricke, this is to saine, sittyng on the pricke, and in soothe thou shalt finde but two degrees in all the zodiake of that condicion. And yet thilke two degrees ben in diuers signes. Than maiest thou lightly by the season of the yeare, know the signe in whiche is the Sonne.

To knowe which day is like to other in length throughout the yeare.

LOoke which degrees been like from the heddes of Cancer and Capricorn, & looke whan the Sonne is in any of thilke degrees, than been the daies like of length, that is to saine, that as long is that day in that moneth, as was such a day in soch a moneth, there varieth but little. Also if thou take two dayes naturelles in the yeare, ylike farre from either points of the equinoctiall, in the oppolite parties, than as long is the day artificiall on that one day as on that other, & eke the contrary.

This chapiter is a maner declaracion to cõclusions that foloweth

VNderstand well, that thy zodiake is departed into halfe cercles, from the heed of Capricorne vnto the heed of Cancer, & ayenward from the head of Cancer vnto the head of Capricorne. The head of Capricorne is the lowest pount, where as the sonne goeth in winter, & the head of Cancer is the highest point, in which the son goeth in sommer. And therefore vnderstande well, that any two degrees that been ylike far frõ any of these two heads, trust wel that thilke two degrees ben lyke declinatiõ, be it Southward or Northward, and the daies of hem ben like of length, and the nyghts allo, and shadowes ylike and the altitudes ylike at midday for euer.

To knowe the very degree of any manner starre straunge after his latitude, though he be indeterminate in thine Astrolaby, sothly to the trouth thus he shal be knowne.

TAke the altitude of thy starre, whan hee is on the East side of the lyne meridionall, as nygh as thou mayest gesse, and take an ascendent anone right by some manner starre fixe whych thou knowest and forget not the altitude of the first starre ne thyne ascendent. And whan that this is done, aspie dilligently whan this same first starre passeth any thing to the south westwarde, and catch him anone right in the same number of the altitude on the west syde of this line meridionall, as he was caught on the East syde, and take a new ascendent anone right by some manner fixe, the whiche that thou knowest, and forget not this second ascendent. And whan this is done, reken than how many degrees beene betwixt the first ascendent, and the second ascendent, and reken well the middle degree betwyxt bothe ascendents, and set thilk middle degree vpon thine East orizont, and than look what degree sit vpon the line meridionall, and take there the very degree of the ecliptike, in whyche the starre standeth for the tyme. For in the ecliptike is the longitude of a celestiall body rekened euen fro the halfe of the head of Aries, vnto the end of Pisces, and his latitude is rekened after the quantitie of hys declynacion Northe or South, toward the poles of this werke. As thus, if it be of the sonne or any fix starre, reken his latitude or his declination fro the equinoctiall cercle, and if it be of a planete, reken than the quantitie of his latitude

from the ecliptike line, all be it so that fro the equinoctial, may the declinacion or the latitude of any body celestiall be rekened, after the sight Nozth or South, & after the quantity of his declinacion. And yet so may the latitude or the declinacion of any body celestial, saue onely of the Son, after his sight Nozth or South, and after the quantity of his declinacion, be rekened fro the ecliptike line, from which line al planets somtime decline, Nozth or South, saue only the forsaid Son.

To know the degrees of longitudes of fixe sterres, after that they ben determinate in thine Astrolaby, if it so be that they been trewly set.

SEt the center of the sterre vpon the lyne meridional, and take kepe of thy zodiake, and loke what degree of any signe sit vpon the same line meridional at the same time, & there the degre in which the sterre standeth, and with the same degree commeth the same sterre vnto the same line from the orizont.

To know in special the latitude of our centre, I meane after the altitude of Oxenford, and the height of our pole.

VNderstand wel that as farre is the heed of Aries or Libra in the equinoctiall, fro our orizont, as is the sygnet from ŷ pole artike, and as hie is the pole artike from the Orizont, as the equinoctiall is ferre from the sygnet, I preue it thus by ŷ latitude of Oxenford, vnderstand well that the height of our pole artike from our Nozth Orizont is li. degrees, and L. minutes, than is the signet from the pole artike xxxviii. degrees & x. minutes, than is the equinoctiall from our signet li. degrees, and L. minutes, than is our south Orizont from our equinoctiall xxxviii degrees, & x. minutes. Understand wel this rekening also, forget not that the signet is lxxxx. degrees of height from the orizont, and our equinoctiall is lxxxx. degrees from our pole artike. Also this short rule is soth, that the latitude of any planet in a region, is the distance from the signet vnto the equinoctiall.

To proove the latitude of any place in a region by the prefe of the height of the pole artike in that same place.

IN some winters night, whan the fyrmament is cleare and thicke sterred, wait a time till that euery ster sit line right perpendicular ouer the pole artike, and clepe that ster A. and wait another ster that sit line right vnder A. and vnder the pole, and clepe that sterre F. & vnderstand wel that F. is not considred but onely to declare that A. that sit euer on the pole. Take than anone right the altitude of A. from the Orizont, and forget it not, let A. and F. goe far well till against the dawning a great while, and come than again, and abide till that A. is euen vnder the pole vnder F. for soothly than wil F. sit ouer the pole, take than eftsones the altitude of A. from the orizont, and note as well the second altitude as the first altitude. And whan that thys is done, reken how many degrees that the first altitude A. exceeded his altitude, & take halfe thilke porcion that is exceeded, and adde it to his second altitude, and take there the eleuacion of the pole, and eke the altitude of thy region. For these two been of one nombre, that is to sain, as many degrees as thy pole is eleuat, so moch is the latitude of thy region. Ensample as thus. Paraventure the altitude of A. in the euening is xcii. degrees of height than will the second altitude or the dawning be xxi. that is to sain, lesse than xcii. that was his first altitude at euen. Take than the halfe of xcii. & adde to it xxi. that was his second altitude, and than hast thou ŷ height of the pole & the latitude of thy region. But vnderstande wel to preue this conclusion, & many another faire conclusion, thou maiest haue a plommet hanginge on a line higher than thy head on a perch and that line mote hang euen perpendiculer betwixe the pole and thine eye, and than shalt thou see if A. sit euen ouer the pole & ouer F. at euen. And also if F. sit euen ouer the pole and ouer A. or day.

Another conclusion to preue the height of the pole artike from the orizont.

TAke any sterre fix that euer discendeth vnder the orizont in thilk region, and conslyder his highest altitude and his lowest altitude from the orizont, and make a number of these altitudes, take than and abate halfe that number, and take there the elcuacion of the pole artike in that same region, and for the more declaracion, &c.

o 32. 51. o. 20.

Another conclusion to preue the latitude of a region that ye ben in.

VNderstand well that the latitude of any place in a region, is verely the space betwixe ẏ signe of hem that dwellen there, and the equinoctiall cercle, Nozth oz South, taking the measure in the meridionall line, as sheweth in the almicanteras of thine Astrolaby, and thilk space is as much as the pole artike is hie in the same place from the ozizont. And thā is the depzession of the pole artentike beneath the ozizont, ẏ same quantity of space, neither moze ne lesse, than if thou desire to know this latitude of the region, take the altitude of the Sonne in the middle of the day, whan the Son is in ẏ heed of Aries oz of Libza, foz than moueth the Sonne in the line equinoctial, and abate the nomber of that same Sonnes altitud out of 90. degrees, & than is the remnaunte of the nnmbze that leueth, the altitude of the region, as thus. I suppose that the Sonne is thilke day at noone 38. degrees of height, abate than 38. degrees out of 90. so leueth there 52. than is 52. degrees ẏ latitude: I say not this but foz ensample, foz wel I wot the latitude of Oxenfozd is certaine minutes lesse. Now if it so be that thy thinketh to long a tarying to abyde till that the Son be in the head of Aries oz of Libza, than wait whan that the Sonne is in any other degree of the zodiake, and consider the degree of this declinacion be Nozthward from the equinoctiall, abate than from the sonnes altitude at noone the numbze of his declination, and than haste thou the highest of the heades of Aries and Libza, as thus. My Son paraventure is in the 10 degree of Leo almest 56 of height at noone, & his declination is almest 18 degrees nozthward from the equinoctial, abate than thilke 18 degrees of declinacion out of the altitude at noone, than leaueth 38 degrees, lo there the heed of Aries oz Libza, and thine equinoctial in that region. Also if it so be that the Sonnes declinacion be southward from the equinoctiall, adde than thilke declinacion to the altitude of the Sonne at noone, & take there the heedes of Aries and Libza and thine equinoctiall, abate than the height of the equinoctiall out of 90 degrees, and thā leueth there 38 degrees, that is the distaunce of the region from the equinoctiall of any sterre fixe that thou knowest, and take the neither elongation lengthing from the same equinoctiall line, and werke after the maner afozesaid.

Declaration of the ascencion of signes as well in the circle direct, as in oblique.

THe excellence of the sphere solide amongs other noble conclusions, sheweth manifest the diuers ascencions of signes in diuers places, as well in right cercles as in embolike cercle. These auctours writen that thilke signe is cleaped of right ascencion with which the moze part of the cercle equinoctiall and the lesse part of the zodiake ascendeth, and thilke signe ascendeth embolike, with which the lesse of the zodiake equinoctiall, and the moze part of the zodiake ascendeth, and euermo the arch of the day and the arch of the night is there ylike long, and the sonne twise euery yere passing through the signes of her heed, and 2 sommers & 2 winters in a yeare haue these forsaid people, and the almicanteras in her Astrolaby ben streight as a line, so hath shewed in this figure. The vtilities to know the ascencions of signes in the right circle is this. Trust wel that by mediacions of thilke ascencions, these Astrologiens by her table and her instruments, knowen verely the ascencion of euery degre and minute in all the zodiake, in the embolike cercle, as shall be shewed. And note that this forsayd right ozizont that is cleaped ozizont rectum, deuideth the equinoctiall into right angles, and embolike ozizont, where as the people is enhaunced vpon the Ozizont, ouercommeth the equinoctial in embolike angles.

This is the conclusion to know the ascencions of signes in the right circle, that is circulus directus.

SEt the heed of what sign thee list to know the ascending on the right cercle, vpon the line meridionall, & wait where thine almury toucheth the bozdure, and set there a pzicke, tourne than thy reet westward till the end of the forsaid signe, set vpon the meridionall line, and eftsones wait where thine almury toucheth the bozdure, and set there another pzicke. Reken than the nombzes of degrees in the bozdure betwixe both pzickes, & take than the ascencion of the signe in ẏ righte cercle, and thus maist thou werke with euery pozcion of the zodiake.

To know the ascencions of signes in the embolite cercle in euery region, I meane in circulo obliquo.

SEt the heed of ỳ signes, which as thee list to know his ascencion vpon the East Orizont, & wait where thine almury toucheth the bordure, & set there a pricke, tourne than thy reet vpward til the end of the same signe, set vpon the East orizont, & wait eftsones where as thine almury toucheth the bordure, and set there another pricke, reken than the number of the degrees in the bordure bitwixe both prickes, and take there the ascencion of the sign in the embolike cercle. And vnderstand well that all the signes in the zodiake from the heed of Aries vnto the end of Virgo, ben cleaped signs of the Norrth from the equinoctiall, and these signs arisen betwixe the very East & the very North in our orizont generally for euer: & all the signs from the heed of Libra, vnto the end of Pisces, been cleaped signes of the south fro the equinoctiall, and these sinnes arisen euermore betwixe the very East and ỳ very south in our orizont, also euery sign betwix the heed of Capricorne vnto the end of Gemini, arisseth in our Orizonte in lesse than two hours equals, and these same signes from the heade of Capricorn vnto the ende of Geminy, beene called tortuous signes or crooked signes, for they risen embolyse in our orizonte, and these croked signs ben obedient to ỳ signs that ben of the right ascencion. These signs of right ascencion, beene fro the heed of Cancer vnto the heed of Sagitary, & these signes arisen more bryght than doth the other, and therfore they ben called souerain signs, and euery of hem ariseth in more space than in two houres, of which signes Gemini obeieth to Cancer, and and Taurus to Leo, & Aries to Virgo, Pisces to Libra, Aquarius to Scorpio, & Capricorn to Sagitarie, and thus euermore two signes that been like fer from the heed of Capricorn, obeieth euerich of hem to other.

To know iustly the foure quarters of of the world, as East, West, South, and North.

TAke the altitude of thy sonne whan thou lyste, and note well the quarter of the worlde in whiche the sonne is from the tyme by the alymutes, tourne than thyne Astrolabye, and set the degree of the sonne in the Almicanteras of his altytude, on thilke syde that the Sonne standeth, as is in maner of taking of houres, and lay thy label on the degree of the Sonne, and reken howe many degrees of the Sonne, ben bytwene the lyne meridionall and the poynte of thy label, & note wel the numbers. Tourne than agayne thyne Astrolabye, and set the pount of thy great rule there thou takest thine altitudes, vpon as many degrees in his bordure from his meridionall, as was the poynt of thy labell from the lue meridionall, on the wombe syde. Take than thyne Astrolabye with both handes sadly and slyly, and let the sonne shine through bothe holes of thy rule, and slyly in thilke shynyng laye thine Astrolabye couche adowne euen vpon a playne ground, and than will the meridionall lyne of thyne Astrolaby be euen south, and the East line will lie euen east, and the West line West, and the Northe lyne North, so that thou werke softely and autsely in the couchynge, and thou hast thus the foure quarters of the firmament, &c.

To know the altitude of planets from the way of the sonne, whether they ben North or south fro the way aforesaied.

LOoke whan a planet is on the line meridionall, yf that her altitude be of the same heighte, that is the degree of ỳ Sonne for that day, and than is the planet in the very way of the sonne, and hath no latitude. And if the altitude of the planette be hyer than the degree of the Sonne, than is the planet Northe from the waye of the sygne South, a quantitie of latitude as sheweth by thyne Almycanteras, and if the altitude bee lesse than the degree of the Sonne, than is the planet South from the waye of the Sonne, sothe a quantity of latitude as sheweth by thine Almicanteras. This is to saine from the way of the Sonne in euery place of the zodiake. for on the morow the Sonne will bee in another degree.

For to know the signet for the arising of the Sonne, this is to saine, the party of the orizont in which the Sonne ariseth.

Thou

THou must first consider that the Sunne ariseth not in the very East signet, sometime by North East, and sometime by South East, sothely the Sunne ariseth euermore in the very Easte in our Orizonte, but if he be in the hedde of Aries or Libra. Nowe is thine Orizonte departed into xviii. partes of thy Minutes, in signification of xviii. partes of the worlde, though it be so, that shipmen recken all that parties in xxxii. Then is there no more, but waite in ỳ which Minute, that the Sunne entreth at his arising, and take there the signet of the rising of the Sunne.

The maner of deuision of thine Astrolabie is thus enioyned, as in this case.

FIrst, it is deuided in foure places principally, with the line that commeth fro the East to West, and then with another line, that goeth fro the South to the North, then is it deuided in small parties of Minutes, as East and East by South, where that is the first Minute aboue the East line, and so foorth fro partie to partie, till that thou come againe to the Easte line. Thus thou might vnderstand the signet of euery sterre, in which partie he ariseth.

To knowe in which partie of the firmament, is the coniunction.

COnsider the time of the coniunction, by the Kalender, as thus: how many houres that the coniunction is fro middaie of the daie before, as sheweth the Canon of the Kalender, Reken then that nomber in the bordure of thine Astrolabie, as thou were wont to do in knowinge of the houres of the day, or of the night, and lay thy label ouer the Degree of ỳ Sunne, then wil the point of the label, sit vpō the houre of the coniunccion. Looke then in which Minute, the Degree of the Sunne sitteth, and in that partie of the Firmament is the coniunction.

To knowe the Signet of the altitude of the Sonne.

THis is no more to saye, but any time of the daie, take the altitude of the sunne & by the Minutes in which he ascendeth, thou might see in which partie of the Firmament he is, and in the same wise might thou see by night any sterre, whether he sit Easte, West, or South, or any parte betwixt, after the name of the minutes, in which the sterres standeth.

To know sothely the Longitude of the Moone, or any Planet that hath no Laritude, fro the time of the Ecliptike line.

TAke the altitude of the Moone & recken thine altitude vp emonge thine almicanteras, on whiche side that the Moone standeth, & set there a pricke. Take then anone right vpon the Moones side, the altitude of euery sterre fixe that thou knowest, & set his circle vpon his altitude emonge thyne almicanteras there the sterre is founden, waite then of whiche degree the zodiake is, to which ỳ pricke of the altitude of ỳ Moone, & there take the degree in which the Moone standeth. This conclusion is verie soothe, of the Starres in thine Astrolabie, and standeth after the trouth. Some treatise of the Astrolabie, maketh none exception, whether the Moone haue latitude or none, nor whether side of the Moone the altitude of the Sterre be founde. And note if the Moone shewe her selfe by day, then thou mayest worch the same conclusion by the Sunne, as weil as by the Sterre fixe.

This is the werching of the conclusion to knowe whether any Planet be direct, or retrograde.

TAke the altitude of any sterre, that is cleaped a Planette, and note it well, anone righte take the altitude of some sterre fixe, that thou knowest, and note it well also, and come againe the thirde or the fourth night next followinge, for then thou shalt perceiue well the meuing of the Planet whether he meue forward or backwarde, and waite well then when the sterre fixe, is in this same altitude that she was, when thou tooke her first altitude, of the forsaide Planet, and note it well, for truste well, if so bee that the Planet be in the right side of the meridionall line, so that his seconde altitude be lesse then the firste altitude was, then is the Planet direct, and if he be in the West side in

that condicion, then is he retrograde, and if so be that this Planet be in the East side, when his altitude is taken, so that the seconde altitude, be more than his first altitude, then is he retrograde, and if he be in the West side of the line meridional, then is he direct, but the contrary mouing of these parties, is the cours of the Moone, for sothly the Moone moueth ꝑ contrary fro either Planettes, in her ecliptike line, but in none other maner.

The conclusion of equacions of houses, after the Astrolabie.

SEt the beginning of the degre that ascendeth vpon the ende of the viii. houre inequall, than wil the line of the second house sit vpon the line of Midnight, remeue then the degree that ascendeth, and set him vpon the ende of the x. houre inequall, then wil the beginning of the iii. house, sitte vpon the Midnight line, bring vp againe the same degree that ascendeth first, and set him vpon the East Orizont, and then will the beginning of the iiii. hous sit vpon the Midnight line. Take then the nadere of the degree, that ascendeth first, and set him vpon the end of the ii. houre inequall, and then will the beginning of the v. house, sit vpon the Midnight line. Take then the nadere of the ascendent, and set him vpon the end of the iiii. houre inequall, and then will the beginning of the vi. house set vpon the Midnight line. The beginning of the seuenth house, is nader of the ascendent, and the beginning of the viii. house, is nadere of the seconde, and the beginning of the nynth house, is nadere of the third, and the beginning of the tenth house, is nadere of the iiii. and the beginning of the leuēth house, is nadere of the fifth, and the beginning of the xii. house, is nadere of the vi. house.

An other maner of equacions of houses, by the Astrolabie.

TAke thine ascendent, and then thou haste the foure angles, for well thou wotest, that thoppolite is of thine ascendent, that is to saye, the beginning of the seuenth hous sit vpon the West Orizont, and the beginning of the tenth house, vpon the line Meridionall, and his oppolite vpon the line of Midnight, then lay thy labell vppon the degree that ascendeth, and reken then from the point of thy labell, all the degrees in the bordure, till that thou come to the Meridionall line, and depart all thilke degrees into three euen partes, and take there the euen portions of three other houses for to lay thy labell ouer euery of these three parties, & then thou might see by the labell in the Zodiake, the beginning of these three houses fro the ascendent, that is to say, the twelue next aboue the ascendent, & then the eleuenth house and the x. house, vpon the Meridionall line, as I first taide the same wise werche, fro the ascendent, downe to the line of Midnight, and thus thou hast three houses, that is to say, the beginning of the second, the thirde, and the fourth house: then is the nadire of these three houses, ꝑ beginning of these iii. houses that foloweth.

To finde the line Meridionall, to dwell fixe in any certaine place.

TAke a rounde plate of metall, for warping the border the better, and make thereupon a iust compace, a litle within the bordure, and laye this rounde plate vpon an euen grounde, or some euen stone, or on an euen stocke fixe in the ground, and lay it euen by a rule, in the centre of the compace, sticke an euen pinne or a wire vpright, the smaller the better, and set thy pinne or thy wire, by a plomme rules end vpright euen, and let this pinne be no lenger then a quarter, of thy diameter of the compace fro the pinne, and wait busilie about tenne or eleuen of the Clocke, when the Sonne sheweth, when the shadow of the pinne entereth any thyng, within the circle of the compace one heere brede, & make there a pricke with pinne: abide then still waiting on the Sonne, after one of the clocke, till that the shadowe of the pinne, or of the wire, passe any thinge out of the circle or compace, be it neuer so little, and sette there a pricke. Take then a compace and measure euen the middle, betwixt both the prickes, and set there a pricke: Take then a Rule and draw a strike, euen fro the pinne vnto the middle pricke, and take there the line Meridional for euermore, as in the same place. And if thou draw a crosse ouerthwart the compace, iustly ouer the line Meridionall, then hast thou East and West, & perconsequens the oppolitike, that is South and North.

Description of the Meridionall line, & of the longitudes and latitudes, of cities and tounes, as well as of climates.

This

This line Meridionall, is but a maner discription of a line ymagined, that passeth vpon the poles of the world, and by the signet of our hedde: and it is cleaped the signet, for in what plate that any man is at any time of the yere, whē the Sunne by meuing of the firmament, commeth to his Meridional place, then is it the very Midday, that we cleap Noone, & therefore it is cleaped the line of Middaie. Then take heede that euermore of two Cities, or of two Tounes, of which the one approcheth nerer the East, then doeth the other Toune, trust well that thilke two Townes haue diuers Meridians. Take kepe also, that the arche of the Equinoctiall, that is conteined & bounded betwene the two Meridians, is cleped the Longitude of the Toune. And if so be that two Tounes haue Meridian like, or one Meridian, then is the distance of hem bothe like farre: and in this maner they change not her Meridian, but sothly they change her Almicanteras, for the haunting of the Pole, and the distance of the Sunne. The longitude of a climate may be cleaped the space of the earth, fro the beginning of the first climate, vnto the last ende of the same climate, euen direct against the Pole artik, thus say some authors. And some clerkes saie, that if men cleape the latitude of a center, the arche Meridian, that is contained or intercept betwixt the signet & the Equinoccial, then they saye, that the distance fro the Equinocciall, vnto the ende of ỹ climate, euen ayenst the Pole artike, is the lōgitude of the climate for South.

To know with what degree of the Zodiake that any planet ascendeth on the Orizont, where his latitude be North, or South.

Knowe by thine Alminacke, the degree of the Ecliptike of any signe, in which that the Planette is reckened for to be, and that is cleaped the degree of his longitude. And know also the degree of his latitude, fro the Ecliptike, North or South, & by these ensamples folowinge in especiall, thou maiest worche with euery signe of the Zodiake. The longitude peraucenture of Venus or of another Planet was of Capricorne, and the latitude of hem Northwarde ỹ degrees, fro the Ecliptike line, then tooke I subtil compas, & cleped the one point of my compace A, & that other F. than tooke I the point of A. and set it in the Ecliptike line, and my zodiake in the degree of the longitude of heddes, that is to saie, in the ende of Capricorne, and then set I the point of F. vpwarde in the same signe, because that the altitude was North, vpon the latitude of Venus, that is to saie, in the degree fro the hed of Capricorn, and thus haue I the degrees betwixt my two pricks, then laid I doune softly my compace; and set the degree of the longitude vpon the Orizont, then toke I and warth my label, in maner of a paire of tables, to receiue distinctly the prick of my compace, then toke I this forsaid labell, and laied it fire ouer the degree of my longitude, then toke I vp my compace, and the point of A in the ware of my labell, as I could gesse, ouer the ecliptike line, in thend of the longitude I set the point ouer endlong on the labell, vpon the space of the latitude inwarde, and on the zodiake, that is to say, Northward fro the ecliptike: then laide I doun my compace, and loked well in the way vpon the ecliptike of A. and F. then turned I my reete, till that the prick of F. late vpon the Orizont, then sawe I wel, that the bodie of Venus in her latitude of degrees septentrionals, ascendeth in the ende of degree, fro the hed of Capricorne. And note that in this maner, thou mightest worch with any latitude septētionall in all signes: but sothly the latitude Meridionall, of a planet in Capricorn may not be take, because of the little space betwixt the ecliptike, and the bordure of the Astrolabie, & likerly in all other signes it may be take. Also the degree peraventure of Iupiter, or of any other Planette, was in the first degree of Pisces in longitude & his latitude was degrees Meridionall. Then tooke I the point of A. and set it in the first degree of Pisces on the ecliptike, then set I the point dounwarde of F. in the same signe, because ỹ the latitude was South degrees that is to saie, fro the hed of Pisces, and thus haue I degrees betwixe both pricks. Then set I the degree of the longitude, vpon the Orizont, then toke I my labell, & laied him fire vpon the degree of longitude, then sette I the point of A. on my labell euen ouer the ecliptike line, in the ende of the degree of ỹ longitude, and I sette the point of F. endlong on my labell, the space of degrees of the latitude outwarde from the Zodiake, that is to saie, Southward from the Ecliptike toward the bordure, and then tourned I my reete, till the pointe of F. sate vpon the Orizont, then sawe

tober I well that the bodie of Iupiter, in his Latitude of degrees Meridionall, assendeth with the degree of ℘isces in horescopo. And in this maner thou mayest worche, with any Latitude, as I saied first, saue in Capricorno. And thou wilte plie this crafte, with the arising of the Moone, looke thou reken well the course of houre by houre, for she dwelleth in a degree of her Longitude but a litle while, as thou wost well; but neuertheles, if thou kepe well her verie meuing by the tables, or after her course houre by houre, thou shalte doe well inough.

Vmbra recta.

If thou wilt worch with Umbra recta, if thou might come to the base of the toure, in this maner shalt thou worche: take the altitude of the Toure with both holes, so that the rule lie euen on a point. Ensample, as thus. I see him through the poinct of foure, then mete I the space, betwixe me and the Toure, and I finde it twenty foot, then behold I how fower is to twelue, & I find it is the third part of twelue. Right so the space betwixe thee & the Toure, is the third part of the altitude of the Toure: then thrise twenty foot, is ỳ highest of ỳ tour, with the addicion of thine own body fro thine eye. If the Rule fall on fiue, then is fiue tymes twelue the highest of the Toure.

Vmbra versa.

If thou maist not come to ỳ base of the toure, & thou fix him through the number of one, set there a pricke at thy foot, then go neare the Tour, and see him through at the point of two, and set there another pricke, and thē behold how one hath him to twelue, and thou shalt find that he hath him twelue sithes, then behold how two haue him to xii. and thou shalt find it sixe sithes, and therefore the space betwixe twoo prickes, is sixe times thine altitude. And note that at the first altitude of one, thou settest a pricke, and afterward when thou seest him through at two, there thou settest a prick, thē thou findest betweene eightie foote, then thou shalt find that ten is the sixt part of lxxx. then is a foot the altitude of the Toure, but if it fal vpon another point, as thus. It falleth on sixe at the second taking it, when it falleth on fower, then shalt thou finde that sixe is the second part of twelue, and fower is the third parte of twelue, by the third parte. that is to saye, the space betwixe two prickes, twise the height of the Tour, and if the difference were three, then would it be three times the height Et sic de singulis. Another maner worching, by Umbra recta. If thou maiest not come by the base of the Toure, worch in this wise: Sette thy rule vpō one, till thou see the altitude, and set at thy foot a pricke, and thē set thy rule vpō two, & so doe in the same maner: then looke what is the difference betwixe one and two, and thou shalt find that it is one. Then measure the space betwixe the two pricks, & that is the twelue part of the altitude of the tour, and so of all other.

Vmbra recta.

If thy Rule fall vpon the eight point, vpon the right shadow, then make the figure of eight, than looke how moch space of feet is, betwixe thee and the Toure, and multiply that by twelue, & when thou haste multiplied it by the same number, then deuide it by the number of eight, and keepe the residue, and adde thereto thy height vnto thine eye, to the residue, and that shal be the very height of the Toure. And thus maist thou woorch on the same side, from one to twelue, &c.

Vmbra recta.

Another maner of working vpon the same side. Looke vpon what point thy rule falleth, when thou seest the top of the Toure, through the two holes, & then mete the space from thy foote, to the base of the Toure, and right as the number of the poinct hath himself to twelue, right so ỳ mesure, betwixe thee and the Toure, hath himselfe to the height of the same Toure. Ensample as thus. I set case thy rule fall vpon eight, then is eight two third parts of twelue, so is ỳ space two thirde parts of the Toure.

Vmbra versa.

TO knowe the height, by the poincte of Umbra versa. If the rule fall vpon iii. when thou seest the toppe of the Toure, set

sette a pricke there thy foote standeth, and go nere till thou maiest see the same toppe, at the point of iiii. and set there another prick: then mete howe manye foote is betwixte the two prickes, and the height vp to thine eye, & that shal be the height of the toure. And note that iii. is the fourth part of xii. and iiii. is the third part of xii. Now passeth iiii. the nomber of iii. by distance of i. therefore the same space with thy height to thy eye, is the height of ỳ toure. And if it were so that there were two or three distances in the nombers, so should the measure betwixe the prickes, by twise or thrise the height of the toure.

Vmbra recta.

TO knowe the height, if thou maiest not come of the bace of ỳ thinge, set thy rule vpon what point thou wilt, so that thou maist see the toppe of the thinge, through the two holes, & make a marke, there as thy foot standeth, & go nere or ferther, till thou maiest see it through another point, & make there another marke, & looke what difference is betwixt the two points in the scale, and right as that difference hath him to xii. right so the spaces betwixt the two markes hath him to the height of the thing. Ensample. I set the case, ỳ thou seest it through at the point of iiii. and after at the point of ii. Now passeth the nomber of iiii. the nomber of iii. the distance of i. and right as this difference of one, hath himselfe to xii. right so the measure betwixte bothe the markes, hath him to the height of the same thing putting thereto the height of thy selfe to thine eye. And thus maiest thou worke from i. to xii.

Vmbra versa.

FErthermore, if thou wilt know in Umbra versa, by the craft of Umbra recta, I suppose to take thine altitude at the point of iiii. & makest a marke, & then thou goest nere, till thou hast it at the point of iii. & makest ther another marke, then must thou deuide 144. by 3. the nomber that cometh therof shal be thirtie & sixe, and after deuide 144. by 3. and the nomber that cometh therof is 48. then looke what difference is betwixt 36. and 48. and that shalt thou finde 12. and right as 12. hath him to 12. so the space betwixt the two prickes, hath him to the altitude of the thing.

Here endeth the conclusions of the Astrolabie.

The complaint of the blacke Knight.

IN Maie when Flora the fresh iustie Queene
The soyle hath cladde, in grene, red, and whight
And Phebus gan to shede his stremes shene
Amidde the Bull, with al the beames bright
And Lucifer, to chace away the night
Ayen the morowe our Orizont hath take
To bid all louers out of her slepe awake.

And hartes beautie for to recomfort
From derthed, of heuie nightes sorowe
Nature bad hem rise, and hem disporte
Ayen the goodly glad grey morowe
And hope also, with saint John to borowe
Bad in despite of Danger and Dispaire
For to take the holsome iustie aire.

And with a sigh I gan for to abreide
Out of my slomber, and sodainly vp starte
As he (alas) that nigh for sorowe deide
My sickenesse sate aye so nie my harte
But for to finde succour of my smarte
Or at the least some release of my pame
That me so sore halte in euery vaine.

I rose anone, and thought I would gone
Into the wood, to heare the birdes sing
When that the mistic vapour was agone
And cleare and faire was the morning
The dewe also like siluer in shyning
Upon the leaues, as any Baume swete
Til firie Titan with his persant hete

Had dried vp the lustie licour newe
Upon the herbes in the grene mede
And that the floures of many diuers hewe
Upon her stalkes gon for to spredde
And for to splay out her leues in brede
Againe the Sunne, gold burned in his spere
That doune to hem cast his beames clere.

And by a riuer forth I gan costeie
Of water clere, as birell or cristall
Till at the last I found a little weie
Toward a parke, enclosed with a wall
In compace rounde, and by a gate small
Who so that would, frelie might gone
Into this parke, walled with grene stone.

And

And in I went to heare the birdes song
Which on the branches, both in plain & vale
So loude sang, that al the wood rong
Like as it should shiuer in peces smale
And as me thought, that the Nightingale
With so great might, her voice gan out wrest
Right as her hart for loue would brest.

The soile was plaine, smoth, & wonder soft
All ouerspradd with tapettes that Nature
Had made her self: couered eke aloft
With bowes grene, the floures for to cure
That in her beautie they may long endure
From all assaut of Phebus feruent fere
Which in his sphere so hote shone and clere.

The aire attempre, and the smothe winde
Of Zepherus, among the blosomes white
So holsome was, and so nourishing by kind
That smale buddes, and round blosomes lite,
In maner gan of her brethe delite
To yeue vs hope there fruite shall take
Ayenst Autumne redy for to shake.

I sawe the Daphene closed vnder rinde
Grene Laurer, and the holsome Pine
The Myrre also, that wepeth euer of kinde
The Cedres hie, vpright as a line
The Filbert eke, that lowe doth encline
Her bowes grene, to the earth adoun
Unto her knight called Demophon.

There sawe I eke the fresh Hauthorne
In white Motley, that so swote doth smell
Asshe, Firre, & Oke, with many a yong acorne
And many a tree mo then I can tell
And me before I sawe a little well
That had his course, as I can beholde
Under an hill, with quick stremes colde.

The grauell gold, the water pure as glasse
The bankes round, the well enuironyng
And soft as Uelure the yong grasse
That there vpon lustely came springing
The lute of trees about compassing
Her shadowe cast, closing the well rounde
And all the herbes growing on the grounde

The water was so holsome, & so vertuous
Through might of herbes growing beside
Not like the welle whereas Narcissus
Islain was, through vengeance of Cupide
where so couertly he did hide
The graine of death vpon eche brinke
That death mote folow, who y euer drinke

Ne like the pitte of the Pegace
Under Pernaso, where Poets slept
Nor like the well of pure chastitte
Which that Diane with her nimphes kept
When she naked into the water lepte
That slowe Acteon with her hands fell
Onely for he came so nigh the well.

But this well that I here rehearse
So holsome was, that it would aswage
Bollen hartes, and the venim peerce
Of penitehed, with all the cruel rage
And euermore refresh the viage
Of hem that were in any wernesse
Of great labour, or fallen in distresse.

And I that had through danger & disdaine
So drie a thurst, thought I would assaie
To taste a draught of this Well or twaine
My bitter langour if it might alaie
And on the banke anone downe I laie
And with mine hed, vnto the Well I raught
And of the water dranke I a good draught

Wherof me thought I was refreshed wele
Of the brenning that sate so nigh my hart
That verely anon I gan to sele
In huge parte released of my smart
And therwithall anon vp I start
And thought I would walke and see more
Forth in the parke, and in the holtes hore.

And through a launde as I yede apace
And gan about fast to beholde
I found anon a delectable place
That was beset with trees young and olde
Whose names here for me shall not be tolde
Amidde of which stoode an herber grene
That dected was with colours new & clene.

This herber was full of floures gende
Into the which, as I beholde gan
Betwixt an Hulsere and a Woodbende
As I was ware, I sawe where lay a man
In black, and white colour pale and wan
And wonder dedly also of his hewe
Of hurtes grene, and fresh wounds newe.

And euermore distrained with sickenesse
Beside all this he was ful grenously
For vpon him he had an hote accesse
That day by day him shooke full pitously
So that for constraining of his maladie
And hartly wo, thus lying all alone
It was a death for to heare him grone.

Whereat

Wherof astonied, my foot I gan withdraw
Greatly wondring what it might be
That he so lay and had no felaw
Ne that I could no wight with him se
Wherof I had routh, and eke pite
And gan anone, so softely as I could
Among the bushes priuely me to shroud

If that I might in any wise aspie
What was the cause of his deedly wo
Or why that he so petously gan cry
On his fortune, and on hye also
With all my might I laid an eere to
Euery word, to marke what he said
Out of his swough among as he abraid

But first, if I should make mencion
Of his person, and plainly him discriue
He was in sooth, without exception
To speake of manhood, one the best on liue
There may no man ayen trouth striue
For of his time, and of his age also
He proued was, there men should haue ado

For one the best thereto of bread & length
So wel ymade by good proporcion
If he had be in his deliuer strength
But thought and sickenesse were occasion
That he thus lay in lamentacion
Grouffe on the ground, in place desolate
Sole by himselfe, awhaped and amate

And for me semeth that it is fitting
His words all to put in remembraunce
To me that heard all his complaining
And all the ground of his woful chaunce
If there withall I may you do plesaunce
I wol to you so as I can anone
Like as he said, reherce euerichone

But who shal helpe me now to complaine
Or who shal now my stile gie or lede
O Niobe, let now thy teeres raine
Into my penne, and helpe eke in nede
Thou woful Myrre ye feelest mine hert blede
Of pitous wo, and my hand eke quake
Whan that I write, for this mannes sake

For vnto wo accordeth complaining
And doleful chere vnto heuinesse
To sorow also, sighing and weping
And pitous mourning vnto derkenesse
And who that shal write of distresse
In party nedeth to know felingly
Cause and root of all such malady

But I alas, that am of witte but dull
And haue no knowing of such matere
For to discriue, and write at the full
The woful complaint, which ye shall here
But euen like as doth a scriuenere
That can no more, what that he shal write
But as his master bidde doth endite

Right so fare I, that of no sentement
Say right naught in conclusion
But as I herd whan I was present
This man complaine, with a pitous soun
For euen like without addicioun
Or diseuereasle, either more of lesse
For to reherse anone I wol me dresse

And if that any now be in this place
That fele in loue brenning or fernence
Or hindred were to his ladies grace
With false tonges, that with pestilence
Slea trew men, that neuer did offence
In word nor dede, ne in her entent
If any such be here now present

Let him of routh lay to audience
With doleful chere, and sober countenaunce
To here this man, by ful hie sentence
His mortal wo, and his perseuerannce
Complaining, now lying in a traunce
With lokes vpcast, and ruful chere
The effect of which was as ye shal here

The thought oppressed with inward sighs sore
The pam life, the body full languishing
The woful ghost, the hert rent and tore
The pitous chere pale in complaining
The deedly face, like ashes in shining
The salt teares that from mine eyen fall
Perce declare, ground of my paines all

Whose hert is ground to bleed in heuinesse
The thought receit of wo, and of complaint
The brest is chest of dole and derkenesse
The body eke so feble and so faint
With hote and cold mine arys is so maine
That now I chiuer, for defaut of heat
And hote as glede, now sodainly I sweat

Now hote as fire, now cold as ashes deed
Now hote for cold, now cold for heate againe
Now cold as ise, now as coles reed
For heat I brenne. and thus betwixe twaine
I posed am, and all for cast in paine
So that my bete plainly as I sele
Of grenous cold is cause euery dele

This is the cold of inward hie disdaine
Cold of dispite, and cold of cruel hate
This is the cold that euer doth his bely payn
Ayenst trouth to fight and debate
This is the cold that the fire abate
Of trew meaning, alas the hard while
This is the cold that wol me begile

Now God that art of trouth soueraine
And seest how I lie for trouth bound
So sore knit in loues firy chaine
Euen at the death through gurt with many a wound
That likely are neuer for to sound
And for my trouth am dampned to the death
And not abide, but draw along the breath

For euer the better that in trouth I ment
With all my might faithfully to serue
With hert and all to be diligent
The lesse thanke, alas I can deserue
Thus for my trouth daunger doth me sterue
For one that should my death of mercy let
Hath made dispite new his sword to whet

Consider and se in thine eternal right
How that mine hert professed whilome was
For to be trew with all my full might
Only to one the which now alas
Of volunt without any trespas
Mine accusours hath taken vnto grace
And cherisheth hem, my death to purchace

Against me, and his arowes to file
To take vengeaunce of wilful cruelte
And tonges false through her sleightly wile
Han gone a werre, that wil not stinted be
And false envy, wrath and enuite
Haue conspired against all right and law
Of her malice that trouth shal be slaw

What meneth this, what is this wonder wise
Of purueaunce if I shal it call
Of god of loue, that false hem so assure
And trew alas, downe of the whele ben fall
And yet in soth this is the worst of all
That falshed wrongfully of troth hath ỹ name
& troth ayẽward of falshed beareth the blame

And male bouch, gan first the tale tel
To sclaunder trouth of indignacion
And false report so loud rang the bell
That misbilefe and false suspection
Haue trouth brought to his dampnacion
So that alas, wrongfully he dieth
And falsenesse now his place occupieth

This blind chaunce, this stormy auenture
In loue hath most his experience
For who that doth with troth most his cure
Shal for this mede find most offence
That serueth loue with all his diligence
For who can faine vnder lowlihede
Ne faileth not to find grace and spede

And entreth is into trouths lond
And hath thereof the ful possession
O rightful god that first the trouth fond
How may thou suffre such oppression
That falshed should haue iurisdiction
In trouths right to slee him giltiesse
In his fraunchise he may not liue in pees

For I loued one, ful long sith agone
With all mine hert, body and ful might
And to be deed my hert cannot gone
From his hest, but hold that he hath hight
Though I be banished out of her sight
And by her mouth dampned that I shal dey
Unto my beheste, yet I wil euer obey

Falsly accused, and of his soone foringed
Without answere, while he was absent
He damned was, and may not be excused
For cruelte sate in iudgement
Of hastinesse without aduisement
And badde Disdaine do execute anone
His iudgement in presence of his sone

For euer sith that the world began
Who so list loke, and in story rede
He shal aye find that the trew man
Was put abacke, where as the falshede
Y furthered was for loue taketh none hede
To slea the trew, and hath of hem no charge
Where as the false goeth freely at her large

Attourney may none admitted been
To excuse trouth, ne a word to speake
To faith or oth the iudge list not seen
There is no gaine, but he wil be wreke
O lord of trouth to the I cal and clepe
How may thou se thus in thy presence
Without merey murdred innocence

I take record of Palamides
The trew man, the noble worthy knight
That euer loued, and of his paine no relees
Notwithstanding his manhode & his might
Loue vnto him did ful great vnright
For aye the bet he did in cheualry
The more he was hindred by envy

And aye the better he did in euery place
Through his knighthood and busy paine
The ferder was he from his ladies grace
For to her mercy might he neuer atraine
And to his death he coud it not refraine
For no daunger, but aye obey and serue
As he best coud, plainly til he sterue

What was the fine also of Hercules
For all his conquest and his worthinesse
That was of strength alone peerles
For like as bokes of him list expresse
He set pillers through his hie prowesse
Alway at Gaddes for to signifie
That no man might him passe in chiualry

The which pillers ferre beyond Inde
Be set of gold, for a remembraunce
And for all that was he set behind
With hem that loue list febly auaunce
For him set last vpon a daunce
Against whom helpe may no strife
For all his trouth he lost his life

Phebus also for all his pleasaunt lyght
When that he went here in earth low
Unto the hert with Venus sight
Ywounded was through Cupides bow
And yet his lady list him not to know
Though for her loue his hert did biede
She let him go, and toke of him no hede

What shal I say of yong Piramus:
Of trew Tristram, for all his hie renowne
Of Achilles or of Antonius
Of Arcite, or of him Palomowne
What was the end of her passiowne
But after sorow death, and than her graue
Lo here the guerdon that these louers haue

But false Jason with his doublenesse
That was untrew at Colkos to Medee
And Theseus root of unkindnesse
And with these two eke the false Enee
Lo thus the false aye in one degree
Had in loue her lust and all her will
And saue falshood, there was none other skill

Of Thebes eke the false Arcite
And Demophon eke for his slouth
They had her lust and all that might delite
For all her falshood and great untrouth
Thus euer loue alas, and that is routh
His false lieges forthereth what he may
And sleeth the trew ungoodly day by day

For trew Adon was slaine with the bore
Amidde the forest in the grene shade
For Venus loue he felt all the sore
But Vulcanus with her no mercy made
The foule choyle had many nights glade
Where Mars her knight and her man
To find mercy comfort none he can

Also the yong fresh Pomedes
So lusty free as of his corage
That for to serue with all his hert he ches
Athalaus so faire of her visage
But loue alas quite him so his wage
With cruel daunger plainly at the last
That with the death guerdonlesse he past

Lo here the fine of loues seruice
Lo how that loue can his seruaunts quite
Lo how he can his faithful men dispise
To slea the trew men, and false to respite
Lo how he doth the sword of sorow bite
In herts, such as most his lust obey
To saue the false and do the trew dey

For faith nor oth, word, ne assuraunce
Trew meaning, awayt, or busynesse
Stil port, ne faithful attendaunce
Manhood ne might in armes worthinesse
Pursute of worship nor hie prowesse
In straunge land riding ne trauaile
Ful litle or nought in loue doth auaile

Peril of death, nor in see ne land
Hunger ne thurst, sorow ne sicknesse
Ne great empryses for to take on hand
Sheding of blood, ne manful hardinesse
Ne oft wounding at sautes by distresse
Nor in parting of life, nor death also
All is for nought, loue taketh no heed thereto

But lesings with her flattery
Through her falshede, & with her doublenesse
With tales new, and many fained lie
By false semblaunt and counterfet humblesse
Under colour depaint with stedfastnesse
With fraud couered under a pitous face
Accept be now rathest into grace

And can himselfe now best magnifie
With fained port and presumpcion
They haunce her cause with false surquidrie
Under meaning of double entencion

To thinke one in her opinion
And say another, to set himselfe aloft
And hinder trouth as it is sene ful oft

The which thing, I buy now all to dere
Thanked be Uenus, and the god Cupide
As it is sene by mine oppressed chere
And by his arowes that sticken in my side
That saue death, I nothing abide
Fro day to day, alas the hard while
When euer his dart that him list to file

My wofull hert for to riue a two
For faut of mercy, and lacke of pite
Of her that causeth all my paine and wo
And list not ones of grace for to see
Unto my trouth through her cruelte
And most of all I me complaine
That she hath ioy to laugh at my paine

And wilfully hath my death sworne
All giltiesse, and wote no cause why
Saue for the trouth that I had afore
To her alone to serue faithfully
O god of loue, vnto thee I cry
And to they blind double deite
Of this great wrong I complaine me

And vnto thy stormy wilful variaunce
Ament with change and great vnstablenesse
Now vp now down, so renning is thy chance
That there to trust may be no sykernesse
I wote it nothing but thy doublenesse
And who that is an archer and is blend
Marketh nothing but shoteth by wend

And for that he hath no discretion
Without aduise he let his arow go
For lacke of sight, and also of reason
In his shoting it happeth oft so
To hurt his frend rather than his fo
So doeth this God with his sharpe slone
The trew fleeth, and letteth the false gone

And of his wounding this is the worst of all
When he hurteth doth to so cruell wretch
And maketh the sicke for to crie and call
Unto his foe for to be his leche
And hard it is for a man to seche
Upon the point of death in ieoperdy
Unto his foe to find remedy.

Thus fareth it now euen by me
That to my foe that gaue my hert a wound
Wote aske grace, mercy, and pite
And namely there where none may be founde
For now my sore my leche wil confound
And god of kind so hath set my wyt
My liues foe to haue my wound in cure

Alas the while now that I was borne
Or that I euer saw the bright sonne
For now I see that ful long afore
Or I was borne, my destiny was sponne
By Parcas sisterne to slea me if they conne
For they my death hopen or my shert
Only for trouth I may it not astert

The mighty goddesse also of Nature
That vnder god hath the gouernaunce
Of worldly things committed to her cure
Disposed haue through his wise purueiaunce
To giue my lady so much suffisaunce
Of all vertues, and therwithal puruide
To murdre trouth, hath take danger to gide

For bounte, beaute, shape, and semelyhede
Prudence, wit, passingly fairenesse
Benigne port, glad chere, with lowlyhed
Of womanhede right plenteous largenesse
Nature did in her fully empresse
When she her wrought, & ather last disdain
To hinder trouth, she made her chamberlain

When mistrust also, and false suspection
With misbeleue she made for to be
Chefe of counsaile to this conclusion
For to exile trouth, and eke pite
Out of her court to make mercy flee
So that dispite now holdeth forth her reine
Through hasty bileue of tales that men feine

And thus I am for my trouth, alas
Murdred and slain, with words sharp & keene
Giltiesse god wote of all trespas
And lie and blede vpon this cold grene
Now mercy swete, mercy my liues quene
And to your grace of mercy yet I prey
In your seruice that your man may dey

But if so be that I shal die algate
And that I shal none other mercy haue
Yet of my death let this ben the date
That by your wil I was brought to my graue
Or hastely, if that you list me saue
By thar pe wounds that ake so and blede
Of mercy charme, and also of womanhede

For other charme plainly is there none

But

But only mercy, to help in this case
For though my wounds blede euer in one
My life, my death standeth in our grace
And though my guilt be nothing elas
I aske mercy in all my best entent
Redy to die, if that ye assent.

For there against shal I neuer striue
In word ne werke, plainly I ne may
For leuer I haue than to be aliue
To die sothly, and it be to her pay
Ye though it be this same day
Or whan that euer her list to deuise
Suffiseth me to die in your seruise.

And god ỹ knowest ỹ thought of euery wight
Right as it is, in euery thing thou maist se
Yet er I die, with all my full might
Lowly I pray to graunt vnto me
That ye goodly, faire, fresh, and fre
Which only slee me for defaut of routh
Or that I die, ye may know my trouth.

For that in soth suffiseth me
And she it know in euery circumstaunce
And after I am wel paid that she
If that her list of death to do vengeaunce
Unto me that am vnder her ligeaunce
It sit me not her dome to disobey
But at her lust wilfully to dey

Without grutching or rebellion
In wil or word, holy I assent
Or any maner contradiction
Fully to be at her commaundement
And if I die, in my testament
My hert I send, and my spirit also
What so euer she list with hem to do

And alderlast to her womanhede
And to her mercy, me I recommaund
That lie now her betwixe hope and drede
Abiding plainly what she list commaund
For vtterly this nis no demaund
Welcome to me while me lasteth breath
Right at her choise where it be life or death

In this mater more what might I saine
Sith in her hand, and in her wil is all
Both life and death, my ioy and all my pain
And finally my best hold I shall
Til my spirit by destany fatall
Whan that her list fro my body wend
Haue here my trouth, & thus I make an end

And with that word he gan sigh as sore
Like as his hert riue would atwaine
And held his peace, and spake no worde more
But for to see his wo and mortall paine
The teares gone fro mine eyen raine
Ful pitously for very inward routh
That I hun saw, so long wishing for trouth

And all this while my selfe I kept close
Among the bowes, and my selfe gone hide
Till at the last the woful man arose
And to a lodge went there beside
Where all the May, his custome was tabide
Sole to complaine of his paines kene
From yere to yere vnder the bowes greene

And for bicause that it drew to the night
And that the sonne his arke diurnall
Ypassed was so that his persaunt light
His bright beames and his stremes all
Were in the waues of the water fall
Under the bordure of our occian
His chaire of gold, his course so swiftly ran

And while the twilight and the rowes rede
Of Phebus light were deaurat alite
A penne I tooke, and gan me fast spede
The woful plaint of this man to write
Word by word as he did endite
Like as I herd and coud him tho report
I haue here set, your herts to disport

If ought be mille, lay the wite in me
For I am worthy for to beare the blame
If any thing mille reported be
To make this ditie for to seme lame (same
Through mine vnconning, but for to fain the
Like as this man his complaint did expresse
I aske mercy and forgifenesse

And as I wrote, me thought I saw a ferre
Ferre in the west lustely appere
Esperus the goodly bright sterre
So glad, so faire, so persaunt eke of chere
I meane Venus with her beames clere
That heuy herts only to releue
Is wont of custome for to shew at eue

And I as fast fel adowne on my kne
And euen thus to her gan I to prey
O lady Venus so faire vpon to see
Let not this man for his trouth dey
For that ioy thou haddest whan thou ley
With Mars thy knizt, when Vulcanus fond
And with a chaine vnuisible you bond

Togider both tway in the same while
That all the court aboue celestiall
At your shame gan laugh and smile
Ah, faire lady willy fond at all
Comfort to careful, o goddes immortall
Be helping now, and do thy diligence
To let the stremes of thine influence

Descend down, in forthering of the trouth
Namely of hem that lie in sorow bound
Shew now thy mizt & on her wo haue routh
Er false daunger slee hem and confound
And speciall let thy might be found
For to socour what so that thou may
The trew man that in the herber lay

And all trew forther for his sake
O glad sterre, o lady Venus mine
And cause his lady him to grace take
Her hert of stele to mercy so encline
Er that thy bemes go vp to decline
And er that thou now go fro vs adowne
For that loue thou haddest to Adowne

And whan she was gone to her rest
I rose anon, and home to bed went
For wery me thought it for the best
Praying thus in all my best entent
That all trew, that be with daunger shent
With mercy may in release of paine
Recured be, er May come eft againe

And for that I ne may no lenger wake
Farewel ye louers all that be trew
Praying to God, and thus my leue I take
That er the sonne to morow be risen new
And er he haue ayen rosen hew
That ech of you may haue such a grace
His owne lady in armes to embrace

I meane thus, in all honeste
Without more ye may togider speake
What so ye list at good liberte
That ech may to other her hert breke
On Ialousies only to be wreke
That hath so long of his malice and enuy
Werred Trouth with his tirany.

Lenuoy.

Princesse pleaseth it to your benignite
This litel dite to haue in mind
Of womanhede also for to se
Your man may your mercy find
And pite eke, that long hath be behind
Let him againe be prouoked to grace
For by my trouth it is against kind
False Daunger to occupy his place

Go litel quaire vnto my liues quene
And my very herts soueraine
And be right glad, for she shal thee sene
Such is thy grace, but I alas in paine
Am left behind, and not to whom to plaine
For mercy, ruth, grace, and eke pite
Exiled be, that I may not attaine
Recure to find of mine aduersite.

Explicit.

A praise of *Women.*

ALtho thee lyst of women euil to speke
And sain of hem worse than they deserue
I pray to god ỹ her neckes to breke
Or on some euill death mote tho tãglers sterue
For euery man were holden hem to serue
And do hem worship, honour and seruise
In euery maner that they best coud deuise

For we ought first to thinke on what manere
Thei bring vs forth, & what pain thei endure
First in our birth, and sith fro yere to yere
How busely they done their busy cure
To kepe vs fro euery misauenture
In our youth whan we haue no might
Our selfe to kepe, neither by day nor night

Alas, how may we say on hem but wele
Of whom we were fostred and yborе
And ben all our socour, and euer trew as stele
And for our sake ful oft they suffer sore
Without women were all our ioy lore
Wherfore we ought all women to obey
In all goodnesse, I can no more say

This is wel knowne, and hath ben or this
That women ben cause of all lightnesse
Of knighthood, norture, eschewing all malis
Encrease of worship, and of all worthinesse
Therto curteis & meke, & ground of all good-
Glad and mery, and trew in euery wise (nesse
That any gentil hert can thinke or deuise

And

And though any would trust to your vntruth
And to your faire wordes would aught assent
In good faith me thinketh it wer great ruth
That other women should for her gilt be shēt
That neuer knew ne wist nought of her entent
Ne list not to heare the faire wordes ye write
Which ye you paine fro day to day tendite

But who may beware of your tales vntrue
That ye so busily paint and endite
For ye will sweare that ye neuer knewe
Ne sawe the woman, neither much ne lite
Saue only her to whom ye had delite
As for to serue of all that euer ye sey
And for her loue must ye nede dey.

Then will ye sweare that ye knew neuer before
What loue was ne his dredfull obseruaunce
But now ye fele that he can wound sore
Wherfore ye put you into her gouernaunce
who loue hath ordeined you to serue & do ple-
with al your might your litle liues space (sance
Which endeth sone, but if she do you grace.

And then to bed will ye sone drawe
And sone sicke ye will you then fain
And sweare fast your Lady hath you slawe
And brought you sodainly in so high a pain
That fro your death may no mā you restrain
With a daungerous look of her eyen two
That to your death must ye needes go.

Thus will ye morne, thus will ye sigh sore
As though your hart anon in two wold brest
And sweare fast that ye may liue no more
Mine owne Ladie, that might if ye lest
Bring mine harte somdeale into rest
As if you list mercie on me to haue
Thus your vntrouth will euer mercie crane

Thus woll ye plain, tho ye nothing smarte
These innocent creatures for to begile
And sweare to hem, so wounded is your harte
For her loue, that ye may liue no while
Scarsly so long as one might go a mile
So hieth death to bring you to an ende
But if your soucrain lady list you to amende

And if for routh she comfort you in any wise
For pitee of your false othes sere
So the innocent weneth ỳ it be as you deuise
And weneth your hart be as she may here
Thus for to comfort, & somwhat do you chere
Then wol these ianglers deme of her ful ill
And saine that ye haue her fully at your will

Lo how redie her tonges been, and prest
To speake harme of women causelesse
Alas, why might ye not as wel say the best
As for to deme hem thus giltelesse
In your hart ywis there is no gentilnesse
That of your own gilt, list thus women fame
Now by my trouth, me think ye be to blame

For of women cometh this worldly wele
wherfore we ought to worship hem euermore
And though it mishap one, we ought for to hele
For it is al through our false lore
That day and night we pain vs euermore
with many an othe, these women to begile
With false tales, and many a wicked wile.

And if falshed should be reckened and told
In women, ywis ful trouth were
Not as in men, by a thousand fold
Fro all vices ywis they stand cleare
In any thing that euer I could of heare
But if entising of these men it make
That hem to flatteren women neuer slake.

I would fain wete where euer ye could here
without mens tising, what womē did amis
For there ye may get hē, ye lie fro yere to yere
And many a gabbing ye make to hem ywis
For I could neuer heare, ne knowen er this
Where euer ye could finde in any place
That euer women besought you of grace.

There ye you pain, with al your ful might
With all your hart, and all your businesse
To plesen hem, both by day and night
Praying hem of her grace and gentilnesse
To haue pitie vpon your great distresse
And that they wold on your pain haue routh
And slea you not, sens ye meane but trouth.

Thus may ye see that they ben fautlesse
And innocent to al your werkes slie
And all your crafts that touch falsenesse
They know hem not, ne may hem not espie
So sweare ye, that ye must needes die
But if they would of her womanhedde
Upon you rewe, er that ye be dedde

And then your lady, and your harts Queene
Ye call hem, and therewith ye sigh sore
And saie, my lady I trowe that it be sene
In what plite that I haue liued ful yore
But now I hope that ye woll no more
In these paines suffre me for to dwell
For of all goodnesse, ywis ye be the well.

Lo which a painted processe can ye make
These harmlesse creatures for to begile
And when they slepe, ye paine you to wake
And to bethinke you on many a wicked wile
But ye shal see the day ẏ ye shall curse ẏ while
That ye so busily did your entent
Hem to begile, that failhed neuer ment.

For this ye know well, though I would lie
In women is all trouth and stedfastnesse
For in good faith, I neuer of hem sie
But much worship, bountie, and gentilnesse
Right comming, faire, and full of meknesse
Good and glad, and to wly I you ensure
Is this goodly angelike creature.

And if it happe a man be in disease
She doeth her businesse, and her full paine
With al her might, him to comfort and please
If fro his disease she might him restrain
In worde ne deede ywis she woll not faine
But with al her might, she doth her businesse
To bring him out of his heuinesse.

Lo what gentillesse these women haue
If we could know it for our rudenesse
How busie they be vs to kepe and saue
Bothe in heale, and also in sickenesse
And alway right sorie for our distresse
In euery maner, thus shew they routhe
That in hem is al goodnesse and trouth.

And sith we find in hem gentilnesse & trouth
Worship, bountie, and kindnesse euermore
Let neuer this gẽtillesse, through your slouth
In her kind trouth be aught forlore
That in women is and hath been full yore
For in reuerence of the heauens Queene
We ought to worship all women that bene

For of al creatures that euer wer get & borne
This wote ye wel, a woman was the best
By her was recouered ẏ blis ẏ we had lorne
And through ẏ woman shal we come to rest
And been ysaued, if that our selfe lest
Wherefore me thinketh, if that we had grace
We oughten honour women in euery place.

Therfore I rede that to our liues ende
Fro this time forth, while that we haue space
That we haue trespased, purpse to amende
Praying our Lady, well of all grace
To bring vs vnto that blisfull place
There as she & al good women shal be in fere
In heauen aboue emong the angels clere.

Explicit.

The house of Fame.

GOD tourne vs euery dreame to good
For it is wõder thing by the Rood
To my witte, what causeth swevenes
On the morowe or on euenes
And why the effect wolweth of some
And of some it shal neuer come
Why that it is an avision
And why this is a revelation
Why this a dreame, why that a sweven
And not to euery man liche euen
With this a fantome, why that Oracles
I not: but who so of these miracles
The causes knowe bet then I
Define he, for I certainly
Ne can hem not, ne neuer thinke
To busie my witte for to swinke
To knowe of her significations
The gendres, ne distinccions
Of the tymes of hem, ne the causes
Or why this is more then that is
Or yeue folkes complexions
Make hem dreame of reflexions
Or els thus, as other saine
For the great feblednesse of her braine
By abstinence, or by sickenesse
Pyson, strief, or great distresse
Or els by disordinaunce
Or naturall accustomaunce
That some men be to curious
In studie, or Melancolius
Or thus: so ivly full of drede
That no man may him bote rede
Or els that deuocion
Of some, and contemplacion
Causen such dreames oft
Or that the cruell life vnsoft
Of hem that loues leden
Oft hopen much or dreden
That purely her impressions
Causen hem to haue visions
Or if spirites han the might
To make folke to dreame on night
Or if the soule of proper kinde
Be so persite as men finde
That it wote what is to come
And that he warneth all and some
Of euerichc of her auentures;

By

By auisions, or by figures
But that our flesh hath no might
To vnderstand it aright
For it is warned to derkely
But why the cause is, not wote I
Well worthe of this thing clerkes
That treaten of that, and of other werkes
For I of none opinion
Nill as now make mencion
But onely that the holde Rood
Tourne vs euery dreame to good
For neuer sith I was borne
Ne no man els me beforne
Hette I trowe stedfastly
So wonderfull a dreame as I.
The tenth day now of December
The which, as I can remember
I woll you tellen euery deale
But at my beginning trusteth weale
I woll make inuocation
With a deuout speciall deuocion
Unto the God of slepe anone
That dwelleth in a caue of stone
Upon a streame that cometh fro Lete
That is a flood of hell vnswete
Beside a Fulke, that men clepe Cimerie
There slepeth ayc this God vnmerie
With his slepie thoulande sonnis
That alway to slepe her won is
And to this God that I of rede
Pray I, that he woll me spede
My swouen for to tell aright
If euery dreame stand in his might
And he that mouer is of all
That is and was, and euer shall
So giue hem ioy that it here
Or all that they dreame to yere
And for to stand all in grace
Of her loues, or in what place
That hem were leuest for to stonde
And shelde hem from pouertie and shonde
And from euery vnhappe and disease
And send hem that may hem please
That taketh well and scorneth nought
Ne it mis deme in her thought
Through malicious entencion
And who so through presumpcion
Or hate or scorne, or through enuie
Dispite or iape, or felonie
Mis deme it, praie I Iesus good
Dreame he barefoote or dreame he shood
That euery harme that any man
Hath had sith the world began
Befall hym thereof or he sterue
And graunt that he may it deserue

Lo, with right such a conclusion
As had of his auision
Croesus, that was king of Lide
That high vpon a gibet dide
This prayer shal he haue of me
I am no bette in charitie.

NOw herken, as I haue you saied
What that I mette or I abraied
Of December the tenth daie
When it was night, to slepe I laie
Right as I was wont to done
And fell a slepe wonder sone
As he that was werie forgo
On pilgrimage miles two
To the corps of saint Leonarde
To maken lithe, that erst was harde
But as me slept me mette I was
Within a temple ymade of glas
In which there were mo Images
Of golde, standing in sondrie stages
In mo rich Tabernacles
And with perre mo pinnacles
And mo curious portratures
And queint maner of figures
Of golde worke, then I sawe euer
But certainly I nist neuer
Where that it was, but wel wist I
It was of Uenus redely
This temple, for in purtreture
I sawe anone right her figure
Naked fleting in a see
And also on her hedde parde
Her rose garland white and redde
And her combe to kembe her hedde
Her doues, and Dan Cupido
Her blind sonne, and Vulcano
That in his face was full broune
But as I romed vp and doune
I found that on the wall there was
Thus written on a table of bras
I woll now sing if that I can
The armes, and also the man
That first came through his destine
Fugitife fro Troy the countre
Into Italie, with full much pine
Unto the strondes of Lauine
And tho began the storie anone
As I shall tellen you echone
First saw I the destruccion
Of Troie, through the Greke Sinon
With his false vntrue forswerings
And with his chere and his lesinges
Made a horse, brought into Troye
By which Troians lost of all her ioye

And

And after this was graued, alas
How Ilions castell assailed was
And won, and king Priamus slain
And Polites his sonne certain
Dispitously of Dan Pirrus.
And next that saw I how Uenus
When that she sawe the castell brende
Doune from heauen she gan discend
And bad her sonne Eneas to flee
And how he fled, and how that he
Escaped was from all the prees
And tooke his father, olde Anchises
And bare him on his backe away
Crying alas and welawaie
The which Anchises in his hande
Bare tho the Goddes of the lande
Thilke that unbrenned were.
Then sawe I next all in fere
How Crusa, Dan Eneas wife
Whom that he loued all his life
And her yong sonne Iulo
And eke Askanius also
Fledden eke, with drerie chere
That it was pitie for to heare
And in a Forest as they went
At a tourning of a went
How Crusa was ylost, alas
That rede not I, how that it was
How he her sought, and how her ghoste
Bad him flye the Grekes hoste
And saied he must into Italie
As was his destinie, sauns faile
That it was pitie for to heare
When her spirite gan appeare
The wordes that she to him saied
And for to kepe her sonne him prayed.
There sawe I grauen eke how he
His father eke, and his meine
With his Shippes gan to saile
Toward the countrey of Italie
As streight as they mighten go
There sawe I eke the cruell Juno
That art Dan Jupiters wife
That hast yhated all thy life
All the Troian brood
Ren and crie as thou were wood
On Eolus, the God of Windes
To blowen out of all kindes
So loude, that he should drenche
Lorde, Ladie, grome, and wenche
Of all the Troians nacion
Without any of her sauacion
There sawe I such tempest arise
That euery hart might agrise
To see it painted of the wall
There sawe I eke grauen with all
Uenus, how ye my Ladie dere
Weping with full wofull chere
Praying Jupiter on hie
To saue and kepe that nauie
Of that Troian Eneas
Sith that he her sonne was
There sawe I Joues Uenus kisse
And graunted was of the tempest lisse
There sawe I how the tempest stent
And how with all pine he went
And priuelie tooke a riuage
Into the countrey of Cartage
And on the morowe how that he
And a knight that height Achate
Metten with Uenus that daie
Goying in a queint araie
As she had be an hunteresse
With winde blowing vpon her tresse
And how Eneas began to plaine
When he knewe her of his paine
And how his Shippes drent were
Or els ylost, he nist where
How she gan him comfort tho
And bad him to Carthage go
And there he should his folke finde
That in the sea were left behind
And shortly of this thing to pace
She made Eneas so in grace
Of Dido, Queene of that countrey
That shortly for to tellen, she
Became his loue, and let him do
All that wedding longeth to
What should I speake it more quaint
Or pain me my wordes to painte
To speake of loue, it woll not be
I cannot of that facultie
And eke to tellen of the manere
How they first acquainted were
It were a long processe to tell
And ouer long for you to dwell.
There sawe I graue how Eneas
Tolde to Dido euery caas
That him was tidde vpon the see
And eft grauen was how that she
Made of him shortly at a worde
Her life, her loue, her lust, her lorde
And did to him all reuerence
And laied on him all the dispence
That any woman might do
Wening it had all be so
As he her swore, and hereby demed
That he was good, for he such semed
Alas what harme doeth apparence
When it is false in existence

For he to her a traitour was
Wherefore she slowe her selfe alas
Lo,how a woman doth amis
To loue him that vnknowen is
For by Christ,lo thus it fareth
It is not all gold that glareth
For also brouke I well myne hedde
There may be vnder goodlyhedde
Couered many a shrewde vice
Therefore be no wight so nice
To take a loue onely for chere
Or speach or for frendly manere
For this shall euery woman finde
That some man of his pure kinde
Woll shewen outward the fairest
Till he haue caugh that what him lest
And then woll he causes finde
And swere how she is vnkinde
Or false or prime,or double was
All this saie I by Eneas
And Dido,and her nice lest
That loued all to sone a gest
Wherefore I woll saie o prouerbe
That he that fully knoweth the herbe
May safely lay it to his eye
Withouten drede this is no lie
But let vs speake of Eneas
How he betrayed her, alas
And left her full vnkindly.
So when she saw all vtterly
That he would her of trouth faile
And wenden from her into Itaile
She gan to wring her hands two.
Alas(qd she)that me is woo
Alas,is euery man thus true
That euery yere wol haue a newe
If it so long time endure
Or els three paraunture
And thus of one he woll haue fame
In magnifying of his owne name
In other for frendship saieth he
And yet there shall the thirde be
That is taken for delite
Lo or els for singuler profite
In such wordes gan complaine
Dido of her great paine
As me mette dreaming readily
None other authour allegde woll I
Alas(qd she)my swete harte
Haue pitie on my sorowes smart
And slea me not,go not awaie
O wofull Dido,welawaie
(Qd she)vnto her selfe tho
O Eneas what woll ye do
O that your loue ne your bonde
That ye swore with your right honde
Ne my cruell death(qd she)
May holde you still here with me.
O,haue ye of my death no pitie
Iwis mine owne deare hart ye
Knowe full well that neuer yet
As farre as euer I had wit
Agilte you,in thought ne in dede
O,haue ye men such goodlihede
In speach,and neuer a dele of trouthe
Alas that euer had routh
Any woman on a false man.
Now I see well,and tell can
We wreched women can no arte
For certaine,for the more parte
Thus we ben serued euerichone
How sore that ye men can grone
Anon as we haue you receiued
Certainly we been disceiued
For though your loue lest a season
Waite vpon the conclusion
And eke how ye determine
And for the more parte define
O welawaie that I was borne
For through you my name is lorne
And mine actes redde and song
Ouer all this land in euery tong.
O wicked fame,for there nis
Nothing so swifte lo as she is
O sothe is,euery thing is wist
Though it be couerd with the mist
Eke though I might duren euer
That I haue done recouer I neuer
That it ne shall be saied,alas
I shamed was through Eneas
And that I shall thus iudged be
Lo right as she hath doen,now she
Woll doen eftsones hardly
Thus saie the people priuely
But that is done nis not to done
But all her complaint ne her mone
Certain auailed her not a stre
And when she wist sothly,he
Was forth into his ship agone
She into chamber went anone
And called on her suster Anne
And gan her to complain thanne
And saied,that she cause was
That she first loued him,alas
And first counsailed her thereto
But what,when this was saied and do
She roft her seluen to the harte
And deide through the woundes smarte
But all the maner how she deide
And all the wordes how she seide

who

Who so to know it hath purpose
Rede Virgile in Eneidos
Or the Pistels of Ouid
What that she wrote, or that she did
And nere it to long to endite
By God I would it here write
But welaway, the harme and routh
That hath betide for such vntrouth
As men may oft in bookes rede
And alday seen it yet in dede
That for to thinken it tene is
Lo Demophon, Duke of Athenis
How he forswore him falsely,
And traied Phillis wickedly
That kings doughter was of Thrace
And falsely gan his terme pace
And when she wist that he was false
She hong her selfe right by the halse
For he had doen her such vntrouth
Lo, was not this a wo and routh.
Eke looke how false and recheles
Was to Briseida Achilles
And Paris to Oenone
And Jason to Hipsiphile
And efte Jason to Medea
And Hercules to Dianira
For he left her for Iolee
That made him take his death parde.
How false was eke Theleus
That as the storie telleth vs
How he betrayed Adriane
The deuil be his soules bane
For had he laughed or ploured
He must haue been all deuoured
If Adriane ne had bee
And for she had of him pitee
She made him fro the death escape
And he made her a full false iape
For after this within a while
He left her sleping in an Ile
Desert alone right in the see
And stale away and let her be
And tooke her sister Phedra tho
With him, and gan to ship go
And yet hee had sworne to her
On all that euer he could swere
That so she saued him his life
He would taken her to his wife
For she desired nothing elles
In certaine, as the booke vs telles
But for to excuse this Eneas
Fullich of all his great trespas
The booke saieth Iaunes saue
The Goddes bad him go to Italie
And leauen Affriques regioun
And faire Dido and her toun.
Tho saw I graue how to Italie
Dan Eneas gan for to saile
And how the tempest all began
And how he lost his sterelman
Which that the sterne, or he tooke kepe
Smote ouer the bord as he slepe.
And also saw I how Sibile
And Eneas beside an Ile
To hell went for to see
His father Anchises the free
And how he there found Palimurus
And also Dido, and Deiphebus
And euerich tourment eke in hell
Saw he, which long is for to tell
Which paines who so list to know
He must rede many a row
In Virgill or in Claudian
Or Dante, that it tellen can.
Tho saw I eke all the armaile
That Eneas had made in Italie
And with king Latin his treate
And all the battailes that he
Was at himselfe, and his knights
Or he had all ywon his rights
And how he Turnus refte his life
And wan Laumia to his wife
And all the maruellous signals
Of the Goddes celestials
How maugre Juno, Eneas
For all her sleight and her compas
Atchieued all his auenture
For Jupiter tooke on him cure
At the praier of Venus
Which I pray alway saue vs
And vs aie, of our sorowes light
When I had seen all this sight
In this noble temple thus
Hey Lord thought I, that madest vs
Yet saw I neuer such nobleste
Of Images, nor such richeste
As I see grauen in this church
But nought wote I who did hem worch
Ne where I am, ne in what countree
But now will I out gone and see
Right at the wicked if I can
Seen ought where stering any man
That may me tellen where I am
When I out of the dore cam
I fast about me beheld
Then saw I but a large feld
As farre as euer I might see
Without toune, house, or tree
Or bush, or grasse, or eared land
For all the field was but of sand

As smal as men may see at eye
In the desert of Lybye
Ne no maner creature
That is yformed by nature
Ne saw I, me to rede or wish
O Thrist thought I, that are in blisse
From fantom and illusion
We saue, and with deuocion
Mine eyen to the heuen I cast
Tho was I ware, lo at the last
That fast by the sonne on hie
As kenne might I with mine eye
Me thought I saw an Egle sore
But that it semed much more
Than I had any Egle yseine
This is as soth as death certaine
It was of gold and shone so bright
That neuer saw men such a sight
But if the heauen had ywonne
All new of God another sonne
So shone the Egles fethers bright
And somewhat downward gan it light.

Explicit liber primus.

NOw herkē euery maner man
That Engl[illegible] vnderstand can
And listeth of my dreme to here
For now at erst shall ye lere
So sely and so dredfull a vision
That I say neither Scipion
Ne king Nabugodonosore
Pharao, Turnus, ne Alcanore
Ne metten soch a dreme as this
Now faire blisful, O Cipris
So be my fauour at this time
That ye me tendite and rime
Helpeth, that in Pernaso dwell
Beside Elicon the clere well
O thought, that wrote all that I met
And in the tresory it set
Of my braine, now shal men se
If any vertue in thee be
To tell all my dreme aright
Now kith thy engin and thy might
This Egle of which I haue you told
That with fethers shone all with gold
Which that so hie gan to sore
I gan behold more and more
To seen her beaute on the wonder
But neuer was that dent of thunder
Ne that thing that men call foudre
That smit[illegible] a toure to powdre
And in his [illegible]
That so swithe gan do[illegible]
As this foule whan it beheld
That I a rowme was in the field
And with his grim pawes strong
Within his sharpe nailes long
Me fleyng at a swappe he hent
And with his sours again vp went
Me carying in his clawes starke
As lightly as I had ben a larke
How hye I cannot tellen yow
For I came vp, I nist neuer how
For so astonied and aswoued
Was euery vertue in me houed
What with his sours and my dread
That all my feling gan to deed
For why, it was a great affray
Thus I long in his clawes lay
Til at last he to me speake
In mans voice, and said awake
And be not agast so for shame
And called me tho by my name
And for I should better abraid
Me to awake, thus he said
Right in the same voice and steuin
That both one that I can neuin
And with that voice soth to saine
My mind came to me againe
For it was goodly said to me
So nas it neuer wont to be
And here withall I gan to stere
As he me in his fect bere
Til that he felt that I had heat
And felt eke tho mine hart beat
And tho gan he me to disport
And with gentil words me comfort
And said twise, saint Mary
Thou art a notous thing to cary
And nothing needeth it perde
For al so wise God helpe me
As thou no harme shalt haue of this
And this case that betide thee is
Is for thy lore and for thy prow
Let see, darst thou looke yet now
Be ful ensured boldely
I am thy frend, and therewith I
Gan for to wonder in my mind
O God (qd. I) that madest all kind
Shal I none otherwise die
Whether Jouc wil me stellifie
Or what thing may this signifie
I am neither Enocke, ne Hely
Ne Romulus, ne Ganemede

That were boꝛe vp as men rede
To heuen with dan Iupiter
And made the goddes doteler
Lo, this was thy fantaſie
But he that bare gan eſpie
That I ſo thought and ſaid this
Thou deemiſt of thy ſelfe amis
Foꝛ Ioue is not there about
I dare the put ful out of dout
To make of the yet a ſterre
But er I beare the much ferre
I wil the tel what I am
And whider thou ſhalt, and why I came
To do this, ſo that thou take
Good heart, and not foꝛ feare quake
Gladly (qd. I) now wel (qd. he)
Firſt, I that in my feet haue the
Of whom thou haſt feare and wonder
I am dwelling with the God of thonder
Which men callen Iupiter
That doth me flien ful oft fer
To do all his commaundement
And foꝛ this cauſe he hath me ſent
To thee: Herk now by thy trouth
Certaine he hath of the trouth
That thou haſt ſo truly
Long ſerued ententifely
His blind new Cupido
And faire Venus alſo
Without guerdon euer yet
And netheles haſt ſet thy wit
Although in thy heed ful litel is
To make bookes, ſongs and ditees
In rime oꝛ els in Cadence
As thou beſt canſt in reuerence
Of loue, and of his ſeruaunts eke
That haue his ſeruice ſought, and ſeke
And paineſt the to pꝛaiſe his art
Although thou haddeſt neuer part
Wherfoꝛe alſo God me bleſſe
Iouis hait it great humbleſſe
And vertue, eke that thou wilt make
I night ful oft thine heed to ake
In thy ſtudy ſo thou wꝛiteſt
And euermoꝛe of loue enditeſt
In honour of him and pꝛaiſings
And in his folkes furtherings
And in her mater all deuiſeſt
And not him ne his folke diſpiſeſt
Although thou maiſt go in the daunce
Of hem, that him liſt not auaunce
Wherfoꝛe as I ſaid ywis
Iupiter conſidꝛeth wel this
And alſo beauſire, of other thyngs
That is thou haſt no tidings
Of loues folke if they be glade
Ne of nothing els that God made
And not only fro ferre countre
That no tidings comen to the
Not of thy very neighbours
That dwellen almoſt at thy doꝛes
Thou hereſt neither that ne this
Foꝛ whan thy labour all done is
And haſt made all thy reckenings
In ſtede of reſt and of new thyngs
Thou goeſt home to thine houſe anone
And alſo dombe as a ſtone
Thou ſitteſt at another boke
Til fully daſed is thy loke
And liueſt thus as an Hermite
Although thine abſtinence is lite
And therfoꝛe Iouis thꝛough his grace
Wil that I beare thee to a place
Which that hight the houſe of Fame
And to doe the ſpoꝛt and game
In ſome recompenſation
Of thy labour and deuocion
That thou haſt had, ſo cauſeleſs
To God Cupido the recheleſs
And thus this God thꝛough his merit
Wil with ſome maner thing the quite
So that thou wilt be of good chere
Foꝛ truſt wel that thou ſhalt here
Whan we ben comen there as I ſay
Mo wonder thyngs dare I lay
And of loues folke mo tidings
Both ſothſawes and leſings
And mo loues new be gon
And long ſerued til loue is won
And mo louers caſuelly
That ben betide, no man wote why
But as a blind man ſtarteth an Hare
And moꝛe tolite and welfare
While they find loue of ſtele
As thinke men, and ouer all wele
Mo diſcoꝛds, and mo ialouſies
Mo murmures, and mo nouelries
And alſo mo diſſimulacions
And eke feined reperacions
And mo berdes in two houres
Without ualour oꝛ ſiſoures
Ymade, than graines be of ſands
And eke mo holding in mo hands
And alſo mo renouelaunces
Of old foꝛleten aqueintaunces
Mo loue daies, and mo accoꝛds
Than on inſtruments ben coꝛds
And of loue mo exchaunges
Than euer coꝛne were in graunges
Unneth maiſt thou trowen this

(Qd.he)no so help me god as wis
(Qd.I)No why(qd.he)for it
Were impossible to my wit
Though Fame had all the pies
In al a realme and all aspies
How that yet he should here all this
Or they espien, Oyes yes
(Qd.he)to me,that can I preue
By reason,worthy for to leue
So that thou giue thine auertence
To vnderstand my sentence
First shal thou here where she dwelleth
Right so as thine owne booke telleth
Her palais standeth as I shal say
Right euen a middes of the way
Betwene heuen,erth,and see
That whatsoeuer in all these three
Is spoken in priue or apperte
The way therto is so ouerte
And stant eke in so iust a place
That euery sowne mote to it pace
Or what so cometh from any tongus
Be rowned,redde,or song
Or spoken in surete or drede
Certaine it mote thider nede
Now herken wel for why I wil
Tellen the a proper skil
And a worthy demonstracion
In mine imaginacion
Geffray,thou wottest well this
That euery kindly thing that is
Hath a kindly stede there he
May best in it conserued be
Vnto which place euery thing
Through his kindly enclining
Mueth for to come to
When that it is away therefro
As thus,Lo how thou maist all day se
Take any thing that heuy be
As stone or lead.or thing of wright
And bere it neuer so hie on height
Let go thine hand,it falleth downe
Right so say I by fire or sowne
Or smoke,or other things light
Alway they seke vpward on height
Light things vp,and dowonward charge
While euerich of hem be at large
And for this cause,thou maist wel se
That euery riuer vnto the see
Enclined is to go by kind
And by these skilles as I find
Haue fishes dwelling in flood and se
And trees eke on the earth be
Thus euery thing by his reason
Hath his owne proper mancion
To which he seketh to repaire
There as it should nat appaire
Lo, this sentence is knowen couth
Of euery Philosophers mouth
As Aristotle,and dan Platone
And other clerkes many one
And to confirme my reasoune
Thou wost wel that speech is sowne
Or els no man might it here
Now herke what I wol the lere
Sowne is not but eyre ybroken
And euery speech that is spoken
Loud or priue,foule or faire
In his substaunce is but eyre
For as flame is but lighted smoke
Right so is sowne eyre ybroke
But this may be in many wise
Of which I will thee deuise
As sowne cometh of pipe or harpe
For whan a pipe is blowen sharpe
The eyre is twist with violence
And rent:Lo,this is my sentence
Eke,whan men harpe strings smite
Whether it be much or lite
Lo,with the stroke the eyre it breketh
And right so breaketh it whan men speaketh
Thus wost thou wel what thing is speech
Now henceforth, I wil thee teach
How euerich speech, voice or sowne
Through his multiplicacioune
Though it were piped of a mouse
Mote nedes come to Fames house
I proue it thus,take hede now
By experience,for if that thou
Threw in a water now a stone
Wel wost thou it wil make anone
A litel roundel as a cercle
Paraventure,as brode as a covercle
And right anon thou shalt see wele
That whele cercle wil cause another whele
And that the third,and so forth brother
Euery cercle causing other
Broder than himselfe was
And thus from roundel to compas
Ech about other going
Causeth of others stering
And multiplying euermo
Till it be so fare go
That it at both brinkes be
Although thou may it not se
Aboue,yet goeth it alway vnder
Though thou thinke it a great wonder
And who so saith of trouth I vary
Bidde him proue the contrary
And right thus euery word ywis

That loud or pitue ypoken is
Moueth first an eyre about
And of his mouing out of dout
Another eyre anon is moued
As I haue of the water proued
That euery cercle causeth other
Right so of eyre myn leue brother
Euerich eyre in other stereth
More and more, and spech vp bereth
Or voice or noise, word or sowne
Ye through multiplicacioune
Til it be at the house of Fame
Take it on ernest or in game
Now haue I told, if thou haue mind
How speech or sowne, of pure kind
Enclined is vpward to meue
This maist thou fele wel by preue
And that some stede ywis
That euery thing enclined to is
Hath his kindlich stede
That sheweth it without drede
That kindly the nuncioun
Of euerich spech of euery soun
Be it either soule or faire
Hath his kind place in eyre
And lith that euery thing ywis
Out of his kind place ywis
Moueth thider for to go
Yf it away be therefro
As I haue before proued the
It sheweth euery soune perde
Moueth kindly to pace
As vp into his kind place
And this place of which I tell
There as Fame list to dwell
Is set a middes of these three
Heauen, earth, and eke the see
As most conseruatife the soun
Than is this the conclusioun
That euery speech of euery man
As I thee tel first began
Moueth vp on height to pace
Kindly to Fames place
Tel me this now faithfully
Haue I not proued thus simply
Without any subtelte
Of speech, or great prolixite
Of termes of Philosophy
Of figures of Poetry
Or colours of Rhetorike
Perde it ought thee to like
For hard language, and hard matere
Is incombrous for to here
At ones, wost thou not wel this
And I answered and said yes

Ah ha (qd. he) lo so I can
Lewdly vnto a leud man
Speke, and shew him soch skiles
That he may shake hem by the biles
So palpable they shoulden be
But tel me this now pray I the
How thinketh the my conclusioun
A good persuasioun
(Qd. I) it is and like to be
Right so as thou hast proued me
By God (qd. he) and as I leue
Thou shalt haue it or it be eue
Of euery word of this sentence
I prose, by experience
And with thine eares heaten well
Coppe and taile, and euerydell
That euery word that spoken is
Cometh into Fames house ywis
As I haue said, what wilt thou more
And with this word vpper to sore
He began, and said by saint Iame
Now wil we speake all of game
How farest thou now (qd. he) to me
Wel (qd. I) now see (qd. he)
By thy trouth yond adowne
Where that thou knowest any towne
Or house, or any other thing
And whan thou hast of ought knowing
Loke that thou warne me
And I anon shal tel the
How farre that thou art now therefro
And I adowne gan to loken tho
And beheld fields and plaines
Now hils, and now mountaines
Now vales, and now forestis
And now vmneth great beestis
Now riuers, now cities
Now townes, now great trees
Now shippes sailing in the see
But thus soone in a while he
Was flowen fro the ground so hie
That all the world as to mine eye
No more semed than a pricke
Or elis was the eyre so thicke
That I might it not discerne
With that he spake to me so yerne
And said: Seest thou any token
Or ought, that in this world of spoken
I said nay, no wonder is
(Qd. he) for neuer halfe so hie as this
Was Alexander of Macedon
King: ne of Rome dan Scipion
That saw in dreame at point deuise
Heauen and earth, hel and Paradise
Ne eke the wretch Dedalus

Ne his child nice Icharus
That flew ſo hie, that the hete
His wing molt, and he fel wete
In midde the ſee, and there he dreint
For whom was made a great compleint
Now turne vpward (qd. he) thy face
And behold this large place
This eyre, but loke that thou ne be
Adrad of hem that thou ſhalt ſe
For in this regioun certaine
Dwelleth many a citezeine
Of which ſpeaketh dan Plato
Theſe ben the eyrish beeſts lo
And tho ſaw I all the menye
Both gone and also flye
Lo (qd. he) caſt vp thine eye
Se yonder lo, the Galaxie
The which men cleape the milky way
For it is white: And ſome parfay
Callen it Watling ſtrete
That ones was brent with the heat
Whan the Sunnes ſon the tread
That hite Pheton would lead
Algate his fathers cart, and gie
The carthorſe gan wel aſpie
That he coud no gouernaunce
And gon for to lepe and praunce
And beare him vp, and now downe
Til he ſaw the Scorpiowne
Which that in heauen a ſigne is yet
And he for fere loſt his wit
Of that, and let the reines gone
Of his horſe, and they anone
Soone vp to mount, and downe diſcend
Til both eyre and earth brend
Til Jupiter, lo at the laſt
Him ſlew, and fro the cart caſt
Lo, is it not a great miſchaunce
To let a foole haue gouernaunce
Of things that he cannot demaine
And with this word ſoth for to ſaine
He gan alway vpper to lore
And gladded me than more and more
So faithfully to me ſpake he
Tho gan I to loke vnder me
And beheld the eyrish beeſts
Clouds, miſts, and tempeſts
Snowes, hailes, raines, and winds
And the engendering in her kinds
All the way through which I came
O God (qd. I) that made Adame
Much is thy might and nobles
And tho thought I vpon Boece
That writeth a thought may flye ſo hie
With fethers of Philoſophie
To paſſen euerich Element
And whan he hath ſo far ywent
Than may ben ſeen behind his backe
Cloud, and earth, and all that I of ſpake
Tho gan I were me a were
And ſaid, I wote wel I am here
But whether in body or in ghoſt
I not ywis, but God thou wooſt
For more clere entendement
Nas me neuer yet ylent
And than thought I on Marcian
And eke of Anticlaudian
That ſoth was her diſcripcion
Of all the heauens region
As farre as that I ſaw the preue
And therefore I can hem leue
With that the Egle gan to crie
Let be (qd. he) thy fantaſie
Wilt thou learne of ſterres ought
Nay certainly (qd. I) right nought
And why (qd. he) for I am old
Or els would I thee haue told
(Qd. he) the ſterres names lo
And all the heauens ſignes to
And which they be: No force (qd. I)
Yes perde (qd. he) woſt thou why
For whan thou redeſt poetry
How the goddes can ſtellify
Bird, fiſh, or him, or her
As the Rauin and other
Or Arions harpe fyne
Caſtor, Polexe, or Delphyne
Or Athalantes doughter ſeuen
How all theſe are ſet in heuen
For though thou haue hem oft in hand
Yet noſt thou nat where they ſtand
No force (qd. I) it is no need
As wel I leue ſo God me ſpeed
Hem that writen of this matere
As though I knew her places here
And eke thy ſeluen here ſo bright
It ſhould ſhenden all my ſight
To loke on hem, that may wel be
(Qd. he) and ſo forthy bare he me
A while, and tho be gan to crie
That neuer herd I thing ſo hie
Hold vp thine heed, for all is well
Saint Julian lo, bonne hoſtell
See here the houſe of Fame lo
Maiſt thou not here that I do
What (qd. I) the great ſowne
(Qd. he) that rombleth vp and downe
In Fames houſe ful of tidings
Both of faire ſpeech and chidings
And of falſe, and ſoth compowned

Herken wel it is not rowned
Herest thou not the great swough
Yes perde (qd. I) wel ynough
And what sowne is it like (qd. he)
Peter, like the beating of the see
(Qd. I) against the roches hyllow
Whan tempests done her ships swollow
And that a man stand out of doubt
A mile thens, and here it rout
Or els like the humbling
After the clap of a thundering
Whan Iouis hath the eyre ybete
But it doth me for feare swete
Nay drede thee not therof (qd. he)
It is nothing that will biten the
Thou shalt haue no harme truely
And with that word both he and I
As nigh the place arrived were
As men might cast with a spere
I nist how, but in a strete
He set me faire on my fete
And said, walke forth a pace
And tel thine aduenture and case
That thou shalt find in Fames place
Now (qd. I) while we haue space
To speake, or that I go fro the
For the loue of God tel me
In soth, that I wil of the lere
If this noise that I here
Be as I haue herd the tel
Of folke that done in earth dwell
And cometh here in the same wise
As I the herd or this deuise
And that her liues body nis
In all that house that yonder is
That maketh all this loud fare
No (qd. he) by saint Clare
And also wisse God rede me
But o thing I will warne thee
Of the which thou wilt haue wonder
Lo, to the house of Fame yonder
Thou wost how cometh euery speech
It nedeth not the eft to tech
But vnderstand now right wel this
Whan any speech ycomen is
Vp to the palais anon right
It weyeth like the same wight
Which that the word in earth spake
Be he clothed in reed or blake
And hath so very his likenesse
That spake the word that thou wilt gesse
That it the same body be
Man or woman, he or she
And is not this a wonder thing
Yes (qd. I tho) by heauen king
And with this word farewel (qd. he)
And here wil I abide the
And God of heuen send thee grace
Some good to learne in this place
And I of him toke leaue anone
And gan forth to the palais gone.

Explicit liber secundus.

GOD of Science and of light
Apollo through thy great might
This little last booke now thou gye
Not that I will for maistrye
Here art potenciall be shewde
But for the rime is light and lewde
Yet make it somwhat agreable
Though some verse faile in a sillable
And that I do no diligence
To shew craft, but sentence
And if diuine vertue thou
Wilt helpe me to shew now
That in my heed ymarked is
Lo, that is for to meanen this
The house of Fame for to discriue
Thou shalt see me go as blyue
Vnto the next laurer I see
And kisse it, for it is thy tree
Now enter in my brest anone
Whan I was from the egle gone
I gan behold vpon this place
And certaine or I further passe
I wol you all the shappe deuise
Of house and cite, and all the wise
How I gan to this place approch
That stood vpon so hie a roch
Nier standeth none in Spaine
But vp I clambe with much paine
And though to clombe greued me
Yet I ententife was to se
And for to pozen wonder low
If I coud any wise yknow
What manr stone this roch was
For it was liked a limed glas
But that it shone full more clere
But of what congeled matere
It was, I nist readily
But at the last espied I
And found that it was euerydele
A roch of yse and not of stele
Thought I by saint Thomas of Kent

This

This were a feble foundement
To builden on a place hie
He ought him little to glorifie
That hereon bilte, God so me saue.
Tho sawe I all the hall ygraue
With famous folkes names fele
That had been in much wele
And her fames wide yblowe
But well vneth might I knowe
Any letters for to rede
Her names by, for out of drede
They weren almost of thawed so
That of the letters one or two
Were molt away of euery name
So vnfamous was wexe her fame
But men saie, what may euer last.
Tho gan I in mine harte cast
That they were molt away for heate
And not away with stormes beate
For on that other side I sey
Of this hill that Northward ley
How it was writen full of names
Of folke that had afore great fames
Of olde time, and yet they were
As fresh as men had written hem there
The self day, or that houre
That I on hem gan to poure
But well I wist what it made
It was conserued with the shade
All the writing that I sie
Of a Castell that so stoode on hie
And stoode eke in so cold a place
That heate might it not deface
Tho gan I on this hill to gone
And founde on the coppe a wone
That all the men that been on liue
Ne han the conning to discriue
The beautie of that like place
Ne coud cast no compace
Such another for to make
That might of beautie be his make
Ne so wonderly ywrought
That it astonieth yet my thought
And maketh all my witte to swinke
On this Castell for to thinke
So that the great beautie
The caste, crafte, and curiositie
Ne can I not to you deuise
My witte ne may me not suffise
But natheless all the substaunce
I haue yet in my remembraunce
For why me thought by saint Gile
All was of stone of Berile
Bothe the Castell and the Toure
And eke the hall, and euery boure,
Without peces or joynings
But many subtill compassings
As babeuries and pinnacles
Imageries and tabernacles
I sawe, and full eke of windowes
As flakes fallen in great Snowes
And eke in ech of the pinacles
Were fondrie habitacles
In which stoden all withouten
Full the castell all abouten
Of all maner of Minstrales
And Jestours that tellen tales
Both of weping and of game
And of all that longeth vnto fame
There heard I play on an Harpe
That souned both well and sharpe
Him Orpheus full craftely
And on this syde fast by
Sat the Harper Orion
And Gacides Chirion
And other Harpers many one
And the Briton Glaskurion
And small Harpers with her glees
Sat vnder hem in diuers sees
And gone on hem vpward to gape
And counterfaited hem as an Ape
Or as craft counterfeit kind
Tho sawe I standen hem behind
A farre from hem, all by hem selue
Many a thousand times twelue
That made loud Minstralsies
In Cornmuse and Shalmies
And many an other pipe
That craftely began to pipe
Both in Douced and in Rede
That been at feasts with the brede
And many a Flott and litling horne
And pipes made of grene Corne
As haue these little heerd gromes
That kepen beasts in the Broines
There sawe I then dan Citherus
And of Athens dan Proserus
And Mercia that lost her skinne
Both in face, body, and chinne
For that she would enuien, Io
To pipen bet then Apollo
There sawe I eke famous old and yong
Pipers of all the Duch tong
To learn loue daunces, springs
Reyes, and the straunge things
Tho sawe I in anot her place
Standing in a large space
Of hem that maken bloody soun
In trumpe beme, and Clarioun
For in fight and bloodshedings

Is bled glad clarionings
There heard I trumpe Mellenus
Of whom that speaketh Vergilius
There heard I Joab trumpe also
Theodomas and other mo
And all that bled clarion
In Casteloigne, and Aragon
That in her times famous were
To learnen lawe I trumpen there
There lawe I sit in other sees
Playing vpon other londrie glees
Which that I can not neuen
No then Sterres been in heauen
Of which I nill as now not rime
For ease of you, and losse of time
For time ylost, this know ye
By no way may recouered be.
There lawe I playing Jogelours
Magicians and Tragetours
And Phetonisses Charmeresses
Olde Wiches Sorceresses
That vsen Exorcisacions
And eke fumigacions
And clerkes eke which conne well
All this Magike naturell
That craftely do her ententes
To maken in certain ascendents
Images lo, through which Magike
To maken a man been hole or sicke.
There lawe I the queene Medea
And Circes eke, and Caliophia
There lawe I Hermes Ballenus
Limote, and eke Symon Magus
There lawe I, and knew by name
That by such arte done men haue fame
There lawe I Coll Tragetour
Upon a table of Sicamour
Plaie an vncouth thing to tell
I lawe him carte a winde Well
Under a Walnote shale
What should I make lenger tale
Of all the people that I sey
I could not tell till Domildey.
When I had all this folke beholde
And found me loose and not holde
And I amused a long while
Upon this wall of Berile
That shone lighter then a glas
And made well more then it was
As kinde thing of fame is
And then anone after this
I gan forthe romen till I fonde
The castell yate on my right honde
Which so well corven was
That neuer such an other nas
And yet it was by auenture
Iwrought by great and subtil cure
It nedeth not you more to tellen
To make you to long dwellen
Of these yates florishinges
Ne of compaces, ne of karuings
Ne how the hacking in Masonries
As corbettes, and Imageries.
But Lord so faire it was to shewe
For it was all with golde behewe
But in I went, and that anone
There met I crying many one
Alarges a larges, holde vp well
God saue the ladie of this pell
Our owne gentill Ladie Fame
And hem that willen to haue a name
Of vs, thus heard I crien all
And fast comen out of the hall
And shoke nobles and starlings
And crouned were as kings
With crownes wrought full of Losinges
And many ribans, and many fringes
Were on her clothes truely.
Tho at the last espied I
That Pursenauntes and Heraudes
That crien riche folkes laudes
Ir weren, all and euery man
Of hem, as I you tell can
Had on him throwe a vesture
Which men clepe a coate armure
Embroudred wonderly riche
As though they were not yliche
But nought will I so mote I thriue
Be about to discriue
All these armes that they weren
That they thus on her coates weren
For to me were impossible
Wen might make of hem a bible
Twentie foote thicke as I trowe
For certain who so could knowe
Might there all the armes seen
Of famous folke that had been
In Affrike, Europe, and Asie
Sith first began chevalrie.
Lo, how should I now tell all this
Ne of the hall eke what nede is
To tellen you that euery wall
Of it, and rofe and floze with all
Was plated halfe a foote thicke
Of golde, and that nas not wicke
But for to proue in all wise
As fine as ducket in Venise
Of which to lite all in my pouche is
And they were set as thicke of ouches
Fine, of the finest stones faire

That

That men reden in the lapidaire
Or as Gralles growen in a Mede
But it were all to long to rede
The names: and therefore I pace
But in this lustie and riche place
That Fames hall called was
Full much prees of folke there nas
Ne crouding, for to much prees
But all on hie aboue a dees
Satte in a see Imperiall
That made was of Rubie royall
Which that a Carbuncle is ycalled
I sawe perpetually ystalled
A femine creature
That never formed by nature
Was such another thing I saye
For altherfirst, loth to saye
Me thought that she was so lite
That the length of a cubite
Was lenger then she semed be
But thus sone in a whyle she
Her selfe tho wonderly streight
That with her fette she therthe reight
And with her hedde she touched heauen
There as shineth the Sterres seuen
And thereto yet, as to my wit
I sawe a great wonder yet
Upon her eyen to beholde
But certainly I hem neuer tolde
For as fele eyen had she
As fethers ben on fowles be
Or weren [illegible] beastes foure
That Goddes throne can honoure
As writeth Johan in the Apocalips
Her heere that was owndie and crips
As burned gold it shone to see
And sothe to tellen also she
Had also fele vp standing eares
And tonges, as on beast been heares
And on her feete wopen sawe I
Partriche winges redily.
But Lord the perrie and the richelle
I saw sitting on the Goddelle
And the heauenly melodie
Of songes full of armonie
I herd about her trone ysong
That all the palais wall rong
So song the mightie Muse she
That cleped is Caliope
And her seuen sisterne eke
That in her faces semen meke
And euermore eternally
They song of Fame tho heard I
Heried be thou and thy name
Goddes of renowne and of Fame

Tho was I ware at the last
As I myne eyen gan vp cast
That this like noble Queene
On her shoulders gan sustene
Bothe the armes and the name
Of tho that had large Fame
Alexander, and Hercules
That with a sherre his like did lese
And thus found I sitting this Goddesse
In noble honour and richesse
Of which I stinte a whyle nowe
Other thing to tellen you
Tho sawe I stande on thother side
Streight doune to the doores wide
From the dees many a pillere
Of metall, that shone not full clere
But though they were of no richesse
Yet were they made for great nobilesse
And in hem great sentence
And folke of hie and digne reuerence
Of which to tell will I fonde
Upon a piller sawe I stonde
Aldrefirst there I sie
Upon a piller stond on hie
That was of Lede and of Iron fine
Hym of the leet Saturnine
The Ebraike Iosephus the old
That of Iewes gestes told
And he bare on his shulders hie
The fame vp of the Iurie
And by him stoden other seuen
Wise and worthie for to neuen
To help him beare vp the charge
It was so heauie and so large
And for they written of battailes
As well as of other marualles
Therefore was lo, this pillete
Of which I you tell here
Of Leade and Iren bothe ywis
For Iron Martes mettall is
Which that God is of battaile
And the Leade without en faile
Is lo, the metall of Saturne
That hath ful large whele to tourne
To hand forth on either rowe
Of hem, which I could knowe
Though I by order hem not tell
To make you to long to dwell
These, of which I gan rede
These sawe I stande out of drede
Upon an Iron piller strong
That painted was all endlong
With Tigres blood in euery place
The Tholason that height Stace
That bare of Thebes vp the name

Upon

Upon his shoulders, and the fame
Also of cruell Achilles
And by him stoode withouten lees
Full wonder hie vpon a piller
Of Iron, he the great Omer
And with him Dares and Titus
Before, and eke he Lollius
And Guido eke the Colempnis
And English Galfride eke ywis
And eche of these as I haue toye
Was busie to beare vp Troye
So heauie thereof was the fame
That for to beare it was no game
But yet I gan full well espie
Betwixe hem was a little enuie
One saied that Omer made lies
Feyning in his Poetries
And was to the Grekes fauourable
Therefore heide he it but fable.
Tho sawe I stand on a pilliere
That was of Tinned Iron clere
The Latine Poet Virgile
That hath bore vp a long while
The fame of Pius Eneas
And next him on a piller was
Of Copper, Venus clerke Ouide
That hath sowen wonders wide
The great God of loues fame
And there he bare vp well his name
Upon this piller also hie
As I might see it with mine eye
For why this hall whereof I rede
Was more on height, length, and brede
Well more by a thousand deale
Then it was erst, that sawe I weale.
Tho sawe I on a pilier by
Of Iron wrought full sternely
The great Poet dan Lucan
Than on his sholders bare vp than
As hie as that I might see
The fame of Julius and Pompee
And by him stoden all these clerkes
That write of Romes mightie werkes
That if I would her names tell
All to long must I dwell.
And next him on a piller stoode
Of Sulphure, liche as he were wood
Dan Claudian, sothe for to tell
That bare vp all the fame of hell
Of Pluto, and of Proserpine
That Queene is of the derke pine
What should I more tell of this
The hall was all full iwis
Of hem that written old iestes
As been on trees Rokes nestes
But it a full confuse mattere
Were all these iestes for to here
That they of write, and how they highte
But while that I beheld this sighte
I herd a noise approchen blithe
That fareth as Bees doen in an hiue
Ayenst her time of out flying
Right such a maner murmuring
For all the world it semed me
Tho gan I looke about and see
That there come entring into the hall
A right great company withall
And that of sondry regions
Of all kins condicions
That dwell in earth vnder the Moone
Poore and rich, and also sone
As they were come into the hall
They gan on knees doun to fall
Before this ilke noble Quene
And said, graunt vs Lady shene
Ech of vs thy grace a bone
And some of hem she graunted sone
And some she warned well and faire
And some she graunted the contraire
Of her asking vtterly
But this I say you truly
What her grace was I nill
For of these folke full wel I wist
They had good fame ech deserued
Although they were diuersly serued
Right as her sister dame Fortune
Is wont to serue in commune
Now herken how she gan to pay
Hem that gan her of grace pray
And yet lo, all this company
Saiden soth, and not a lie
Madame said they, we be
Folke that here beseechen the
That thou graunt vs now good fame
And let our workes haue good name
In ful recompensacioun
Of good worke, giue vs good renoun
I warne it you (qd. she) anone
Ye get of me good fame none
By God, and therefore go your way
Alas (qd. they) and welaway
Tell vs what your cause may be
For me list it not (qd. she)
No wight shal speak of you twis
Good ne harme, ne that ne this
And with that word she gan to call
Her messenger that was in hall
And bad that he should fast gone
Upon pain to be blind anone
For Eolus the God of wind

In Trace there ye shall him finde
And bid him bring his clarioun
That is full diuers of his soun
And it is cleped cleare Laude
With which he wont is to heraude
Hem that me list ypraised be
And also bid him how that he
Bring eke his other clarioun
That height Sclaunder in euery toune
With which he wont is to diffame
Hem that me list and doe hem shame.
This messenger gan fast to gone
And found where in a caue of stone
In a countrey that height Trace
This Eolus with hard grace
Held the Windes in duresse
And gan hem vnder him to presse
That they gone as the Beres roze
He bound and presled hem so soze
This messenger gan fast crie
Rise vp(qd he)and fast thee hie
Till thou at my Ladie be
And take thy clarions eke with thee
And spede thee fast, and he anone
Toke to one that hight Critone
His clarions to bearen tho
And let a certain winde go
That blewe so hidously and hie
That it ne left not a skie
In all the Welken long and brode
This Eolus no where abode
Till he was come to Fames fete
And eke the man that Criton hete
And there he stoode as still as stone
And here withall there came anone
An other huge companie
Of good folke and gan to crie
Ladie, graunt vs now good Fame
And let our workes haue that name
Now in honour of gentilnesse
And also God your soule blesse
For we han well deserued it
Therefore is right that we be quit.
As thriue I(qd she)ye shall faile
Good workes shall you not auaile
To haue of me good Fame as now
But wote ye what, I graunt you
That ye shall haue a shrewde name
And wicked loos, and worse fame
Though ye good loos haue well deserued
Now goeth your waie for ye been serued
And thou Dan Eolus(qd she)
Take forth thy trompe anone let se
That is ycleped Sclaunder light
And blowe her loos, that euery wight
Speake of hem harme and shrewdnesse
Instede of good and worthinesse
For thou shalt trumpe all the contraire
Of that they haue done, well and faire,
Alas thought I what auentures
Haue these sorie creatures
That they emong all the pres
Should thus be shamed guiltes
But what, it must needes be
What did this Eolus, but he
Toke out his blacke trompe of bras
That fouler then the Deuil was
And gan this trompe for to blowe
As all the world should ouerthrowe
Throughout euery regioun
Went this foule trumpes soun
As swift as a pellet out of a gonne
When fire is in the pouder ronne
And such a smoke gan out wend
Out of the foule trumpes end
Blacke, blu, grenish, swartish, rede
As doeth where that men melte lede
Lo, all on hie from fewell
And thereto one thing sawe I well
That the ferther that it ranne
The greater wexen it beganne
As doth the riuer from a well
And it stanke as the pitte of hell
Alas, thus was her shame yprong
And gultesse on euery tong.
Tho came the third companie
And gone vp to the dees to hie
And doune on knees they fell anone
And saiden, we been euerichone
Folke that han full truely
Deserued fame rightfully
And prayed you it might be knowe
Right as it is and forth blowe.
I graunt(qd she)for now me list
That your good workes shall be wist
And yet ye shall haue better loos
Right in despite of all your foos
Then worthie is, and that anone
Let now(qd she) thy trumpe gone
Thou Eolus, that is so blake
And out thine other troumpe take
That hight Laude, and blowe it so
That through the world her fame go
All easely and not to fast
That it be knowen at the last.
Full gladly Ladie mine he saied
And out his trumpe of golde he braied
Anone, and set it to his mouthe
And blewe it East, West, and Southe
And North, as loude as any thonder

That

That euery wight hath of it wonder
So brode it ran or that it stent
And certes all the breath that went
Out of his trumpes mouth smelde
As men a pot full of baume helde
Emong a basket full of roses
This fauour did he to her loses
And right with this I gan espie
There came the fouth company
But certaine they were wonder fewe
And gon to standen on a rewe
And saiden, certes Lady bright
We haue doen well with all our might
But we ne keepe to haue fame
Hide our workes and our name
For Goddes loue, for certes we
Haue surely done it for bountie
And for no maner other thing
I graunt you all your asking
(Qd he) let your workes be dedde
With that about I turned my heede
And sawe anon the fifth rout
That to this Ladie gan lout
And doune on knees anon to fall
And to her tho besoughten all
To hiden her good workes eke
And saied, they yeue not a leke
For no fame, ne such renoun
For they for contemplacioun
And Goddes loue had it wrought
Ne of fame would they nought.
What (qd she) and be ye wood
And wene ye for to do good
And for to haue of that no fame
Haue ye despite to haue my name
Naie ye shall lien euerichone
Blowe thy trumpe and that anon
(Qd she) thou Eolus I hote
And ring these folkes workes by note
That all the world may of it heare
And he gan blowe her loos so cleare
In his golden clarioun
Through the world went the soun
Also kindly, and eke so soft
That their fame was blowe aloft.
Tho came the sixt company
And gan fall to Fame crie
Right verely in this manere
They saiden, mercie Ladie dere
To tel certain as it is
We haue don neither that ne this
But ydell all our life hath be
But natheless yet pray we
That we may haue as good a fame
And great renoume and knowen name
As they that haue do noble ieftes
And acheued all her questes
As well of loue as other thing
All was vs neuer broche ne ring
Ne cls what fro women sent
Ne ones in her hart yment
To maken vs onely frendly chere
But mought temen vs on bere
Yet let vs to the people seme
Such as the world may of vs deme
That women louen vs for wood
It shall do vs as much good
And to our harte as much auaile
The counterpeise, ease, and trauaile
As we had won with labour
For that is dere bought honour
At regard of our great ease
And yet ye must vs more please
Let vs beholde eke thereto
Worthie, wise, and good also
And riche, and happie vnto loue
For Goddes loue that sitteth aboue
Though we may not the bodie haue
Of women, yet so God me saue
Let men glewe on vs the name
Sufficeth that we haue the fame.
I graunt (qd. she) by my trouth
Now Eolus withouten slouth
Take out thy trumpe of gold (qd. she)
And blow as they haue asked me
That euery man wene him at ease
Though they go in ful badde lease
This Eolus gan it so blow
That through this world it was yknow
Tho came the seuenth rout anone
And fill on knees euerichone
And said, Lady graunt vs soone
The same thing, the same boone
That this next folke haue done
Fie on you (qd. she) euerichone
Ye masty swine, ye idle wretches
Ful of rotten slow tetches
What false theues, where ye wold
Been famed good, and nothing nold
Deserue why, ne neuer thought
Men rather you to hangen ought
For ye be like the sleepy Cat
That would haue fish: but wost thou what?
He woll nothing wet his clawes
Euill thrift come to your iawes
And on mine if I it graunt
Or do fauour you to auaunt.
Thou Eolus, thou king of Thrace
Go blow this folke a lowe grace
(Qd. she) anone, and wost thou how

As

As I shal tel the right now
Say these ben they that wold honour
Haue, and do no kins labour
Ne do no good, and yet haue laud
And that men wend that bel I saud
Ne coud hem not of loue werne
And yet she that grint at querne
Is all to good to ease her hert
This Solus anon vp stert
And with his blacke clarioun
He han to blasen out a soun
As loud as belleth wind in hell
And eke therwith soth to tell
This sowne was so ful of tapes
As euer mowes weren in apes
And that went all the world about
That euery wight gan on hem shout
And for to laugh as they were wood
Such game found they in her hood
Tho came another company
That had ydone the trechery
The harme and great wickednesse
That any hert coudeu gesse
And praied her to haue good fame
And that she nold do hem no shame
But giue hem loos and good renoun
And do it blow in clarioun
Nay wis (qd. she) it were a vice
All be there in me no iustice
We lift not to do it now
Ne this I nill graunt it you
Tho came there leaping in rout
And gan clappen all about
Euery man vpon the crowne
That all the hall han to sowne
And said, lady leke and dere
We ben such folkes as ye may here
To tel al the tale aright
We ben shrews euery wight
And haue delite in wickednesse
As good folke haue in goodnesse
And ioy to ben knowen shrewes
And ful vice and wicked thewes
Wherfore we pray you on a row
That our fame be such yknow
In all things right as it is
I graunt it you (qd. she) ywis
But what art thou that saiest this tale
That wearest on thy hose a pale
And on thy tippet such a bell
Madame (qd. he) soth to tell
I am that ilke shrew ywis
That brent the temple of Isidis
In Athens, lo that cite
And wherfore diddest thou so (qd. she)
By my trouth (qd. he) madame
I would faine haue a name
As other folke had in the towne
Although they were of great renowne
For her vertue and her thewes
Thought I; as great fame haue shrewes
(Though it be nought) for shrewdnesse
As good folke haue for goodnesse
And sithen I may not haue that one
That other nill I not forgone
As for to get a fame here
The temple set I all on fire
Now done our loos be blow swithe
As wisly be thou euer blithe
Gladly (qd. she) thou Solus
Hearest thou not what they prayen vs
Madame yes, ful wel (qd. he)
And I will trumpen it parde
And took his blacke trump fast
And gan to puffen and to blast
Til it was at the worlds end
With that I gan about wend
For one that stood right at my backe
Me thought ful goodly to me spake
And said, frend what is thy name
Art thou come hider to haue fame
Nay forsoth frend (qd. I)
I come nat hither graunt mercy
For no such cause by my heed
Suffiseth me, as I were deed
That no wight haue my name in hond
I wot my selfe best how I stond
For what I dry, or what I thinke
I wol my self all it drinke
Certaine for the more part
As ferforth as I can mine art
What doest thou here than (qd. he)
(Qd. I) that wol I tel the
The cause why I stand here
Some new tidings for to lere
Some new thing I not what
Tidings either this or that
Of loue, or such things glade
For certainly he that me made
To come hider, said to me
I should both heare and see
In this place wonder things
But these be no such tidings
As I ment of: No (qd. he)
And I answerd, no parde
For wel I wote euer yet
Sith that first I had wit
That some folke han desired fame
Diuersly, and loos and name
But certainly I nist how

Ne where that fame dwelled or now
Ne eke of her discripcion
Ne also her condicion
Ne the order of her dome
Knew I not til I hider come
Why than be lo these tidings
That thou now hether brings
That thou hast herd (qd. he) to me
But now no force, for wel I se
What thou desirest for to lere
Come forth and stand no lenger here
And I wol the without drede
Into such another place lede
There thou shalt here many one
Tho gan I forth with him gone
Out of the castel forth to ley
Tho saw I stand in a valey
Under the castel fast by
An house, that domus Dedali
That Labor[illegible]intus ycleaped is
Nas made so wonderly ywis
Ne halfe so queintly ywrought,
And euermo, as swift as thought
This queint house about went
That neuermo it stil stent
And there came out so great a noise
That had it stond vpon Oyse
Men might haue heard it easely
To Rome, I trow likerly
And the noise which that I herd
For all the world right so it ferd
As doth the couting of the stone
That fro the engin is letten gone
And all this house of which I rede
Was made of twigs falow rede
And greene eke, and some were white
Such as men to the cages twhite
Or maken of these paniers
Or els hutches or dossers
That for the swough and for the twigges
This house was also ful of gigges
And also ful eke of chirkings
And of many other worknings
And eke this house hath of entrees
As many as leues ben on trees
In semmer whan they ben grene
And on the rofe yet men may sene
A thousand holes, and wel mo
To letten the sowne out go
And by day in euery tide
Ben all the dores open wide
And by night ech one vnshet
Ne port is there none to let
No maner tidings in to pace
Ne neuer rest is in that place
That it nis filled ful of tidings
Either loud or of whisperings
And euer all the houses angels
Is ful of rownings and of tangles
Of wers, of peace, of marriages
Of rests, and of labour of viages
Of abode of death, and of life
Of loue, of hate, accord, of strife
Of losse, of lore, and of winnings
Of heale, of sickenesse, or of lesings
Of faire weather, and eke of tempests
Of qualme, of folke, and of bests
Of diuers transmutacions
Of estates, and eke of regions
Of trust, of drede, of ialousy
Of wit, of winning, of folly
Of plenty, and of great famine
Of chepe, of dearth, and of ruine
Of good or misgouernement
Of fire, and of diuers accident
And lo, this house of which I write
Sikerbe ye it nas not lite
For it was sixty mile of length
All was the timber of no strength
Yet it is founded to endure
While that it list to Aventure
That is the mother of tidings
Is the see of wels and springs
And it was shapen like a cage
Certes (qd. I) in all mine age
Ne saw I such an house as this
And as I wondred me ywis
Upon this house, tho ware was I
How mine Egle fast by
Was perched hie vpon a stone
And I gan streight to him gone
And said thus, I pray the
That thou a while abide me
For Gods loue, and let me sene
What wonders in that place bene
For yet peraunter I may lere
Some good therin, or somwhat here
That lefe me were, or that I went
Peter, that is now mine entent
(Qd. he) to me therfore I dwel
But certain one thing I thee tel
That but I bring the therin
Ne shal thou neuer conne the gin
To come into it, out of dout
So fast it whirleth lo about
But sith that Joues of his grace
As I haue said, wil the solace
Finally with these things
Uncouth sights and tidings
To passe with thine eumelle

Soch

Such routh hath he of thy distresse
That thou suffredest deuonairly
And wost they seiuen vtterly
Desperate of all blisse
Sith that fortune hath made a misse
The swote of all thine herts rest
Languish, and eke in point to brest
But he through his mighty merite
Will do the ease, all be it lite
And gaue in expresse commaundement
To which I am obedient
To forther thee with all my might
And wisse and teach thee aright
Where thou maist most tidings here
Thou shalt here many one lere
With this word he right anone
Hent me vp betweene his tone
And at a window in me brought
That in this house was, as me thought
And therwithall me thought it stent
And nothing it about went
And me set in the floore adoun
But such a great congregacioun
Of folke, as I saw come about
Some within and some without
Nas neuer seen, ne shal be eft
That certes in this world ms left
So many formed by nature
Ne deed so many a creature
That wel vneth in that place
Had I a foot brede of space
And euery wight that I saw there
Rowned euerich in others ere
A new tiding prively
Or els he told it all openly
Right thus, and said: Hoit nat thou
That is betid, so right now
Nor qd. he, tel me what
And than he told him this and that
And swore therto, that it was soth
Thus hath he said, and thus he doth
And this shal be, and thus herd I say
That shal be found, that dare I lay
That all the folke that is on liue
Ne haue the conning to discriue
The things that I herd there
What aloud, and what in ere
But all the wonder most was this
Whan one had herd a thing ywis
He came streight to another wight
And gan him tellen anon right
The same that him was told
Or it a forlong way was old
And gan somwhat for to ech
To this tiding in his speech
More than euer it spoken was
And not so sone departed nas
The fro him that he ne met
With the third, and er he let
Any stound, he told him alle
Were the tidings soth or falle
Yet would he tel it natheles
And euermore with mo encrees
Than it was erst: thus north and south
Went euer tiding, fro mouth to mouth
And that encreasing euermo
As fire is wont to quicken and go
From a sparcle sprongen amis
Til all a cite brent vp is
And whan that was ful vp sprong
And waxen more on euery tong
Than euer it was, and went anone
Vp to a window out to gone
Or but it might out there passe
It gan out crepe at some crenasse
And flew forth fast for the nones
And sometime I saw there at ones
A leasing, and a sad soth saw
That gonnen of auenture draw
Out at a window for to pace
And whan they metten in that place
They were achecked both two
And neither of hem might out go
For ech other they gon so croud
Til ech of hem gan crien loud
Let me gone first, nay but let me
And here I wol ensuren thee
With nones that thou wolt do so
That I shal neuer fro thee go
But be thine owen swoin brother
We wol meddle vs ech in other
That no man be he neuer so wroth
Shal haue one two, but both
At ones, as beside his leue
Come me a mirrow or on cue
Be we cried or stil yrowned
Thus saw I falle and soth compowned
Together flie for o tiding
Thus out at holes gon wring
Euery tiding streight to Fame
And she gan yeue ech his name
After her disposicion
And yeue hem eke duracion
Some to wax and wane soone
As doth the faire white moone
And let hem gon, there might I seen
Winged wonders fast flien
Twenty thousand in a rout
As Eolus hem blew about
And lord this house in all times

Was ful of shipmen and pilgrimes
With scrips bret ful of leasings
Entermelled with tidings
And eke alone by hemselue
O many thousand times twelue
Saw I eke of these pardoners
Currours, and eke messaungers
With boxes crommed ful of lies
As euer vessel was with lies
And as I aither fastest went
About, and did all mine entent
Me for to playen and for to lere
And eke a tiding for to here
That I had herd of some countre
That shal not now be told for me
For it no nede is redily
Folke can sing it bet than I
For all mote out late or rath
All the sheues in the rath
I herd a great noise withall
In a corner of the hall
There men of loue tidings told
And I gan thiderward behold
For I saw renning euery wight
As fast as that they hadden might
And euerich cried, what thing is that
And some said I not nere what
And whan they were all on an hepe
Tho behind gonne vp lepe
And clamben vp on other fast
And vp the noise on highen cast
And treden fast on others heles
And stampe as men done after eles
At the last I saw a man
Which that I nought ne can
But he semed for to be
A man of great auctorite
And therewithall I abraid
Out of my slepe halfe afraid
Remembring wel what I had sene
And how hie and ferre I had bene
In my ghost, and had great wonder
Of that the God of thonder
Had let me knowen, and began to write
Like as ye haue herd me endite
Wherfore to study and rede alway
I purpose to do day by day
Thus in dreaming and in game
Endeth this little booke of Fame.

¶ Here endeth the booke of Fame.

The Prologue of the testament of Loue.

Many men there been, that with eeres openly spread so much swalowen ỳ delicioulneffe of ieftes and of ryme, by queint knitting colloures, that of ỳ goodneffe or of the badneffe of the sentence, take they little heede or els none.

Soothely dulle witte and a thoughtfull foule so sore haue mined and grafted in my spirites, that sothe crafte of enditing woll nat beene of mine acquaintaunce. And for rude wordes and boistous pierceth the heart of the hearer to the inreft poynt, and planteth there the sentence of things, so that with litel helpe it is able to spring. This booke that nothyng hath of the great flood of wit, ne of seemelich colours, is doluen with rude wordes and boystous, and so draw we togider to maken the catchers thereof beene the more ready to hent sentence.

Some men there been, that painten with colours riche and some with verse, as with red inke, and some with coles ỳ chalke: And yet is there good matter to the lewd people of thilke chalkie purtreyture, as hem thynketh for the tyme, and afterwarde the syght of the better colours yeuen to hem more ioy for the firste lewdneffe. So soothly this leud clowdy occupacion is not to prayse, but by the leud: for commonly leud, leudeneffe commendeth. Eke it shall yeue sighte that other precyous thynges shall bee the more in reuerence. In Latin and French hath many souerain wits had greate delyte to endite, and haue manye noble thynges fulfilled, but certes there been some ỳ speaken their poilye mater in French, of whiche speeche the Frenche men haue as good a fantasye as wee haue in hearynge of Frenche mens Englishe. And many tearmes there ben in English, which vnneth wee Englishe men connen declare the knowledging: How should than a French man borne, soche tearmes conne iumpere in his matter, but as the Jay chatereth Englishe. Right so truely the vnderstandyng of Englishe men woll not

stretche

stretche to the priuye tearmes in Frenche, what so euer wee boasten of straunge language. Let than clerkes enditen in Latin, for they haue the property of science, and the knowyng in that facultie: and lette Frenchemenne in their Frenche also enditen theyr queynte tearmes, for it is kyndely to theyr mouthes, and let vs shewe our fantasyes in suche wordes as we learneden of our dames tongue. And although this booke bee little thanke worthy for the leudenesse in trauaile, yet such writing exiten men to thilke things that beene necessary: for euerye man thereby maie as by a perpetuall myrrour seene the vices or vertues of other, in whyche thynge lyghtlye may bee conceyued to eschewe perils, and necessaries to catche, after as auentures haue fallen to other people or personnes.

Certes the souerayneste thynge of desire and most creature reasonable, haue or els should haue full appetite to their perfectyon: vnreasonable beestes mowen not, sithe reason hath in hem no worckynge: Than reasonable that woll not, is comparisoned to vnreasonable, and made lyke hem. Forsoothe the most souerayne and finall perfection of man is in knowynge of a soothe, wythouten any entente deceiuable, and in loue of one verye God, that is inchangeable, that is to know and loue his Creator.

Nowe principallie the meane to bryng in knowledgyng and louynge his creatour, is the consideracion of thyngs made by the creatour, wherethrough bee thilke thynges that been made, vnderstanding here to our wyttes, arne the vnseene pryueties of God made to vs sightfull and knowynge, in our contemplacion and vnderstondyng.

These thynges than forsooth much bringen vs to the full knowledgyng soothe, and to the parfyte loue of the maker of heauenlye thynges. Lo Dauid sayth: thou hast delited mee in makyng, as who sayeth, to haue delite in the tune howe God hath lent mee in consideracion of thy makyng. Whereof Aristotle in the Booke De Animalibus, sayth to naturall Philosophers: it is a great lykyng in loue of knowyng theyr creatoure: and also in knowynge of causes in kyndelye thynges considered. Forsoothe the formes of kindely thynges and the shappe, a great kyndely loue me should haue to the werkman that hem made. The crafte of a werkeman is shewed in the werk. Herefore truly the Philosophers with a lyuely studye manie noble thynges, righte precyous and worthye to memorye written and by a great swetande trauaile to vs left-ten of causes the properties in natures of thynges, to whyche therefore Philosophers it was more ioye, more lyking, more heartye luste in kyndely vertues and matters of reason the perfection by bulye studye to knowe, than to haue had all the treasour, all the richesse, all the vaineglory that the passed Emperours, Princes, or kynges hadden. Therefore the names of hem in the booke of perpetuall memory in vertue and peace arne written, and in the contrarye, that is to sayne, in styye the foule pitte of helle arne thilke pressed that such goodnesse hated. And bicause this booke shall be of loue, and the prime causes of steryng in that doyng, with passions and diseases for wantyng of desire, I wil that this booke be cleped ỳ Testament of Loue.

But now thou reader, who is thilke that will not in seven laugh, to heare a dwarfe or els halfe a man, say hee will vende out the swerd of Hercules hands. And also hee should set Hercules gades a mile yet ferther, and ouer that hee had power of strength to pull vp the spere, that Alisander the noble might neuer waggе.

And that passinge all thyng to beene mayster of Fraunce by might, there as the noble gracious Edwarde the thirde for all his great prowesse in victories ne might all yet conquere.

Certes I wote well, there shall be made more scorne and iape of me, that I so vnworthely clothed all togither in the cloudye cloude of vnconning, will putten me in prees to speake of loue, or els of the causes in that matter, sithen all the greatest clerkes han had inough to done, and as who saieth gathered vp cleane to forne hem, and with their sharpe sithes of conning all mowen and made therof great rekes and noble, ful of all plenties to fed me and many another. Enuy forsoothe commendeth nought his reason, that hee hath in haine, bee it neuer so trusty. And although these noble repers, as good workmen & worthy their hier, han all drawe and bound vp in the sheues, and made many shockes, yet haue I enlampit to gader the small crommes, and fullin my walet of tho that fallen from the bourde among the small hounds, notwithstandinge the trauaile of the almoigner, that hath drawe vp in the cloth al ỳ remissailes, as trenchours, & the relick to bere to the almesse.

yet also haue I leaue of the noble husbande Boece, although I be a straunger of commyng to come after his doctrine, and these greate workmen, and glene my handfuls of the shedding after their hondes, and if me faile ought of my full, to encrease my porcion with that I shall draw by pyuities out of shockes, a slye seruaunt in his owne helpe is often muche commended, knowyng of trouth in causes of things, was more hardier in the first seekers, and so sayth Aristotle, and lighter in vs that han followed after. For their passing study han freshed our wittes, and our vnderstandyng han excited in consideracion of trouthe by sharpenesse of their reasons. Utterly these thynges be no dreames ne iapes, to throw to hogs, it is lifelich meat for children of trouth, and as they me betiden whan I pilgrammed out of my kith in winter, whan the weather out of measure was boystous, and the wilde wind Boreas as his kinde asketh with dryng colds, maked the waws of Pocian see so to arise vnkindly ouer the cõmune banks that it was in point to spill all the earth.

Thus endeth the Prologue, and hereafter followeth the first booke of the Testament of Loue.

The testament *of Loue.*

ALas Fortune alas, I that somtyme in delytous houres was woont to enioy blissfull stoundes, am nowe dryue by vnhappy heauinesse to bewayle my sondry yuels in tene. Trewly I leane, in myne heart is writte ay perdurable letters all the entencions of lamentacion that nowe beene ynempned, for any manner disease outward in sobbing manner, sheweth sorowfull yering from within. Thus from my confort I ginne to spill, sith she that should me solace, is ferre from my presence. Certes her absence is to mee an hell, my sterning death thus in woe it myneth, that endlesse care is throughout mine heart clenched, blisse of my ioy, that oft mee murthed is turned into gall, to thinke on thyng that may not at my will in armes me hent. Mirth is chaunged into tene, whan swinke is there continually, that reste was woont to soiourne and haue dwelling place. Thus witlesse thoughtful, sightlesse ioking, I endure my penaunce in this derke prison, caitifned from frendship and acquaintaunce, and forsaken of al that any word dare speak. Straunge hath by way of intruciouu made his home there mee should bee, if reason were heard as he should. Never the later yet hertly Lady precious Margarit, haue minde on thy seruaunte, and thinke on his disease, howe lightlesse hee lyueth, sithe the beames brennend in loue of thine eien arne so bewet, that wordes and cloud atwene vs twey wol not suffer my thoughtes of hem to bee enlumined. Thinke that one vertue of a Margarite precious, is amonges manye other the sorowfull to comfort, yet will of that mee sorowfull to comforte, is my luste to haue nought els at this tyme, deede ne death, ne no manner trauaile hath, no power myne heart so muche to fade, as should to hearc of a twinckling in your disease. Ah, God forbede that, but yet let mee dey, let mee sterue wythouten any measure of penaunce, rather than myne heartely thynking comforte in ought were diseased. What may my seruice auaile in absence of her, that my seruice shoulde accepte? Is this nat endelesse

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sorowe to thinke? Yes,yes God wote,myne hart breaketh me a sonder, howe shoulde the grounde without kindlye noriture, bringen forth any fruites? Howe shoulde a ship withouten a sterne in the greate sea bee gouerned? how should I withouten my blisse, my harte, my desire, my ioye, my goodnesse, endure in this contrarious prison, that thinke euery houre in the day,an hundred Winter? Well may now Eue sain to me Adam, in sorow fallen from wealth, driuen art thou out of Paradise, with sweate thy sustenaunce to bee swinke.Depe in this pyning pit,with woe I ligge ystocked, with chaines linked of care, & of tene. It is so hie from thens I lie, and the common earth, there ne is cable in no lande maked, that might stretch to mee, to drawe me into blisse, ne steyers to steyr on is none, so that without recouer endlesse, here to endure I wote well I purueide. O, where arte thou nowe frendship, that sometime with laughande chere, madest both face and countenaunce to me wardes? Truely nowe arte thou went out of towne,but euer me thinketh he wearyeth his olde clothes, and ỳ the soule, in the which the life of frendship was in, is drawen out from his other spirites. Nowe then farewell frendship,and farewell felowes, me thinketh ye all han taken your leaue: no force of you all at ones.

But ladie of loue, ye wote what I meane, yet thinke on thy seruaunt, that for thy loue spilleth,all things haue I forsake,to folowen thine hestes: rewarde mee with a thought though ye doe naught els. Remembrance of loue lieth so sore vnder my breste, that other thought commeth not in my mynd, but gladnesse to thinke on your goodnesse, and your merie chere,frendes and sorowe, to thinke on your wretche and your daunger, from which Christ me saue.My great ioye it is to haue in meditations, the bounties, the vertues, the nobley in you printed: sorowe and hel comen at ones,to suppose that I be veined. Thus with care,sorowe,and tene am I shapt, mine ende with death to make.Now good goodly thinke on this.

O wretched foole that I am fallen into so lowe, the heate of my brenning tene hath me all defaced: how should ye Lady set prise on so foule filth? My conning is thinne, my witte is exiled, like to a foole naturall,am I comparisoned. Truely ladie,but your mercie the more were, I wote well all my labour were in ydell: your mercie than passeth right, God graunt that proposition to bee verified in mee,so that by trust of good hope, I mow come to the hauen of ease, and sith it is impossible, the coloures of your qualities to chaunge:and forsoothe I wote well,wemme ne spot maie not abide, there so noble vertue haboundeth,so that the defasing to you is verily imaginable,as countenaunce of goodnes with encreasing vertue, is so in you knit to abide by necessarie maner, yet if the ryuers might fall,which is ayenst kind, I well well mine heart,ne should therefore naught flit,by the leaste poinct of Geometrie, so sadlie is it sonded, that away from your seruice in loue, maie hee not departe. O loue, when shall I beene pleased? O charity, when shall I beene eased? O good goodlie, when shal the Dice tourne? O full of vertue, doe the chaunce of comfort, vpwarde to fall. O loue, when wolt thou thinke on thy seruaunt? I can no more,but here outcast of all welfare, abyde the day of my death, or els to se the light that myght all my wellyng sorowes voyde, and of the floode make an ebbe. These diseases mowen well by duresse of sorowe, make my life to vnbodie, and so for to die: but certes, yee Ladie in a full perfection of loue, beene so knitte wyth my soule, that deathe maie not thilke knotte vnbynde ne departe,so that yee and my soule together is endelesse, in blysse should dwell, and there shall my soule at the full beene eased, that hee may haue your presence, to shewe the entente of his desires: Ah deare God, that shall bee a greate ioye. Now yearthlie Goddesse, take regarde of thy seruaunt,though I be feeble,for thou art woont to prayse them better, that woulde con serue in loue,all bee hee full meaner than Kyngs or Princes, that woll not haue that vertue in minde. Now precious Margarite,that with thy noble vertue, hast drawne mee into loue firste, mee wenyng therof to haue blisse, as Gall and Aloes are so muche sprong, that sauour of sweetenesse maie I not atast. Alas, that your benigne eyen, in which that mercie seemeth, to haue all his noriture, nill by no waie tourne the clearenesse of mercie to mewardes. Alas that your brennand vertues, shinyng emonges all folke, and enluminyng all other people, by haboundaunce of encreasyng,sheweth to me but smoke, and no lyght. These thynges to thinke in mine hearte,maketh euery date weepyng in myne eyen to renne. These liggen on my backe so sore, that importable burden mee seemeth on

my backe to be charged, it maketh mee backwarde to meue, when my steppes by common course euen for the pretende: These thynges also on right side and ieste, haue me so enuolued with care, that wanhope of helpe is thorough me conne truely, and leue that graceleste is my fortune, which that euer sheweth it mewardes by a cloudie disease, al ready to make stormes of tene, and the blisful side hait still a waiwarde, and woll it not suffer to mewardes to turne: no force, yet wol I not ben conquered.

O, alas that your nobley so muche emong all other creatures, commended by folowinge streme, by all manner vertues, but there been wonderfull, I not which that let the flood to come into my soule, wherefore purely mated with sorowe thyough sought, my selfe I crye on your goodnes, to haue pitie on this caitife, that in the unest degree of sorrow and disease is left, and without your goodly will, from any helpe and recouery. These sorowes may I not sustene, but if my sorowe should be tolde, and to you wardes shewed, although much space is betweene vs twaine, yet mee thinketh that by such soleining wordes, my disease gimeth eb. Truely, mee thinketh that the soune of my lamentatious weping, is right nowe flowe into your presence, and there cryeth after mercie and grace, to which thinge mee seemeth, thee liste none aunswere to yeue, but with a deinous chere, ye commaunded it to auoide, but God forbidde that any worde shoulde of you spryng, to haue so little routhe. Parde pitie and mercie, in euery Margarite is closed by kynde, emongest many other vertues, by qualities of comfort, but comforte is to mee right naught worthe, withouten mercie and pitie of you alone, which thinges hastly God me graunt for his mercie.

Whearsing these thinges and many other, without time or moment of rest, mee semed for anguishe of disease, that all togither I was ravished, I cannot tell how, but wholy al my passions and feelinges weren lost, as it semed for the time, and sodainly a manner of dreade, light in me all at ones, nought suche feare as folke haue of an enemie, that were mightie, and woulde hem greue, or dooen hem disease: for I trowe this is well knowe to many persones, that otherwhile if a man be in his Soueraines presence, a manner of ferdnesse creepeth in his heart, not for harme, but of goodly subiection: namely as menne reden that Angels beene afeerde of our Saviour in heauen. And parde there ne is, ne may no passion of disease bee, but it is to meane that Angels beene adradde, not by frendes of dreede, sithen they beene perfitly blisled, as affection of wonderfulnesse, and by seruice of obedience, suche ferde also han these louers in presence of their loues, and subiectes afore their soueraines: right so with ferdnesse, mine heart was caught. And I sodainly astonyed, there entered into the place there I was lodged, a ladie, the semelich and moste goodly to my sight, that euer tofore appeared to any creature, and truely in the blustring of her looke, shee yaue gladnes and comforte, sodainly to all my wittes, and right so shee doeth to euery wight, that commeth in her presence. And for shee was so goodly (as me thought) mine harte began somedeale to be enbolded, and wext a little hardy to speak, but yet with a quaking voice, as I durst, I salued her, and enquired what she was, and why she so worthie to sight, dained to enter into so foule a dongeon, and namely a prison, without leaue of my kepers. For certes, although the vertue of deedes of mercie, stretchen to visiten the poore prisoners, and hem after that facultees berne had to comfort, me semed that I was so ferre fallen into miserie and wretched hid caitifenesse, that me should no precious thing neigh: and also that for my sorowe euery wight should been heauie, and wish my recouery.

But when this Ladye had somedeale apperceiued, as well by my wordes, as by my chere, what thought bulied me within, with a good womanly countenaunce, shee saied these wordes. O my nozie, weneste thou that my manor bee, to forget my frendes, or my seruauntes? Naie (qd she) it is my full entent, to visite and comfort all my frendshippes and alies, as well in tyme of perturbacion, as of moste propertie of blisse. in me shall vnkindnesse neuer be founden. And also sithen I haue so fewe especiall true, nowe in these dayes, wherefore I may well at more leisar, come to hem that me deseruen, and if my commynge may in any thing auaile, were well I woll come often.

Now good lady (qd I) that art so faire on to loke, reinyng honie by thy wordes, blisse of Paradise arne thy lokinges, ioye and comfort

foꝛt are thy mouinges. What is thy name? Howe is it that in you is so mokell werkinge vertues enpight, as mee seemeth, and in none other creature, that euer saw I with myne eyen? My disciple (qd she) me wondreth of thy wordes, and on thee, that foꝛ a little disease hast foꝛgotten my name. Wost thou not well that I am Loue, that firste thee brought to thy seruice? O good Ladie (qd I) is this worship to thee, oꝛ to thine excellence, foꝛ to come into so foule a place? Parde sometime tho I was in prosperitie, and with foꝛaine goodes enuolued, I had mokil to doen to drawe thee to mine hostell, and yet many wernings thou madest, ere thou liste fully to graunt, thine home to make at my dwelling place: & nowe thou comest goodly by thine owne vise, to comfoꝛt me with wordes, and so therthrough I ginne remember on passed gladnes. Truelie Lady I ne wot, whether I shall saie welcome oꝛ none, sithen thy comminge woll as much doe mee tene and sorowe, as gladnesse and mirth: see why. Foꝛ that me comfoꝛteth to thinke on passed gladuesse, that mee anoyeth eft to be in doing. Thus thy comming both gladdeth and teneth, and that is cause of much sorowe: lo Lady, howe then I am comfoꝛted by your comming, and with that I gan in teares to distill, and tenderly wepe. Nowe certes (qd Loue) I see well (and that me ouerthinketh) that wit in thee faileth, and art in point to dote. Truely (qd I) that haue ye maked, and that euer woll I rue. Wottest thou not well (qd she) that euery Shepherde ought by reason, to seke his sperkeland shepe that arne ron into wildernesse, emong bushes and perris, and hem to their pasture ayen bring, and take on hem prime busie cure of keping? And tho the vnsonning shepe, scattered would been lost, renning to wildernesse, and to desertes drawe, oꝛ els woulden put hemselfe to the swallowing Wolfe, yet shal the Shepherde, by businesse & trauaile, so put him foꝛth, that he shal not let him be lost by no waye. A good shepherd putteth rather his life to been lost foꝛ his shepe.

But foꝛ thou shalte not wene me, being of werse condicion, truely foꝛ euerichе of my folke, and foꝛ all tho that to mee warde, bee knit in any condicion, I woll rather die than suffer hem through errour to beene spilte. Foꝛ me liste, and it me liketh, of all myne a Shepeꝛdesse to bee cleaped. Wost thou not well, I failed neuer wight, but he me refused, and would negligently go with vnkindnesse? And yet parde, haue I many such holpe and releeued, and they haue ofte mee begyled, but euer at the end, it discendeth in their owne neckes.

Hast thou not radde, howe kinde I was to Paris, Priamus sonne of Troie? How Iason me failed, foꝛ all his fals behestes? Howe Sclaꝛs sonke, I lefte it foꝛ no tene, til he was troned in my blisse, foꝛ his seruice. What (qd she) most of all, maked I not a loneday, betweene God and mankinde, and chese a maid to be nompere, to put the quarell at end? Lo how I haue trauailed to haue thanke on all sides, and yet lift me not to rest, and I might finde on whome I should werche. But truely mine owen disciple, because I haue thee found at all assayes in thy will to be readie, myne hestes to haue followed, and haste beene true to that Margarite Perle, that ones I thee shewed, and she alway ayenward, hath made but daungerous chere, I am come in proper persone to put thee out of errours, and make thee glad by woates of reason, so that sorowe ne disease shall no more hereafter the amastrie. Wherethrough I hope, thou shalt lightly come to the grace, that thou long hast desired, of thilke Jewell.

Haste thou not heard manye enlampies, how I haue comfoꝛted, and releued the scholers of my loꝛe? Who hath woꝛthied kinges in the felde? Who hath honoured ladies in boure, by a perpetuall mirroꝛ of their trueth in my seruice? Who hath caused woꝛthie folke, to void vice and shame? Who hath hold cities, and realmes in prosperitie? If thee list clepe ayen thine olde remembraunce, thou condest euery point of this declare in especial, and say that I thy maistres haue be cause, causing things, and many mo other.

Now ywis madame (qd I) all these things I knowe well my selfe, and that thyne excellence, passeth the vnderstandynge of vs beastes, and that no mannes witte earthlyc, may comprehende thy vertues. Well then (qd she) foꝛ I see thee in disease and sorowe, I wote well thou arte one of myne noꝛices, I may not suffer thee so to make sorowe, thine owne selfe to shende: but I my selfe come to be thy fere, thine heuy charge to make to seme the lesse, foꝛ wo is him that is a loue: And to the soꝛy to been moued by a sorowfull wight it is great gladnesse. Right so with my sicke frendes I am sicke, and with sorie. I can not elles but sorowe make, till when I haue hem releued, in such wise that gladnesse in

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a manner of counterpaisinge, shall restore as mokell in ioy, as the passed heauinesse before did in tene. And also (qd she) when any of my seruaunts ben alone in solitarie place, I haue yet euer buried mee to bee with hem, in comfort of their hartes, and taught hem to make songes of plainte and of blisse, and to enditen letters of Rhetorike, in quemt understandinges, and to bethinke hem in what wyse, they might best their Ladies in good seruice please, and also to learne manner in countenaunce, in wordes, and in bearing, and to ben meeke and lowly to euery wight, his name and fame to encrease, and to yeue great yeftes and large, that his renoume may springen, but thee thereof haue I excused, for thy losse and thy greate costages, wherethroughe thou arte neadie, arne nothinge to mee unknowen, but I hope to GOD sometime it shall beene amended, as thus, as I sined. In norture haue I taught all mine, and in curtesie made hem expert, their Ladies hartes to winne, and if anye woulde endeinous, or proude, or be enuious, or of wretches acquaintaunce, hastlich haue I such voyded out of my schole, for all vices truely I hate: vertues and worthinesse in all my power I auaunce.

Thy worthie creature (qd I) and by iuste cause, the name of Goddes dignely ye mowe beare: in thee lithe the grace, through whiche any creature in this worlde hath anye goodnesse, truely all manner of blisse, and precioulnesse in vertue out of thee springen, and wellen, as brookes and riuers, proceaden from their springes, and like as all waters by kinde, drawen to the Sea, so all kindlye thinges thresten, by full appetite of desire to drawe after thy steppes, and to thy presence aproche, as to their kindly perfection: how dare then beastes in this worlde, aught forfete ayenst thy Domine purueighaunce? Also Lady ye knowen all the prime thoughtes, in hartes, no counsayle may beene hidde from your knowing. Wherefore I wote well Ladie, that ye knowe your selfe, that I in my conscience am, and haue been willing to your seruice, all coude I neuer doe as I shoulde, yet forsooth fained I neuer to loue otherwise, then was in myne harte: and if I could haue made chere to one, and ythought an other, as manye other dooen al daye afore myne eyen, I trowe it woulde not mee haue bayled.

Certes (qd she) haddest thou so doen, I would not nowe haue thee here visited. Ye wote well Ladie eke (qd I) that I haue not playd raket, Nettle in, Dock out, and with the heathercocke waued, and truely there ye me sette, by accorde of my conscience, I would not flie till ye and reason by aperte strength, maden mine harte to tourn.

In good faith (qd shee) I haue knowe thee euer of tho condicions, and sithen thou wouldest (in as much as in thee was) made mee prime of thy counsaile, and Judge of thy conscience, though I forsoke it in tho dayes, till I sawe better my time, would neuer GOD that I shoulde nowe faile, but euer I woll be readie, witnessing thy soothe, in what place that euer I shall, ayenst all tho that woll the contrary susteine, and for as muche as to mee is naught unknowen, ne hid of thy prime harte, but all haste thou tho thynges, made to mee open at the full, that hath caused my comming into this prison, to worde the webbes of thine eyen, to make thee clerely to see the errours thou haste beene in, and because that men beene of diuers condicions, some adradde to saye a soothe, and some for a soothe anone readie to fight, and also that I maye not my selfe beene in place, to withsaye thilke men, that of thee speaken otherwise then the soth, I woll and I charge thee, in vertue of obedience that thou to mee owest, to writen my wordes, and set hem in writinges, that they mowe as my witnessing, beene noted among the people. For bookes written, neither dreden ne shamen, ne striue conne, but onely shewen the entent of the writer, and yeue remembraunce to the hearer: and if anye woll in thy presence saye anye thinge to tho writers, looke boldlye, trust on Mars to answere at the full. For certes, I shall him enforme of all the trouthe in thy loue, with thy conscience, so that of his helpe thou shalte not varie at thy neede. I trowe the strongest and the best that may be founde, woll not transuers thy wordes, whereof then wouldest thou drede.

Greatly was I tho gladded of these wordes, as who saieth, weren somedele light in hart, both for thaurthoritie of witnesse, and also for sikernesse of helpe of the foresaide behestе, and said. Truely ladie nowe am I well gladded, through comfort of your wordes: Be it nowe liking unto your noblye to shewe, which folke diffame your seruaunts, sith your

seruice

seruice ought aboue all other thinges to been commended. Yet (qd she) I see well thy soule is not all out of the amased cloude: thee were better to beare thinge, that thee might light out of thyne heauie charge, and after knowing of thine owne helpe, then to stirre sweete wordes, and such reasons to heare: for in a thoughtfull soule (and namelye such one as thou art) will not yet such thinges sinken. Come of therefore, and let me seene thy heauie charge, that I may the lightlyer for thy comfort purueigh.

Now certes ladie (qd I) the most comfort I might haue, were vtterly to wete mee be sure in harte of that Margarite I serue, and so I thinke to doen with all mightes, while my life dureth. Then (qd shee) maiest thou thereafter, in suche wise that mispleasaunce ne entre? In good faith (qd I) there shall no mispleasaunce be caused, through trespace on my side. And I doe thee to weeten (qd shee) I sette neuer yet person to serue in no place (but if he caused the contrarye, in defaultes and trespaces) that he ne spedde of his seruice. Myne owne earthly Ladye (qd I tho) and yet remember to your worthinesse howe longe sithen by manye reuoluinge of yeres, in time when October his leaue ginneth take, and Nouember sheweth him to sight, when Barnes been full of goodes, as is the Nutte on euery halke, and then good londe tillers ginneth shape for the earth, with greate trauaile to bringe foorth more Corne, to mannes sustenaunce, ayenste the next yeares folowing. In such time of plentie, he that hath an home, and is wise, liste not to wander manuailes to seech, but he be constrained or excited: oft the lothe thinge is doen, by excitacion of other mannes opinion, which woulden faine haue mine abyding, take in harte of luste to trauaile, and see the wynding of the earth, in that tyme of Winter, by woodes that large streates weren in, by small pathes, that swine and hogges hadden made, as lanes with ladels their mast to seche, I walked thinkinge alone a wonder great while, and the great beastes that the wood haunten, and adorneth all manner Forestes, and herdes gone to wilde: then ere I was ware, I neighed to a sea banke, and for feard of the beastes, shipcrafte I cryed: for ladie I trowe yee wete well your selfe, nothing is werse then the beastes that shoulden been tame, if they catch her wildenesse, and gine againe ware ramage: thus forsooth was I aferde, and to Shippe me hied. Then were there ynowe to lache myne handes, and draw me to a Shippe, of which many I knewe well the names. Sight was the firste, Lust was another, Thought was the thirde, and Will eke was there a Master: these broughten me within borde, of this Shippe of trauaile. So when the saile was sprade, and this Shippe gan to moue, the Winde and Water gan for to rise, and ouerthwartlye to tourne the welken, the wawes semeden as they kisse togither, but often vnder colour of kissinge, is mokell olde hate priuilye closed and kepte. The storme so strangely, and in a deuouring manner, ganne so fast vs assaile, that I supposed the date of my death, should haue made there his ginning, nowe vp, nowe downe, nowe vnder the wawe, and nowe abouen was my Shippe a greate while. And so by mokell duresse of weathers, of stormes, and with greate auowinge pilgrimages, I was driuen to an Ile, where vtterly I wende first to haue bee restowed, but truely at the first begunninge, it seemed mee so perillous, the hauen to catch, that but through grace I hadde beene comforted, of life I was full dispayred. Truely Ladie, if ye remember aright of all manner thinges, your selfe came hastilie to seen vs sea driuen, and to weten what wee weren: but firste ye were deinous of chere, after which ye gone better alight, and euer as mee thought, ye liued in great drede of disease, it seemed so by your chere. And when I was certified of your name, the lenger I looked on you, the more I you goodly dradde, and euer myne harte on you opened the more, and so in a little time, my Shippe was out of mynde.

But ladie as ye me lad, I was ware both of beastes & of fishes, a great nomber thronging togider: emonge whiche a Muskell in a blewe shel, had enclosed a Margarite Perle, the most precious & best that euer to forn came in my sight: and ye tolden your selfe, that like iewell in his kinde was so good and so vertuous, that her better shoulde I neuer finde, all sought I thereafter to the worldes ende, and with that I helde my peace a greate while: and euer sithen I haue mee bethought on the man that sought the precious Margarites, and when hee had founden one to his liking, he solde all his good to buy that iewell: I wis thought I, and yet so I thinke, nowe haue I founden the iewell that mine harte

harte desireth, whereto shoulde I seche further, truely nowe woll I stinte, and on this Margarette I sette me for euer. Nowe then also, sithen I wiste well it was your will, that I should so such a seruice mee take, and so to desire that thing, of which I neuer haue blisse, there liueth none, but hee hath disease: your might then that brought mee to such seruice, that to mee is cause of sorrowe and of ioye, I wonder of your worde that ye saine, to bringen men into ioye, and pardie ye woot wel that default ne trespas, may not reasonable beene put to me wardes, as ferre as my conscience knoweth: but of my disease mee list nowe a whyle to speake, and to enfourme you in what manner of blisse ye haue me throng. For truely I weene that all gladnesse, all ioy, and all mirthe is beshet vnder locke, and the keye throwen in such a place, that it may not bee founde: my brenninge who hath altered all my hewe. When I shoulde sleepe, I wallowe and I thinke, and mee disporte. Thus combred, I seeme that all folke had me mased. Also ladie mine, desire hath longe dured, some speakinge to haue, or els at the leaste haue been ennoised with sight: and for wanting of these thinges, my mouth woulde and he durst, pleine right sore, sithen euils for my goodnesse, arne manifolde to mee holden. I wonder Ladie truely, saue euermore your reuerence, howe ye mowe for shame suche thinges suffer on your seruaunt, to be so multiplyed: Wherefore kneeling with a lowe harte, I pray you to rewe on this caitife, that of nothing nowe may serue. Good Ladie, if you list nowe your helpe to mee shewe that am of your priuiest seruauntes, at all assaies in this tyme, and vnder your winges of protection. No helpe to mee wardes is shapen, howe shall then straungers in any wise after succour looke, when I that am so priuie, yet of helpe I doe faile. Further may I not, but thus in this prison abide: What bondes and chaines mee holden, Ladie, ye see well your selfe. A reniant forjudged hath not halfe the care. But thus sighing and sobbinge I waile here alone, and nere it for comfort of your presence, right here woulde I sterue. And yet a little am I gladded, that so goodly suche grace and none happe haue I hence, graciously to finde the precious Margarite, that all other lefte, men shoulde buye, if they shoulde therefore sell all her substaunce. Who is me that so many let games, and purpose breakers been maked waiters, suche prisoners as I am euermore, to ouerlook and to hinder, and for soche iettours, it is harde any soche iewell to winne. Is this Ladye an honour to thy deitie? Me thinketh by right, such people should haue no maistrye, ne beene ouerlookers, ouer none of thy seruauntes. Truely were it lefull vnto you, to all the Goddes would I plaine, that yee rule your Diume purueighaunce emonges your seruauntes, nothyng as yee should. Also Ladie my moeble is insufficiaunte, to counteruaile the price of this iewell, or els to make the eschaunge: eke no wight is worthie, suche pearles to weare, but kyngs or Princes, or els their peers: This iewell for vertue, would adorne and make faire all a realme, the nobley of vertue is so moche, that her goodnesse ouer all is commended. Who is it that would not wayle, but he myght soche riches haue at his wille, the vertue thereof out of this prisone may mee deliuer, and nought els. And if I bee not there thorowe holpen, I see my selfe withouten recouery: although I might hence voide, yet would I not, I would abide the date, that destenie hath mee ordained, whych I suppose is without amendmente, so sore is myne hearte bounden, that I may thinken none other. Thus straite (Ladie) hath sir Daunger laced mee in stockes, I leue it bee not your will: and for I see you taken so little heede, as me thinketh, and woll not maken by your myght, the vertue in mercy of the Margarite on me for to stretch, so as yee mowe well, in case that you list: my blisse and my myrth arne felde, sickenesse and sorowe been alwaye readye, the cope of tene is wounde aboute all my bodye, that standyng is me beste, vneth may I ligge for pure miseasie sorowe, and yet all this is little ynough, to bee the earnest sauer, in forward of this bargaine, for treble folde, so mokell must I suffer, er tyme come of myne ease. For hee is worthie no wealth, that may no woe suffer. And certes, I am heaue to thinke on these thynges, but who shall yeue mee water ynough to drinke, least mine eyen drie for rennyng streames of teares? Who shall wailen with mee myne owne happie heauinesse? Who shall counsaile mee nowe in my lyking tene, and in my goodlie harse? I not. For euer the more I brenne, the more I coueite: the more that I sorowe, the more thirst I in gladnesse. Who shall then yeue mee a contrarious drinke, to staunch the thurst of my blissfull bitternesse?

thus I brenne and I drench, I shiuer and I sweat, to this reuersed duell was neuer yet ordained salue, forsoth al liches ben vnconninge, saue the Margarite alone, any suche remedy to purueye.

And with these wordes I brast out to weepe, that euery teare of mine eyen for greatnesse seemed they boren out the bal of my sight, and that all the water hadde ben out ronne. Than thought me, that loue gan a little too heauy for miscomfort of my cheare, and gan soberly and in easy manner speak, wel auising what she said. Commonly the wise speaken easily and soft for many skilles: One is, their wordes are the better beleeued, and also in easie speakinge, auisement men maye catche, what to put forth, and what to holden in. And also the authority of easy words is the more, and eke they geuen the more vnderstanding to other intencion of the matter. Right so this Lady easely and in a soft manner, gan say these wordes.

Marualle (qd. she) great it is, that by no manner of semblant, as ferre as I can espy thou liste not to haue any recour, but euer thou playnest and sorrowest, and wayes of remedye for foolish wilfulnesse thee liste not to seeche: but enquire of thy next friendes, that is thine inwitte, and me that haue been thy maistresse, and the recour and fyne of thy disease, for of disease is gladnesse and ioy, with a ful vessel so helded, that it quencheth the feeling of the first teenes. But thou that were wonte not onely these thynges remember in thine heart, but also fooles therefof to enformen, in adnulling of their errours, and distroying of their darke opinions, & in comfort of their scare thoughts, nowe canst thou not beene comfort of thine owne soule, in thinking of these thyngs. O where hast thou ben so long commensall, that haste so mikell eaten of the potages of forgetfulnesse, and dronken so of ignorance that the olde souking which thou haddest of me, arne amaistred and lorne fro all maner of knowinge? O this is a worthy person to helpe other which cannot counsaile himselfe. And with these wordes for pure and strong shame I wox all reed.

And shee than seeing mee so astonied by diuers stoundes, sodainly (whiche thinge kynde hateth) gan deliciously me comfort with lugred wordes, putting me in ful hope that I shoulde the Margarite getten, if I followed her hestes, and gan with a faire clothe to wipen the teares that hungen on my cheekes: and than said I in this wise.

Nowe well of wisedome and of all wealth, withouten thee may nothing bern learned, thou bearest the keyes of all priuy thynges. In vaine trauaile men to catche any kedship, but if yee Lady first the locke vnbet, ye lady lern vs the waies and the bypathes to heauen: ye Lady maken all the heauenly bodies goodlye and benignely to done her course, that gouernen vs beestes here on earth. Ye armen your seruauntes ayenst all debates, with imperciable harneis, ye setten in her heartes insuperable blood of hardinesse, ye leaden hem to the parfite goode. Yet all thyng desireth, yee werre no man of helpe that wele done your lore, graunt mee nowe a little of your grace, all my sorowes to cease. Mine owne seruaunt (qd. she) trewly thou sittest nie mine heart, and thy badde cheare gan sorely me greue: but among thy plaining wordes, me thought thou allegest thinges to bee letting of thine helping, and thy grace to hinder, wherthrough me thinketh that wanhope is crope through thine heart: God forbid ỳ nice vntrusty thought shoulde come in thy minde thy wittes to trouble, sithen euery thyng in comming is contingent, wherefore make no more thy proposicion by an impossible. But now I pray thee rehearse me ayen tho thynges, that thy mistrust causen, and thilke thynges I thinke by reason to distroien, and put full hope in thine heart. What vnderstandest thou there (qd. she) by that thou saidest, many let games are thine ouerlookers. And also by that thy moeble is insufficaunt, I not what thou therefof meanest.

Truly (qd. I) by the first, I say that tanglers euermore arne speaking, rather of euill than of good, for euery age of man rather enclineth to wickednesse, thã any goodnesse to auaunce. Also false wordes springen so wide, by the stering of false lying tongues, that fame als swiftly flieth to her eares, and saieth many wicked tales, and as soone shal falsenesse ben leued as trouth, for all his great soothenesse. Now by that other (qd. I) me thinketh thilk iewel so precious ỳ to no such wretch as I am wouldе vertue therof extend, and also I am to feble in worldely ioyes, any such iewell to countervaile. For suche people that worldely

toles han at her will, been set at the high-
eſt degree, and moſt in reuerence ben accep-
ted, for falſe wening maketh felicite there-
in to bee ſuppoſed: but ſuche eaytiues as I
am euermore been hindred. Certes (qd. ſhe)
take good heed and I ſhal by reaſon to thee
ſhewen, that all theſe thinges nowe not let
thy purpoſe, by the leaſt point that any
wight could pricke.

REmembreſt nat (qd. ſhe) enſample is one of the ſtron-
geſt manner, as for to preue a mans purpoſe. Than if I
nowe by enſample enduce thee to any propoſicion, is it
nat proued by ſtrength. Yes forſooth (qd. I)
Well (qd. ſhe) raddeſt thou neuer how Paris of Troy and Helaine loued togider, and
yet had they not entercommuned of ſpeeche.
Alſo Acriſius ſhet Dane his doughter in a
Toure, for ſurety that no wight ſhould of
her haue no maiſtry in my ſeruice, and yet
Iupiter by ſignes without any ſpeeche, had
all his purpoſe ayenſt her fathers will. And
many ſuch mo haue ben knit in trouth, and
yet ſpake they neuer togider, for that is a
thing enclоſed vnder ſecre teneſſe of priuity,
why tway perſons entermellen hearts af-
ter a light. The power in knowing of ſuch
things ſo preuen, ſhal not all vtterly bee ye-
uen to you beeſtes, for many thynges in ſuch
precious matters, beene reſerued to iudge-
ment of deuine purueiaunce, for among li-
uing people by mans conſideracion mowen
they not be determined. Wherfore I ſay, all
the enuy, all the iangling, that welnie peo-
ple vpon my ſeruauntes maken efte, is ra-
ther cauſe of exploit, than of any hindring.
Why than (qd. I) ſuffer ye ſuch wrong, and
mowen when ye liſt, lightly al ſuch yuels a-
bate, me ſemeth to you it is a great vnwor-
ſhip. O (qd. ſhee) hold nowe thy peace, I haue
founde ſo many that han ben to me vnkind
that trewly I woll ſuffer euerye wight in
that wiſe to haue diſeaſe, and who that
continueth to the end well and trewly, hem
woll I helpen, and as for one of mine into
bliſſe to wend, as marciall doing in Greece.
Who was prowned, by God not the ſtron-
geſt, but hee that rathеſt come and lengeſt
abode and continued in the iourney, and
ſpared nat to trauaile as long as the play
leſt. But thilke perſon that profered him
nowe to my ſeruice therein is a while, and
anone boideth and ready to another, and ſo
nowe one hee thumbeth, and nowe another,
and into water entreth and anon reſpireth,
ſuche one liſe mee nat in to perſite bliſſe of
my ſeruice bring. A tree ofte ſette in diuerſe
places woll not by kinde endure to bring
forth fruites. Looke now I pray thee, how
myne olde ſeruauntes of tyme paſſed con-
tinued in her ſeruice, and followe thou after
their ſteppes, and than might thou not
faile, in caſe thou worche in this wiſe.
Certes (qd. I) it is nothing liche, this world
to time paſſed, eke this countrey hath one
maner, and another country hath another.
And ſo may not a man alway put to his eie,
the ſalue that hee healed with his hele. For
this is ſoothe, betwixe two thynges liche,
ofte diuerſity is required. Now (qd. ſhe) that
is ſoothe, diuerſity of nation, diuerſity of
lawe, as was maked by many reaſons, for
that diuerſity commeth in by the contrari-
ous malice of wicked people, that han en-
uious heartes ayenſt other. But trewly my
law to my ſeruauntes euer hath ben in ge-
nerall, whiche may not faile, for right as
mans lawes, that is ordained by many de-
terminations, may not bee knowe for good
or badde, till aſſay of the people han proued
it, and to what ende it draweth, and than is
ſhewеth the neceſſity thereof, or elſ the im-
poſſibility: Right ſo the lawe of my ſer-
uants ſo well hath been proued in general,
ỹ hitherto hath it not failed. Wiſt thou not
well that all the lawe of kinde is my lawe,
and by God ordained and ſtabliſhed to dure
by kinde reaſon, wherefore al law by mans
witte pueueyed, ought to bee vnderputte
to lawe of kinde, which yet hath be com-
mune to euery kindely creature, that my
ſtatutes and my lawe that beene kindely,
arne generall to all peoples. Olde doings,
and by many turninges of yeres vſed, and
with the peoples manner proued, mowen
not ſo lightly beene defaced, but newe do-
inges contrariauntes ſuche olde, often cau-
ſen diſeaſes and breaken many purpoſes.
Yet ſay I not therefore, that ayen new miſ-
chiefe, men ſhould not ordainen a new re-
medye, but alway looke it contrary not the
olde, no ferther than the malice ſtretcheth.
Than followeth it, the olde doinges in loue
han been vniuerſall, as for moſt exploite for
thee vſed: Wherefore I wol not yet that of
my lawes nothing be annulled.

But than to thy purpoſe, ſoch tan-

glers and lookers, and waiters of games, if they thinke in ought they mow deere, yet loue wel away, and set hem at nought, and lette thy porte been lowe in euery wightes presence, and ready in thine heart to maine-taine that thou hast begon, and a little thee faine with meekenesse in wordes, and thus with sleight shalte thou surmount and de-quace the yuell in their heartes. And wise-dome yet is to seeme slie other while there a manne wol sight. Thus with such things, the tongues of yuell shall beene stilled: eis fully to graunte thy full meaning, forsoothe euer was and euer it shal be, that mine enemies been afeared to trust to any fighting: and therefore haue thou no cowardes hart in my seruice, no more than sometime thou haddest in ỳ contrary, for if thou dredest such tanglers thy voiage to make: vnderstande well, that he that dredeth any rayne to sowe his cornes, he shall haue thinne bernes, also he that is aferd of his cloths, let him dance naked. Who nothing vndertaketh, nauely in my seruice nothing acheueth. After great stormes the wether is often mery and smooth. After much clattering, there is mo-kell rowning: thus after iangling wordes commeth huilshte, peace and be still. O good Lady (qd. I than) see now how seuen yeare passed and more, haue I grafted and grou-bed a vine, and with all the waies that I coud, I sought to a fede me of the grape, but fruite haue I none found. Also I haue this seuē year serued Laban to awedded Rachel his doughter, but blere eied Lia is brought to my bedde, whiche alway engendreth my tene, & is full of childzen in tribulacion and in care: and although the clippinges & kis-sings of Rachell should seeme to mee sweet, yet is she so barraine, that gladnesse ne ioye by no way woll spring, so that I may wepe with Rachell, I maye not beene counsailed with solace, sithen issue of mine heartely de-sire is failed. Nowe than I pray that to me some freedome and grace, in this eight yere, this eightethe mowe to mee both by kinrest and masseday after these seuen werk dayes of trauaile, to follow the Christen law: and what euer ye doe els, that thilk Margarite bee holden so Lady in your priuye chamber, that she in this case, to none other person be committed. Looke than (qd. she) in this cace to none other person be committed: Looke than (qd. she) thou perseuer in my seruice, in which I haue thee grounded, that thilke scorn in thy enemies mow this on thy per-son be not soothed: lo this man began to e-difie, but for his foundement is bad, to the end may he it not bring. For meekenesse in countenaunce, with a manly heart in deeds and in long continuaunce, is the contisaunce of my liuery, to all my retinue deliuered. What wenst thou that me list auaunce such persons as louen the first sittings at feestes, the highest stooles in churches and in hall, loutings of peopies in markets and faires, vnstedfast to bide in one place any while to-gider, wening his owne wit more excellent than other, scorning all manner deuise but his own: Nay nay God wot, these shul no-thing parten of my blisse. Truely my man-ner here tofore hath ben, worship with my blisse, Lions in the fielde, and lambes in chamber, Egles at assault, and maidens in halfe, foxes in counsaile, stil in their deedes, and their protection is graunted ready to been a bridge, and their banes is areted like wolues in the fyelde. Thus by these wayes shul men ben auaunced: ensample of Dauid that from keeping of sheepe, was drawn vp into the order of kingly gouernaunce, and Jupiter from a bole to been Europes feare, and Julius Cesar from the lowest degre in Rome, to be master of all earthly Princes, and Eneas from hell, to be king of the coun-try there Rome is nowe standing. And so to thee I say thy grace by bering thereafter, may set the in such plight, that no iangling may greeue the least tucke of thy hemmes, that are their ianghes, is nought to counte at a cresse in thy disauauntage.

HEr (qd. she) hath the people in this worlde desired to haue had greate name in worthinesse, and hated foule to beare any fame, and that is one of the obiections thou allegeh to bee a-yen thine heartely desire. Ye forsooth (qd. I) and that so comenly the people woll lie and bring aboute suche enfame. Now (qd. she) if men with leasinges put on the enfame, we-nest thy selfe thereby ben empeired, that we-ning is wrong, se why, for as much as they lien thy merite encreaseth, and make thee beene more worthy to hem that knowen of the soothe, by what thing thou art apeired, that in so mokell thou arte encreased of thy beloued frendes: and soothly a wounde of thy friend to the lasse harme, ye sir, and bet-ter than a false kissing in discreuable glo-

ling of thine enemy, aboue that than to bee well with thy friende maketh soch enfame. Ergo thou art encreased and not apeired. Lady (qd. I) sometime yet if a man be in disease, the estimacion of the enuious people, ne looketh nothing to desertes of men, ne to the merites of their domges, but onely to the auenture of fortune, and thereafter they yeuen their sentence. And some looken the voluntary will in his hearte, and thereafter telleth his iudgemēt, not taking hede to reason ne to the qualitye of the doyng, as thus. If a man bee rich and fulfilled with worldly welefulnesse, some commenden it, & sain it is so lent by iustice cause, and he that hath aduerlity, they sain he is weaked, and hath deserued thilke annoy. The contrary of these thinges some men holden also, and sain that to the rich, prosperity is purueyed into his confusyon, and vpon this matter, many autorities, of many and great witted clerkes they allegen. And some men saine, though all good estimacion forsaken folke that han aduerlity, yet is it merite and encrease of his blisse, so that these purposes arne so wonderfull in vnderstondyng, that trewly for mine aduerlity, now I not howe the sentence of the indifferent people will iudgen my fame. Therefore (qd. shee) if any wight should yeue a trewe sentence on soche matters, the cause of the disease maiest thou see well, vnderstande therebpon after what ende it draweth, that is to sayne good or bad, so ought it haue his fame, or by goodnesse enfame by badnesse: for euery reasonable persone, and namely of a wise man, his witte ought not without reason tofore heard, sodainly in a matter to iudge. After the sawes of the wise, thou shalte not iudge ne deme tofore thou know. Lady (qd. I) ye remember well that in most laud and praising of certaine saintes in holy churche, is to rehearsen theyr conuersacion from badde into good, and that is so rehersed, as by a perpetuall myrrour of remembraunce in worshipping of tho saints, and good ensample to other misdoers in amendement. How turned the Romaine zedcories fro the Romaines, to be with Hannibal ayenst his kind nacion: And afterwardes him seeming the Romains to be at the next degre of confusion, turned to his olde alies, by whose wit after was Hanibal discomfited. Wherfore to enforme you Lady, the manner, why I meane, see now in my youth I was draw to be assentaunt, and in my nights helping to certaine conuiracions, and other greate matters of ruling of Citezins, and thilke thinges beene my drawers in, and cytours to tho matters werne so painted and coloured, that at the prime face, me seemed them noble and glorious to al the people: I than wening mikell merite, haue deserued in furthering and maintenaunce of tho thynges, beried and laboured with all my diligence, in werking of thilke matters to the end. And trewly Lady to tell you the sooth, me rought little of any hate of the mightye Senatours in thilke city, ne of communes malice, for two skils: One was I had comfort to beene in suche plite, that both profite were to me & to my frendes. Another was, for commen profite in communalty, is not but peace and tranquility, with iust gouernaunce proceden from thilke profite, sithen by counsaile of mine inwitte, me thought the first painted thynges, malice and cull meaning, withouten any good availyng to any people: and of tyrannye purposed, and so for pure sorrowe and of my medling, and badde infame that I was in ronne, tho teares lashed out of mine eyen, were thus awaye washe, thanne the vnder hidde malice and the rancoure of purposing enuye forecast and ymagined, in distruction of mokell people, shewed so openly, that had I ben blind, with mine hands all the circumstaunce I might wel haue feled.

Now than tho persones that soch thinges haue cast to redresse, for wrath of my firste meddling, shopen mee to dwell in this pynande prison, till Lachases my threde no lenger would twein. And euer I was sought, if mee list to haue grace of my lyfe, and freenesse of that prison, I should openly confesse howe peace might been enduced to enden all the firste rancours. It was fully supposed, my knowing to be ful in tho matters. Than Lady I thought that euery man that by any way of right, rightfully done, may helpe any commune helpe to been saued, whiche thing to keepe aboue all thynges I am hold to maintaine, and namely in distroying of a wrong, all should I therethrough enpech mine owne feare, if he were guilty, and to do misdede assentant. And mayster ne friende maye nought auaile, to the soule of him that in falsenesse deieth, and also that I nere desired wrath of the people, ne indignacio of the worthy, for

nothing

nothyng that euer I wrought or did, in any doings my selfe els, but in the maintenance of these forsaide errours, and in hiding of the pruities thereof.

And that all the peoples hearts holding on the errours side, weren blinde and of eld so ferforth beguiled, that debate and strife they maintained, and in distruccion on that other side, by which cause the peace, that most in communalty should be desired, was in point to be broken and annulled. Also the citye of London that is to me so deare and sweet, in which I was foorth growen and more kindly loue haue I to that place, than to any other in yerth, as euery kindly creature hath full appetite to that place of his kindly engendrure, and to wilne rest & peace in that steade to abide: thilke peace should thus there haue bene broken, & of all wise it is commended & desired. For knowe thing it is, all menne that desiren to comen to the parfite peace euerlasting, must the peace by God commended, both maintaine and kepe. This peace by Angels voice was confirmed, our God entring in this worlde. This as for his Testament hee lefte to all his friends, when he retourned to the place from whence hee came: This his Apostle admonesteth to holden, without whych man parfitely may haue none insight. Also this God by his comming, made not peace alone betweene heauenly and yearthly bodies, but also among vs on yearth, so he peace confirmed, that in one head of loue, one body wee should perfourme. Also I remember wel how the name of Athens was rather after the God of peace, than of battel, shewing that peace most is necessary to cõmunalties and cities. I than so stered by all these wayes forsome nempned, declared certaine pointes in this wise. First that thilke persones that hadden me drawen to their purposes, and me not witting the priuy intent of their meaning, drawen also the feoble witted people, that haue none insight of gubernatife prudẽce, to clamure and to cry on matters that they stired, & vnder points for commune auantage, they enbolded the pallue to take in the actiues doing, and also stirred innocentes of comming to cric after things, which (qd. they) may not stande but we ben executours of tho maters, and auctority of execucion, by comen election to vs bee delinered, & that must enter by strength of your maintenaunce, for wee out of surhe degree put, oppression of these old hinderers shall againe surmounten and putten you in suche subiection, that in endlesse wo ye shull complaine. The gouernments (qd. they) of your citee left in the handes of forcencious citezeins, shall bring in pestilence and distruction to you good menne, and therefore let vs haue the comune admmistracion to abate such yuels. Also (qd. they) it is worthy the good to commend, & the guilty deserters to chastice. There beene citezeins many forherd of execucion ỹ shall be done, for extorcions by hem cõmitted been euermore ayenst these purposes, and al other good menings. Neuer the later lady, trewly the meaning vnder these words, was fully to haue apeched the mighty senatours. whiche hadden heauy hearte for the misgouernaunce that they seene. And so lady, whan it fell that free election, by great clamour of muche people, for great disease of misgouernaunce so feruently stooden in her election, that they hem submitted to euery manner face, rather than haue suffered the manner and the rule of the hated gouernours, notwithstanding that in the contrary helden much commune meiny, that haue no consideracion, but only to voluntary lustes withouten reason. But than thilke gouernour so forsaken, fayning tofore his vndoing for misrule in his time, shope to haue ietted thilk election, and haue made a newe himselfe to haue beene chosen, and vnder that mokell rore haue arered. These thinges Ladye knowen among the Princes, & made open to the people, draweth in amendement, that euery degree shall beene ordained to stand there as he should, and that of errours comming hereafter, mẽ may lightly tofore hand purvey remedye, in this wise, pace and rest to bee furthered and hold. Of the which things Lady, thilk persons brought ten in answer tofore their most soueraine iudge, not coarted by payning dures openly knowlegeden and asked thereof grace, so that apertly it preueth my wordes beene such without forging of leasings.

But now it greueth me to remẽbre these diuers sentences, in iangling of these sheepy people: certes me thinketh they oughten to maken ioy that a sooth may be knowe. For my trouth and my conscience been witnesse to me both, that this knowing soothe haue I sayde for no harme, ne malice of tho persones, but onely for trouth of my sacrament

in my liegeaunce, by which I was charged on my kings behalfe. But see ye not nowe Lady, how the fellonous thoughts of this people, and couins of wicked men, conspiren ayen my soothfast trouth. See ye not euery wight that to these erronious opinions, were assentaunt and helps to the noise, and knewen all these thinges better than I myselfen, apparaillen to finden newe freundes, and cleapen me false, and studien how they mowen in her mouths worse plite nempne. O God, what may this be, that thilke folk which that in time of my maintenance, and whan my might auailed to stretch to ỳ forsaid matters, tho me commended, and yaue me name of truth, in so manifold meaners, ỳ it was nigh in euery wights cares, there as any of thilke people weren: and on the other syde, thilk company sometime palled, yeuing me name of badde loos. Nowe both tho peoples tourned the good into bad, and badde into good, which thing is wonder, that they knowyng me saying but soth am now tempted to replye her old praysinges, and knowen me wel in all doinges to been trew, and sain openly that I false haue said many thyngs. And they alledged nothing me to ben false or untrew, saue thilke matter knowledged by the parties hem selfe: and God wot other matter is none. Ye also lady know these thinges for trew, I ausunt not in praising of my selfe, thereby should I lese the precious secre of my conscience. But ye see well that false opinion of the people for my trouth, in telling out of false compired matters, and after the iudgement of these clerks I should not hide the soth of no maner person, maister ne other, wherefore I would not drede, were it put in the consideration of trew and of wise. And for comers hereafter shullen fully out of denwere, all the sooth know of these thinges in acte, but as they werne, I haue put it in scripture, in perpetuall remembrance of true meaning. For truly Lady me semeth, that I ought to beare the name of trouth, that for the loue of rightwisenesse haue thus me submitten: But nowe than the false fame whyche that clerkes fain flieth as fast as dooth the fame of trouth, shall so wide spread, till it be brought to the te well that I of meane, and so shal I been hindred withouten any measure of trouth.

Than gan Loue sadly me behold, & said in a changed voice, lower thã shee had spoken in any time. Faine would I (qd. shee) that thou were holpen, but haste thou saied any thing, which thou might not prouen? Parde (qd. I) the persons euery thing as I haue said, han knowledged hemself. Yea (qd. she) but what if they hadden naied, how wouldest thou haue maintained it. Soothly (qd. I) it is wel wist both amongst the greatest, and other of the realme, that I profered my body so largely into proning of tho things, that Mars should haue iudged the end: but for loothnesse of my words they durst not to thilke iudge trust. Nowe certes (qd. shee) aboue all fames in this world, the name of marciall doinges most pleasen to Ladies of my lore, but sithen thou were ready, & thine aduersaries in thy presence refused thilk doing, thy fame ought to bee so borne, as if in deed it had take to the end. And therefore euery wight that any droppe of reason hath, and heareth of the infame, for these thinges hath this answere to say: trewly thou saidest for thine aduersaries thy wordes affirmed. And if thou haddest lied, yet are they discomfited, the prise leaned on thy side, so that fame shall hold downe infame, he shall bring vpon none half. What greeueth thee thine enemy to fame their owne shame, as thus: We arn discomfited, and yet our quarel is true. Shal not the loos of thy frends, ayenward dequaer thilke enfame, and saye they graunted a soothe without a stroke or fighting. Many men in battell ben discomfited and ouercome in a rightfull quarrell, that is goddes priuy iudgement in heauen: but yet although the party be yolden, he may with wordes say his quarell is trewe, & to yeelde him in the contrary for dread of death, he is compelled, and hee that graunteth & no stroke hath fried, he may not crepe away in this wise, by none excusacion. Indifferent folke will say, ye who is trew, who is false himselfe knowledgeth tho thinges. Thus in euery side fame sheweth to ỳ good and no bad. But yet (qd. I) some will say I ne shoulde for no death haue discouered my maistresse, and so by vnkindnesse they woll knet infame to pursue me about: thus enemies of will in manifold maner wol seech priuy serpentines queintises, to quench and di-

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stroy venime of many businesses, the light of truth, to make harts to murmure ayenst my person, to haue me in haine, withouten any cause. Nowe (qd. she) heare me a fewe wordes, and thou shalt fully beene answered, I trowe. Me thinketh (qd. shee) right nowe by thy woordes, that Sacrament of swearing, that is to say, charging by othe, was one of the causes, to make thee discouer, the malicions imaginations tofore nempned, euery oth by knitting of copulacion, must haue these lawes. That is true iudgement and rightwisenesse, in whiche thing, if any of these lacke, the othe is iturned into the name of periury: then to make a true serment, must needs these things follow, for oft times a manne to say sooth, but iudgement & iustice follow, he is forsworne: ensample of Herodes for holding of his serment, was dampned.

Also to saye trueth right fulliche, but in iudgement otherwhile is forboden, by that all soothes ber not to saine. Therefore in iudgement, in truth, and rightwisenesses, is euery creature bounden vp paine of periury full knowing to make, tho it were of his owne person, for dread of sinne, after that word better it is to deye, then liue false, and all woulde peruerted people, false reporte make in vnkindnes, in that intent thy fame to reise, when light of trueth in these matters is forth sprongen, and openly published among commons, then shall not soche darke enfame dare apere, for pure shame of his falsenesse, as some men there been that their own enfame can none otherwise void, or els excuse, but be hindring of other mens fame, which that by none other cause, cleapen other men fals, but for with their owne falsnes mowen they not been anaunsed, or els by false sclandring wordes, other menne shendin their owne true sclaunder, to make seme the lasse, for if soch men woulden their yen of their conscience reuolven, shoulden seen the same sentence, they legen on other spying out of their sides, with so many brãches, it wer impossible to nõber. The which therefore may it be saied in that thing, this man thou demest, therin thy selfe thou condẽnest. But (qd. she) vnderstand not by these words that thou wene me say thee, to bee worthy slander, for any matter tofore written truly I would witnes the contrary, but I say that the beames of slaundring words may not been doden awaye, till the dayr of dome. For how should it not yet emongs so great plenty of people, been many shrewes, sithen when no mo but eight persones, in Noes ship wer closed, yet one was a shrew, and scorned his father. These thinges (qd. she) I trow, shewen that false fame is not to drede, ne of wise persons to accept, & namely not of thy Margarite, whose wisedome hereafter I thinke to declare, wherefore I wot wel soch thing shall not her astert, then of vnkindnesse, thine othe hath thee excused at the full. But now if thou wouldest not greue, mee list a fewe thinges to shewe. Say on (qd. I) what yee woll, I trow yee meane but trouth, and my profit in time cõming. Truly (qd. she) that is soothe, so thou con well kepe these words, and in the inrest secrete chamber of thine heart, so faste hem close, that they neuer flitte, then shalt thou find hem auailing. Looke now what people hast thou serued, which of hem all in time of thine exile euer thee refreshed, by the value of the least coined plate, that walketh in mony. Who was sorie, or made any ruth for thy disease if they hadden getten their purpose of thy misaucenture, sette they not an haw. Lo when thou wer imprisoned how fast they hied in help of thy deliueräce. I wene of thy death, they yeue but lite: thei looked after nothing, but after their owne lustes. And if thou list say the sothe, al that meny that in this brugge thee broughten, lokeden rather after thine helpes, then thee to haue relieued.

Owen not yet some of hem mony for his commons? Paidest not thou for some of her dispences, till they were turned out of Scland? Who yaue thee euer ought, for any riding thou maidest? Yet pardie, some of hem tooken mony for thy chamber, and put tho pens in his purse, vnweting of the renter.

Lo, for which a company thou medlest, that neither thee, ne themselfe mighten help of vnkindnesse, now they beate the name, that thou supposest of hẽ for to haue. What might thou more haue done, then thou diddest, but if thou wouldest in a false quarrell, haue beene a stinking martyr? I wene thou fleddest as long as thou might, their priuity to counsaile, which thing thou helest lenger then thou wouldest. And the like that ought thee money, no pennye woulde paye, they wend thy returne had ben an impossible. How mist thou better haue hem proued

but thus in thy nedy diseases: Now haste thou ensample, for whome thou shalt meddle: truly this love is worthy many goods.

O Ft gan love to stern me these wonders, think on my speech, for truely hereafter, it woll doue thee liking, and howsoeuer thou se Fortune shape her wheele to turne, this meditacion by no way reuolue. For certes fortune sheweth her fairest, whē she thinketh to beguile. And as me thought here tofore, thou saidest thy loos in loue, for thy rightwisenes ought to be raised, should be alowed in time comming. Thou might in loue so thee haue, that loos & fame shul so been raised, that to thy frends comfort, and sorow to thine enimies, endelesse shul indure.

But if thou were that one shepe emongs the hundred, were lost in desart, and out of the waye had erred, and now to the flocke art restored, the Shepheard hath in thee no ioy, and thou ayen to the Forrest tourne. But that right as the sorrow and anguish was great, in time of thine outway going, right so ioye and gladnes shall be doubled, to seene thee conuerted, and not as Lothes wife ayen looking, but hoole counsail with the Sheepe following, & with them grasse and herbs gader. Neuer the later (qd. shee) I say not these things for no wantrust that I haue, in supposing of thee otherwise then I should. For truely I wote wel, that now thou art set in soche a purpose, out of which thee list not to part. But I say it, for many menne there been that to knowing of other mens doings, setten all their cure, & lightly desiren the badde to clatter, rather then the good, and haue no will their owne manner to amend. They also hate of olde rancour lightly hauen, and there that suche thing abideth, sodainly in their mouthes proceedeth the habundance of the hert, & wordes as stones, stones out throw. Wherfore my counsaile is euermore, openly and apertly, in what place thou sit, counterplete therrors and menings, in as ferre as thou hem wistest false, & leaue for no wight, to make hem be know in euery bodies eare, and bee alway pacient, and vse Jacobs wonders, whatsoeuer men of thee clappen, I shall sustain my ladies wrath, which I haue deserued, so long as my Margarite hath rightwised my cause. And certes (qd. she) I witnes my selfe, if thou thus conuerted, sorowest in good mening in thine hert, woldest from all vanitie partitely depart, in consolacion of all good pleasaunce of that Margarite, which that thou desirest after will of thine hert, in a maner of a mothers pity, shull fully accept thee into grace. For right as thou rentest clothes in open sight, so openly to sow hem at his worshippe, withouten reproue commended. Also right as thou were ensample of much fold errour, right so thou must be ensample of manifolde correction, so good fauour to forgoing al error destroying, causeth diligent loue, with many planted praisings to followe, and then shall all the first errours, make the following worshippes, to seeme hugely encreased, blacke and white set togider, euery for other more seemeth, and so doth euery things contrary in kinde. But infame that goeth alway tofore, and praising worshipp by any cause following after, maketh to rise thilke honour, in double of wealth, and that quencheth the spot of the first infame. Why wenest I say these thinges, in hindering of thy name? Nay nay God wote, but for pure increasing worshippe, thy rightwisenes to commende, and thy trouth to seene the more. Wost not well thy selfe, that thou in forme of making, passeth not Adame, that eate of the apple. Thou passeth not the stedfastnes of Noe, that eating of the grape become dronke. Thou passest not the chastitie of Lothe, that lay by his doughter. Eke the nobley of Abraham, whom God reproued by his pride. Also Dauids mekenes, which for a woman made Urie be slaw. What also Hector of Troy, in whom no defaut mizt be found, yet is he reproued that he ne had with máhood, not suffered the war begon: ne Paris to haue went into Grece, by whō ganne all the sorrow: for truely him lacketh no venime of prime consenting, which that openly leueth a wrong to withstay. To eke an old prouerb, emong many other. He that is still, semeth as he graunted.

Now by these ensamples, thou might fully vnderstand, that these things been writ to your lerning, and in rightwisenes of tho persones, as thus: To euery wight his defaut committed, made goodnesse afterwards doen, be the more in reuerence, & more shewing: for ensample, is it not song in

holy

holy church. Lo how necessary was Iudas time, Dauid the king gatte Salomon the king of her that was Uries wife. Truely for reproofe, is none of these things writte: Right so tho I rehearse thy before deede, I reproue thee neuer the more, ne for no villanie of thee, as they rehersed, but for worship so thou continue well hereafter, & for profit of thy selfe, I rede thou on hem thinke.

Then saied I right thus. Lady of vnitie and accord, enuie and wrath lurken, there thou commest in place, ye weren well your selue, and so doeth many other, that while I administred the office of common doing, as in ruling of the stablishmentes emongs the people, I defouled neuer my conscience for no manner deede, but euer by wit and by counsaile of the wisest, the matters were drawen to their right ends. And thus truly for you ladye, I haue desired such cure, and certes in your seruice was I not idle, as far as such doing of my cure stretcheth. That is a thing (qd. thee) that may drawe many harts of noble, & voice of cõmon into glory, and fame is not but wretched and fickle.

Alas, that mankind couteth in so lende a wise, to be rewarded of any good deede, sith glory of Fame in this world, is not but hindering of glory in time comming. And certes (qd. she) yet at the hardest, such fame into heauen, is not the yearth but a centre to the circle of heauen. A pricke is woonder little, in respect of all the circle, and yet in all this pricke maye no name be borne, in manner of persing, for many obstacles, as waters and wildernesse. and straunge languages, and not onely names of men been stilled, and holden out of knowledging, by these obstacles, but also cities and realmes of prosperity, been letted to be knowe, and their reason hindred, so that they mow not been parfitly in mennes proper vnderstanding. How should than the name of a singular londenoys, passe the glorious name of London, which by many it is commended and by many it is lacked, and in many mo places in yearth not knowen, then knowen: for in many countries, little is Londõ in knowing, or in speeche, and yet among one manner of people may not suche fame in goodnesse come, for as many as praisen, cõmonly as many lacken. Fie then on such maner fame. slepe and suffer him that knoweth priuity of harts, to deale such fame in thilke place, there nothing ayenst a sothe shal neither speake ne dare apere, by attorney, ne by other manner. How many great named, and many great in worthines losed, han be tofore this time, that now out of memory are sidden, and cleanly forgotten, for defaut of writinges, and yet scriptures for great eld, so been defaced, that no perpetualtie may in hem been iudged. But if thou wolt make cõparison to euer, what ioye maiest thou haue in yearthly name, it is a faire likenesse, a pees or one graine of wheat, to a thousande shippes full of corne charged. What nomber is betweene the one and the other, and yet mowe both they bee nombred, and end in reckening haue. But truly all that may be nombred, is nothing to recken, as to thilk that may not be nombred, for oft things ended is made comparison, as one little, an other greate, but in thinges to haue an ende, and an other no ende, soch comparison may not be founden, Wherefore in heauen to been loosed, with God hath none ende, but endlesse endureth, and thou canste nothing doen aright, but thou desire the rumour thereof bee healed, and in euery wights care, and that dureth but a pricke, in respect of the other. And so thou seekest reward of folkes, smal words, and of vaine praisinges. Trewly therein thou lesest the guerdon of vertue, and lesest the greatest valour of conscience, and vnhap thy renome euerlasting. Therefore boldly renome of fame, of the yearth should be hated, and fame after death should be desired, of werkes of vertue asketh guerdoning. & the soule causeth all vertue. Than the soule deliuered out of prison of yearthe, is moste worthye soche guerdon emong, to haue in the euerlasting fame, and not the body, that causeth all mans euils.

IF twey things art thou answered, as me thinketh (qd. Loue) and if any thing be in doubt in thy soule, shewe it foorth thyne ignorannce to cleare, and leaue it for no shame. Certes (qd. I) there ne is no body in this world, that aught could say by reason ayenst any of your skilles, as I leue, and by my witte nowe scle I well, that euill speakers, or bearers of enfame, may little greue or let my purpose, but rather by soche thing my quarell to be furthered. Yea (qd. she) and it is prooued also, that the ilke iewell in my

keeping

keeping shall not there through bee stered, of the lest moment that might be imagined. That is sooth (qd. I.) Well (qd. she) then leneth there, to declare þ thy insufficiaunce, is no mauer letting, as thus, for that she is so worthy, thou shouldest not climbe so high, for thy moebles and thine estate nrn voided thou thinkest fallen in suche misery, that gladnesse of thy pursute, wol not on thee difrend. Certes (qd. I) that is soth: right such thought is in mine heart, for commonly it is spoken, and for an olde prouerbe it is ledged: he that heweth to hie, with chippes he may lese his sight. Wherefore I haue beene about in all that euer I might, to studye wayes of remedy, by one side or by another. Now (qd. she) God forbede, er thou lese any other doynges, but suche as I haue learned thee in our resting whiles, and such hearbs as ben planted in our Gardins. Thou shalt wel understand, that aboue man is but one God alone. How (qd. I) han men tofore this time, trusted in writs & chauntments, and in helpes of Spirites, that dwellen in the aire, and thereby they han getten their desires, where as first for all his manly power he daunced behind.

O (qd. she) fie on suche matters, for truely that is sacrilege, and that shal haue no fort with any of my seruauntes, in mine eyen shall such thing not be loked after. How often is it commaunded by these passed wise, that to one God shall men serue, and not to gods. And who that list to haue mine helps, shall aske none help of foule spirits. Alas, is not man maked semblable to God? Wost thou not well, that all vertue of liueliche working by Gods purueiaunce, is vnderput to reasonable creature in yearth is not euery thing a thilshalfe God? Made buxome to mannes contemplation, understanding in heauen, and in earth, & in hell. Hath not man being with stones, soule of wexing with trees and hearbes.

Hath he not soule of feling, with beastes fishes, and fowles, and hee hath soule of reason, and vnderstãding with Angels, so that in him is knitte all manner of liuings, by a reasonable proporcion. Also man is made of all the fower Elementes. All vniuersitie is reckened in him alone: he hath vnder god principality aboue all thinges. Now is his soule here, now a thousand mile hence, now farre, now nigh, nowe high, now low, as farre in a moment, as in mountenaunce of tenne winter, and al this is in mannes gouernaunce and disposicion. Then sheweth it, that menne been liche vnto Goddes, and childzen of most height. But now sithen all thinges vnderput. to the will of reasonable creatures, God forbid any man to win that Lordship, and aske help of any thing, lower then himself, & then namely of foule thynges innominable.

Now then, why shouldest thou wene to loue to high, sithen nothing is thee aboue, but God alone, truly I wot well, that thilk iewell is in a manner, euen in line of degree, there thou art thy selue, and nought aboue, saue thus. Angell vpon Angell, man vpon man, and Deuill vpon Deuil, han a maner of Souerainty, & that shall cease at the day of Dome: and so I say, though thou bee put to serue thilke iewell, during thy life, yet is that no seruage of vnderputting, but a maner of trauailing pleasance, to conquer and get that thou hast not.

I set now the hardest in my seruice, now thou deidest for sorrowe, of wanting in thy desires: Truely all heauenly bodies, with one voyce shall come, and make melodie in thy comming, and say welcome our fere, and worthie to enter into Iupiters ioy, for thou with mighte hast ouercome death, thou wouldest neuer sitte out of thy seruice, and we all shall now pray to the Goddes, rowe by row, to make the like Margarite, that no routh had in this person, but vnkindely without comfort lette thee deie, shall beset her selfe in soch wise, that in yearth for part of vengeance, shall she no ioy haue in loues seruice: and when shee is dead, then shall her soule been brought vp into thy presence, and whider thou wilt chese, the like soule shall been committed. Or else after thy death, anone all the forsaide heauenly bodies by one accorde, shall be nommen from thilke pearle, all the vertues that first her were taken, for she hath hem forfaited, by that on thee my seruaunt, in thy liue shee would not suffer to worke al vertues, withdrawen by might of the high bodies: why then shouldest thou wene so any more. And if thee list to looke vpon the lawe of kinde, and with order, whiche to me was ordained, soothly none age, none ouertourning time, but hitherto had no time ne power, to chaunge the wedding, ne that knotte to vnbinde of two hearts, through one assent in my presence, togither accorden to endure

till

till death hem depart. What trowest thou euery ideot wotte the meaning and the priuie intent of these thinges? They wenefor-sooth, that soche accord may not be, but the Rose of maidenhead bee plucked, doe waie doe way, they know nothing of this: for con-sent of two heartes alone, maketh the faste-ning of the knot, neither law of kind ne mans lawe, determineth neither the age, ne the qua-litie of personnes, but onely accord betweene thilke tway. And truely, after time that such accorde, by their consent in heart, is enseled and putte in my treasorie, emongs my priuie thinges: than ginneth the name of spousaile, and although they breaken forwarde both, yet soche matter enseled is kept in remem-braunce for euer. And see now that spouses haue the name anon after accord, though the Rose be not take. The Aungell bad Joseph take Marie his spouse, and to Egypt wend: Loe, she was cleped Spouse, and yet tofore ne after, neither of hem both meant no flesh-ly luste knowe: wherefore the woordes of trouth accorden, that my seruauntes shoul-den forsake both father and mother, and bee adherand to his spouse, and they twaine in v-nitie of one flesh, shoulden accorde. And this wise two that weren first, in a little manner disacordaunte, higher that one, and lower that other, been made euenliche in gree to stond.

But nowe to enforme thee, that yee been lich to Goddes, these clerkes sain, and in de-terminacion shewen, that three things hauen the names of Goddes been cleaped, that is to saine: Man, Deuil, and Images, but yet is there but one GOD, of whome all good-nesse, all grace, and all vertue commeth, and hee is louing and true, and euerlasting, and prime cause of all beeing thinges: but men been goddes louing and true, but not euerla-sting, and that is by adopcion of the euerla-sting God. Deuils been goddes, stirring by a manner of liuing, but neither been they true, ne euerlasting, and their name of godlihede they han by vsurpacion, as the Prophet sai-eth: All Goddes of Gentiles, that is to say, Painyms, are Deuils. But Images been Goddes by nuncupacion, and they been nei-ther liuing ne true, ne euerlasting: After these woordes they clepen Gods, Images wrought with mens hands.

But nowe reasonable creature, that by a-doption alone, art to the great GOD euer-lasting, and thereby thou art God cleaped: let thy fathers manners so enter thy wittes, that thou might follow, in as much as long-eth to thee thy fathers worship, so that in nothing thy kinde from his will decline, ne from his nobley peruerte. In this wise if thou werche, thou art aboue all other thinges saue GOD alone, and so say no more thine hart, to serue in to hie a place.

FInally haue I nowe declared, thine estate to be good, so thou followe thereafter, and that the obiection first be thee alled-gen, in worthines of thy Margarite, shall not thee let, as it shall further thee, and encrease thee, it is now to declare, the last obiection in nothing may grieue. Yes certes (qd. I) both grieue, and let must it needs, the contrary may not been pro-ued, and se now why.

While I was glorious in worldly wele-fulnesse, and had soche goodes in wealth, as maken menne rich, tho was I drawe into compaignies that loos, prise, and name pe-uen: Tho louteden blasours, tho curteiden glosours, tho welcomeden flatterers, tho wor-shipped thilke, that now deinen not to looke. Euery wight in soche yearthly weale habun-daunt, is holde noble, precious, benigne, and wise, to doe what he shall, in any degree that men him set, all be it that the sothe be in the contrary of all tho thinges: but he that can, ne neuer so well him behaue, and hath ver-tue haboundant, in manifolde manners, and be not wealthed with soch yearthly goodes, is holde for a foole, and saide his witte is but sotted. Loe how false for auerre is hold true. Loe how true is cleaped false, for wanting of goods. Also Ladie, dignities of office, ma-ken menne mikell commended, as thus: He is so good, were hee out, his peere should men not finde. Truly I trowe of some soche that are so praised, were they out ones, an other should make him so be knowe, he should of no wise no more been looked after: but onely fooles well I wot, desiren soche new thinges. Wherefore I woonder that thilke gouer-nour, out of whome alone the causes proce-den, that gouernen all thinges, which that hath ordained this worlde, in werkes of the kindely bodies so be gouerned, not with vn-stedfaste or happious thinge, but with rules of reason, whiche shewen the course of cer-taine thinges: why suffereth he such sliding chaunges, that misturnen such noble thinges as

ags been wore men, that arne a faire parsell of the earth, and holden the vppereſt degree vnder GOD of benigne thinges, as ye sayden right now your selfe, shoulde neuer man haue beene set in so worthie a place, but if his degre were ordained noble. Alas, thou that knitteſt the purueighaunce of all thinges, why lookeſt thou not to amenden theſe defautes: I see shrewes that han wicked maners, sitten in chaires of domes, Lambes to punishen, there Wolues should been punished. Lo, vertue shuned naturally, for pouertie lurketh, and is hid vnder cloud: but the Moone false forswore, as I knowe my selfe, for auer ryches hath vsurped, to shine by daye light, with peinture of other mennes prailings: and truly thilke forged light foule should fade, were the trouth away of colours feined. Thus is night tourned into daie, and daie into night, Winter into Sommer, and Sommer into Winter, not in deede but in misceaping of foolish people.

Now (qd shee) what weneſte thou of theſe thinges? Howe feleſt thou in thine harte, by what gouernance that this cometh about?

Certes (qd I) that wotte I neuer, but if it bee, that Fortune hath graunt from aboue, to lede the ende of men as her liketh. Ah nowe I see (qd shee) the entent of thy meaning: Lo, because thy worldly goodes, beene fullyche dispente, thou beraſt out of dignitie of office, in whiche thou madeſt the gathering of thilke goods, and yet diddeſt in that office, by counsaile of wise, any thinge were ended: and true were vnto hem, whose profite thou shouldeſt looke, and seeſt nowe manye that in thilke heruest made of thee mokel, and now for glosing of other, deineth thee nought to forther, but enhaunsen fals shrewes, by witnessing of trouth.

Theſe thinges greueth thine harte, to seene thy self thus abated, and then frailtie of mankinde ne setteth but little, by the leſers of such richeſſe, haue he neuer so much vertue, and so thou weneſt of thy iewell, to renne in dispite, and not beene accepted into grace: All this shall thee nothyng hinder. Now (qd she) firſte thou woteſt well, thou loſteſt nothynge, that euer mighteſt thou challenge for thine owne: When nature brought thee forth, come thou not naked, out of thy mothers wombe. Thou haddeſt no richeſſe, and when thou shalt enter, into the ende of euery fleshly bodie, what shalte thou haue with thee thane? So euery richeſſe thou haſte, in tyme of thy liuing, nis but lent, thou might therein challenge no propertie. And see now euery thinge that is a mannes owne, he may doe therwith what him liketh, to yeue or to keepe: but richeſſe thou plaineſt from the loſt, if thy might had stretched so farforth, faine thou wouldeſt haue hem kept multiplyed with mo other: so ayenſt thy will, beene they departed from thee, wherefore they were neuer thine. And if thou laudeſt and ioyeſt any wight, for he is stuffed with such manner richeſſe, thou arte in that beleeue begyled, for thou weneſt thilke ioy to be selineſſe, or elis ease, and he that hath loſt such happes, to been vnselie. Yea forsooth (qd I). Well (quod shee) then woll I proue that vnselie, in that wise is to praiſe, and so the tother is the contrary to be lacked. Howe so (qd I)? For vnselie (qd shee) begyleth not, but sheweth the entent of her working. Et econtra. Selineſſe begyleth, for in prosperitie, shee maketh a tape in blindneſſe, that is, shee windeth him to make sorowe, when shee withdraweth. Wolte thou not (qd shee) praiſe him better, that sheweth to thee his harte, tho it be with bitande wordes, and dispitous, than him that gloſeth and thinketh in their absence, to doe thee many harmes. Certes (qd I) the one is to commend, and the other to lacke and dispiſe.

Aha (qd shee) right so eaſe while he laſteth, gloſeth and flattereth, and lightly voydeth, when shee moſte pleasauntly sheweth, and euer in her absence, shee is about to doe thee tene and sorowe in harte: But vnselie all be it with bitande chere, sheweth what shee is, and so doeth not that other, wherefore vnselie doeth not begyle. Selineſſe discreueth: vnselie put awaye doubt. That one maketh men blinde, that other openeth their eyen, in shewing of wretchednesſe. The one is full of drede, to leſe that is not his owne: That other is sober, and maketh men discharged of mokell heaumeſſe in burthen: The one draweth a man from very good, the other haleth him to vertue, by the hookes of thoughtes.

And weneſt thou not, that thy diseaſe hath doen thee mokell more to winne, then euer yet thou loſteſt? And more than euer the contrarie made thee winne. Is not a greate good to thy thinking, for to knowe the hartes of thy soothfaſt frendes. Parde they beene proued to the full, and the true haue discouered from the falſe. Truely, at the going e of thilke brotell ioye, there yede no more awaie, then the ilke that was not thyne proper:

per: he was neuer from that lightly departed, thyne owen good therfore leaueth it still with the. Now good (qd. she) for how much wouldest thou sometime haue bought, this very knowyng of thy frendes, from the flattering lies that they gloſed, whan thou thought thy ſelfe ſely. But thou that platnest of lolle in richeſſe, hast founden the most deare worthy thyng that thou clepest vnſely, hath made thee much thyng to wimen. And also for conclusioun of all, he is friend that now leaueth not his heart from thyne helpes. And if that Margaret denieth now not to suffer her vertues shine to thewards, with spreading beames, as farre or farther than if thou were ſely in worldly ioy: Truly I say not els but she is somdele to blame.

Hy, peace (qd. ɜ) and speake no more of this, mine heart breaketh now thou touchest any such words. A well (qd. she) thanne lette vs singen, thou hearest no more of these thyngs at this time.

Thus endeth the first booke of the Testament of Loue, and hereafter followeth the second.

VEry wealth may not be founden in al this world, & that is wel ſene: Lo how in my most comfort, as a wend and most supposed to haue had full answere of my contrary thoughts, sodainly it was banished. And all the workes of manne faren in the same wise whan folke wenen best her entent for to haue, and wils to perfourme, anon chaunging of the left side to the right halue, turneth it so clean into another kind, that neuer shall it come to the first plite in doing.

O this wrongfull stering so soone, otherwised out of knowing, but for my purpose was at my beginning, and so dureth yet, yf God of his grace tyme woll me graunt, I think to perfourm this worke as I haue begon in loue, after as my thynne witte, with inspiracioun of him that hildeth all grace, woll suffer. Greeuously God wotte haue I suffred a great throw that ỹ Romain Emperour, which in vnity of loue should accord and euery with other, in cause of other to auaunce, and nauely luth this Empire to be correcred of so many sects in heresy, of faith, of seruice, of rule in loues religion. Certainly al were it but to shend erronous opinions, I may it no lenger suffer: For many menne there been that saine loue to been in grauell and sand, that with sea rowing and flowing woweth, as richesse ỹ sodainly vanisheth. And some saine that loue should be in windy blastes, that stound meale tourneth as a phane, and glory of renoume, which after lusts of the variant people is araised or hiled. Many also weenen that in the sunne and the Moon, and other Starres, loue should been founden, for among all other planettes most soueraunly they shinen, as dignities in reuerence of estates rather than good han and occupien. Ful many also there ben that in okes and in huge poles suppolen loue to ben grounded, as in strength and in might, which mowen not helpen their own werchednesse, whan they gynne to fal. But such diuersity of sects ayenst the rightfull bilene of loue, these errours beene foorth spredde, that loues seruauntes in the trew rule and stedfast faith, in no place darne appeare: Thus irrecuperable ioy is went, and anoy endeles is entred. For no man aright reproueth such errours, but confirmen their words, and saine that bad is noble good, & goodnesse is bad, to which folk the prophet biddeth, Woe without end.

Also many tongues of great false teachings in guiling maner principally in my tunes, not only with words, but also with armes, loues seruants that profesſe in his religion of true rule, pursewen to confounden and to distroyen. And for as much as holy fathers, that our Christen faith approued and strengthed to the Jewes as to men reasonable, and of diuinity learned, proued thilke faith with reasonnes, and with authorities of the old Testament, and of the new, her pertinacy to distroy: But to paynims, that for beasts & hounds were hold, to putte hem out of their errour, was miracles of God shewed. These thyngs were figured by comming of thangel to the shepherds, and by the star to painims kings, as who saith: Angel reasonable, to reasonable creature, & star of miracle to people bestiall not learned, were sent to enforme. But I louers clerk in al my conning & with all my mightes, trewly I haue no such grace in

vertue of miracles, ne for no discomfit falsheads, suffiseth not authorities alone, sithen that suche Heretikes and maintaynours of falsites. Wherefore I wot well sithen that they been men, and reason is approoued in hem, the cloud of errour hath her reason bewond probable reasõs, which that catchend wit rightfully may not withsitte. But my trauailing study I haue ordained hem, with that authority misgloseb by mannes reason, to grant shall be enduced.

Now gineth my pen to quake, to thinken on the sentences of the enuious people, which alway been ready, both rider and goer to scorne and to iape this leaud book, and mee for rancoure and hate in theyr harts they shullen so dispise, that although my booke be leued, yet shall it ben more leud holden, and by wicked wordes in many manner appaired. Certes me thinketh the sowne of their badde speech, right nowe is full both mine eares. O good precious Margarite, mine heart should weepe, if I wist ye token heed of such manner speache, but trewly I wotte well in that your wisedome shall not assert. For of God maker of kind witnesse I took, that for none enuy ne yuell haue I drawe this matter together, but only for goodnes to maintain, and errours in falsetes to distroy. Wherfore (as I sayd) with reason I think, thilk foresaid errours to distroy and dequace. These reasons and such other, if they enduce men in loues seruice, trew to beleeue of parfite blisse, yet to full faith in credence of desert, fully mowe they not suffice, sithen fayth hath no merite of mede, whan mannes reason sheweth experience in doing. For vtterly no reason the parfite blisse of loue by no way may make to bee comprehended. Lo what is a perfell of louers ioy, parfite science in good seruice, of their desire to comprehend in bodily doing, the liking of the soule, nat as by a glasse to haue contemplacion of tyme comming, but thilke first ymagined and thought, after face to face in beholdyng: what heart, what reason, what vnderstandyng can make his heauen to be feeled and know without assay of doing: certes none. Sithen than of loue commeth such fruict in blisse, and loue in himselfe is the most among other vertues, as clerkes sain: The seede of such springing in all places, in all countries, in all worlds should ben sow.

But o well away thilk seed is forsake, and mowen not beene suffered the loud tilers to set a werke, without medding of cockle, bad weeds which somtime stonken hath caught the name of loue among ydiotes and badde meaning people. Neuer the later, yet howe so it be that menne cleape thilke kyng precious left in kinde, with many eke names, that other thynges, that the foule yeuen the like noble name, it sheweth well that in a manner men haue a great liking in worshipping of thilke name, wherfore this worke haue I writte, and to the titled of loues name, I haue it auowed in a manner of sacrifice, that where euer it bee radde, it mow in merite by the excellence of thilke name the more wex in authority and worshippe of taking in heed, and to what entent it was ordained, the in seares mowen beene mooued: Euery thing to whom is owande occasion done as for his ende, Aristotle supposeth that the actes of euery thing been in a maner his finall cause. If finall cause is noblerer, or eis euen as noble as thilke thing that is finally to thilke end, wherefore action of thing euerlasting is demed to be eternall, and not tempozall, sithen it is his finall cause: Right so the actes of my booke loue, and loue is noble, wherefore though my booke be leaud, the cause with which I am stered, and for who I ought it done, noble forsooth been both. But bycause that in cunning I am young, and canne yet but creepe, this leud A, B, C, haue I set into learning, for I cannot passen the telling of three as yet: and yf God will, in short time I shall amend this lewdnesse in ioyning of sillables, which thyng for dulnesse of witte I may not in three letters declare. For trewly I say the goodnesse of my Margarite pearle would yeue matter enditing to many clerks: certes her mercy is more to mee sweeter than any liuynges, wherefore my lippes mowen not suffice in speaking of her full laud and worshippe as they should. But who is that in knowing of the orders of heauen, & putteth his reasons in the earth: I forsooth may not with bleare eyen, the shining sonne of vertue in bright whele of this Margarite behold, therefore as yet I may her not discriue in vertue as I would. In time comming in another tretise thorow Goddes grace, this son cleanesse of vertue to bee knowe, and howe she enlumineth all this day, I think to declare.

In

IN this mean while this comfortable Ladye gan sing, a wounder matter of endyting in Latin, but truly the noble colours in Rhetorike wise, knit were so craftily, that my conning will not stretch to remember, but the sentence I trow somdeale haue I in mind. Certes they were wonder sweet of sowne, and they were touched all in lamentacion wise, & by no wer-belles of mirth. Lo thus ganne she sing in Latin, as I may constrew it in our English tongue.

Alas that these heauenlye bodies their light & course shewen, as nature yaue hem in commandement at the ginning of ỳ first age, but these things in free choise of reason han none vnderstanding: but manne that ought to passe all thing of doing, of right course in kind, ouerwhelmed soothenesse by wrongfull title, and hath drawne the starre of enuy to gone by his side, that the clips of me that should be his shinand sonne, so oft is say, that it wened thilke errour thorowe hem come in, should ben mine owne defaut. Trewly therfore I haue me withdrawe, and made my dwelling out of land in an Ile by my selfe, in the Occian closed, and yet sayne there many they haue me harberowed, but God wot they failen. These things me greuen to thinke, and namely on passed gladnesse, that in this world was wont me dispost of high and low, and now it is failed: they that woulden maistries mee haue in thilk stounds. In heuen on high aboue Saturnes sphere, in seasonable time were they lodged, but now come queint counsailours that in no house will suffer mee soiourne, wherof is pite: And yet sain some that they me haue in seller with wine shedde, in garner there corn is laid, couered with wheat, in sacke sowed with wol, in purse with money fall smitte, among pannes mouled in a wich, in presse among cloths laid with rich pelure araied, in stable among horse and other beasts, as hogs, shepe, and neat, and in other maner wise. But thou maker of light (in winking of thine eie the sonne is quaint) wost right well that I in trew name was neuer thus herberowed. Sometime toforn the son in the seuenth party was smitten. I bare both crosse and mitre, to yeue it where I would. With me the Pope went a foot, & I tho was worshipped of al holy church, kings baden me their crownes holde. The law was set as it should: tofore the Iudge as well the poore durst shew his griefe as the rich, for all his money. I defended tho tailages, and was redy for the poor to pay. I made great feastes in my time, and noble songs, and married damosels of gentil feature, withouten gold or other richesse. Poor clarks for wit of schoole, I set in churches, and made such parsons to preach: and tho was seruice in holy churche honest and deuout, in pleasaunce both of God and of the people. But now the leaud for Simony is auaunced, & shendeth all holy church. Now is steward for his achates, now is Courtiour for his debates, now is escheteur for his wrongs, now is losel for his songs, personer and prouender alone, with which many thrifty should encrease. And yet is this shrew behind, free heart is forsake, & lesengour is take. Lo it accordeth, for such there ben that voluntary lusts haunten in courte with ribaudry, that till midnight and more will play and wake, but in the Church at matins he is behind, for euill disposicion of his stomacke: therfore he should eat bean bread, and so did his syre, his estate therwith to strengthen. His aiter is broke, and low lieth in pointe to gone to the yearth, but his horse must ben easy and hie to beat him ouer great waters. His chalice poor, but he hath rich cuppes. No towaile but a shete there God shall been handeled. And on his mete bord there shall been borde clothes and towelles many paire. At masse serueth but a clergion: fiue squiers in hall, Poore chauncell, open holes in euery side: beddes of silk with tapites going all about his chamber. Poore masse booke and lewd chaplain, and broken surplice with many an hole: good houndes and many, to hunt after hart and hare, to feed in their feasts. Of poore men haue they great care, for they euer crane, and nothing offre, they woulden haue hem doluen. But among legisters there dare I not come, my doing they saine maken hem redy, they ne would for nothing haue me in town, for than were tost & foorth nought worth an haw about, and pleasen no men, but thilk grenous and toxious been in might and in doing: these thinges tofore said mowe well if men list rime, truly they accord nothing. And for as much as all things by me shoulden of right

ben gouerned, I am sory to see that gouernaunce faileth, as thus: To seen smal and low gouern the hie, and bodies aboue. Certes that pollisye is nought, it is forbode by them that of gouernaunce treaten and enformen. And right as beastly wit should ben subiect to reason, so yearthly power in it selfe, the lower should ben subiect to the hier.

What is worthy thy body but it be gouerned with thy soule, right so little or nought is worthy yearthly power, but if regnatife prudẽce in heads gouern ỹ small, to which heads the small owen to obay, and suffer in their gouernaunce. But souerainesse ayenward should think in this wise: I am seruant of these creatures to me deliuered, not lord, but defendour: not maister but enfourmer, not possessour, but in possession, and to hem lich a tree in which Sparrowes shulen stealen, her birds to norish & forth bring vnder surety ayenst al rauenous foules and beasts, and not to be Tyraunt themselfe. And than the small rest and quiet, by the heads well disposed, owen for their souerames healths and prosperity to pray, and in other doings, in maintenaunce thereof performe, withouten other administracion in rule of any maner gouernaunce. And they wit haue in hem, and grace to come to such things, yet shuld they cease till their heads them escaped, although profit & pleasaunce should follow. But truly other gouernance ne other medling ought they not to claime, ne the heads on thẽ to put. Truly amongs cosinage dare I not come, but if richesse be my mean, soothly she & other bodily goods maketh nigh cosinage, there neuer propinquity ne alliaunce in liue was, ne shuld haue be, nere it for her medling manners, wherefore kindly am I not there leged. Pouert of kindred is behind, richesse suffereth him to passe: trewly he saith he come neuer of Japetes children: wherof I am sory that Japhetes children for pouert, in no linage ben reckened, and Caines childrẽ for riches be maked Japhetes heirs. Alas this is a wonder chaunge bitweene tho two Noes childrẽ sithen that of Japhetes offspring commeden knights, and of Cain descended the line of seruage to his brothers children. Lo how gentillesse and seruage as cosins, both descended out of two brethern of one body: wherefore I say soothnesse that gentillesse in kinrede maken not gentill linage in succession. without desert of a mans own selfe. Where is now the line of Alisaundry the noble, or els of Hector of Troye? Who is discẽded of right blood of line fro king Artoure? Parde sir Perdicas, whom that king Alisander made to ben his heire in Greece, was of no kings blood, his dame was a tombistere. Of what kinred ben ỹ Gentils in our daies: I trowe therefore if any good be in gentillesse, it is only that it semeth a maner of necessity be input to gentilmen, that they shoulden not varien fro the vertues of their auncestres. Certes all maner linage of men been euen liche in birth, for one father maker of all goodnes enformed hem al, and all mortal folke of one seed are greined. Wherto auaunt men of her linage, in cosinage or in eld fathers. Looke now the gianning, and to God maker of mans person, there is no clerk ne no worthy in gentillesse: & he that norisheth he his cozare with vices and vnreasonable lusts, & leaueth the kind course, to which end him brought forth his birth, trewly he is vngentill, and among clerkes may been nempned. And therefore he that woll ben gentill, he mote daunten his flesh fro vices that causen vngentilnesse, & leaue also reigs of wicked lusts, and draw to him vertue, that in all places gentilnesse gentilmen maketh. And so speake I in feminine Gender in generall, of tho persones at the reuerence of one, whom euery wight honoreth, for her bounty and her noblesse ymade her to God so deare, that his moder she became, and she me hath had so great in worship, that I nill for nothing in open declare that in anye thing agamst her secte may sowne: For all vertue and all worthinesse of pleasaunce in hem habounderh. And although I would any thing speak, trewly I cannot, I may find in yuel of hem no maner matter.

Right with these words she stint of that lamẽtable melady, and I gamne with a liuely heart to pray, if that it were liking vnto her noble grace, she wold her deign to declare me the matter ỹ first was begon in which she left and stint to speake before she gan to sing.

O (qd. she) this is no new thing to me to seen you menne desiren after matter, which your self caused to void.

My good lady (qd. I) in whom victory of strength is proued aboue all other thing, after the iudgemēt of Eldram, whose lordship all lignes: Who is that right as Emperour hem commaundeth, whether thilke ben not women, in whose likenesse to me ye appearen. For right as man hath the principality of all thing vnder his being, in the masculine Gender, and no mo Genders ben there but masculine, and feminine, all the remnaunt been no Genders but of grace, in faculty of Grammer. Right so in the feminine, the women holden the vppereste degre of all thyngs, vnder thilke Gender contayned. Who bringeth forth kings, which that been lords of sea and of yearth, and all peoples of women ben borne: they norish hem that graffen vines, they make men comfort in their gladde theares. Her sorow is death to mannes heart. Without women the being of menne were impossible. They conne with their sweetenesse the cruell hart ravish and make it meeke, buxome, and benigne, without violence meuing. In beauty of their eien, or els of other manner features is all mennes desires, ye more than in gold, precious stones, either any richesse. And in this degree Lady your selfe many hearts of men haue so bounden, that parfite blisse in womankind to ben men wenen, and in nothing els. Also Lady the goodnesse, the vertue of women, by property of discrecion, is so well knowen, by littlenesse of malice, that desire to a good asker by no way conne they warne, and ye thanne that wol not passe the kind werching of your sects by general discrecion, I woot well ye woll so encline to by prayer, that grace of my request shall fullye been graunted. Certes (qd. she) thus for the more part fareth all mankind to pray, and to cry after womans grace, and faine many fantasies to make hearts to encline to your desires: and whan these sely women freely of their kind beleuen your words, and wenen all be Gospel the promise of your behests, than graunt they to you their harts, and fulfyllen your lustes, wherethrough their liberty in maistership that they tofore had is thralled, and so maked souerain and to be praied, the first was seruant, and voice of prayer bled. Anone as alled is your lust many of you be so trew, that little heede take ye of suche kindnesse, but with traisoun anone ye thinke hem beguile, and let light of that thyng which first ye maked to vpon wonders deare, so what thing to women is to loue any wight ere shee him well know, and haue him proued in many saile, for euery glittering thyng is not gold, and vnder colour of faire speech many vices may be hid and concealed. Therefore I read no wight to trust on you to rath mens eyeare, & her speech right guilefull is full oft, wherefore without good assay, it is not worth on many on you to trust: Truly it is right kindly to euery man that thinketh women betray, and shewen outward all goodnesse, till he haue his will performed. Lo the bird is beguiled with the merry voice of the foulers whistell. Whan a woman is closed in your net, than woll ye causes finden, & bear vnkindnesse her on hand, or faiset vpon her put, your owne malicious treason with such thing to excuse. Lo than han women none other wreche in vengeaunce, but bloter and wepe til hem lut stint, and sothly her mishap complaine, and is put into wening that all men ben so vntrew. How often haue men changed her loues in a litle while, or els for failing their wil in their plates hem set: for frendship shall be one, & faine with another him list for to haue, and a third for delite, or els were he lost both in packe & in clothes: is this faire, nay God wote I may not tell by thousand parts, the wrongs in trechery of such false people, for make they neuer so good a bond, all set ye at a nute whan your heart tourneth: And they that wenen for sorow of you dey, the pity of your false heart is flow out of towne. Alas therfore, that euer any woman woulde take anye wight in her grace, till she know at the full on whom she might at all assaies trust.

Women conne no more craft in quaint knowing, to vnderstand the false discrepuable conuectments of mans begulings. Lo how it fareth, though ye men grouen and crien, certes it is but disceit, & that preueth wel by the ends in your werking. How many women haue been lorne, and with shame foule shent by long lasting time, whyche thorow mennes guile haue been discreued? Euer their fame shall dure, and their deeds radde and song in many londes, that they han done recoueren shall they neuer, but alway been deemed lightly, in such plite ayen should they fall, of which sclaunders and tenes ye false men and wicked ben the very causes, on you by right ought these shames and these reproues all holy discend. Thus

arne ye all nigh vntrewe, for all your fayre speech your hart is full fickell. What cause han ye women to dispise? Better fruit than they been, ne sweeter spices to your behoue mow ye not find, as far as worldly bodyes stretchen. Look to their forming at the making of their persons by God in toy of Paradise, for goodnesse of mans proper body were they maked, after the laws of the Bible, rehearsing Gods wordes in this wise: It is good to mankind that we make to him an helper. Lo in paradise for your help was this tree grafted, out of which all lignage of man discendeth: if a man be noble fruit, of noble fruit it is sprongen: the blisse of Paradise to mens sory harts, yet in this tree abideth. O noble helps ben these trees, and gentill iewell to ben worshipped of euery good creature: he that hem anoieth doth his own shame, it is a comfortable pearle against all tenes. Euery company is mirthed by their present being. Truly I wist neuer vertue, but a women were therof the root. What is heauen the worse, though Sarazins on it lien? Is your faith vntrew though renagates maken theron leasings. If the fire doth any wight bren, blame his own wit that put himself far in the heat. Is not fire gentilest and most element comfortable amongs all other? Fire is chiefe werker in forthering sustenaunce to mankind, shall fire ben blamed for it brend a foole naturally, by his own sluity wit in stering. Ah wicked folkes, for your proper malice, and shrewdnesse of your self, ye blame and dispise the precious thing of your kind, and which things among other most ye desiren. Truly Nero and his children ben shrews, that disyisen so their dames. The wickednesse and guiling of men, in disclaundring of thilke ỹ most hath hem gladded ⁊ pleased, were impossible to write or to nempne. Neuer ỹ later yet I say he that knoweth a way, may it lightly passe: eke an hearbe proued may sakely to smart and sores beene laid: So I say in him ỹ is proued is nothing such euels to gesse. But these things haue I rehearsed to warn you womẽ all at ones, ỹ to lightly without good assay ye assentẽ not to mans speach. The son in ỹ day light, is to knowen from ỹ Moon that shineth in the night. Now to thee thy self (qd. she) as I haue oft said, I know well thine hart, thou art none of al the tofore nempned people, for I know well ỹ continuaunce of thy seruice, that neuer sithen I set thee a werke, might thy Margarit for pleasance, frendship, ne faitehead of none other be in pount mooued from thine hert, wherfore into mine houshold hastily I wol that thou enter, and all the parfit priuity of my werking make it be know in thy vnderstãding, as one of my priuy familiers. Thou desirest (qd. she) fame to hear of tho things there I left.

Ye forsoth (qd. I) that were to me a great blisse. Now (qd. she) for thou shalt not wene that womans conditions for fayre speach, such thing belongeth.

Thou shalt (qd. she) vnderstand first among all other things, that all the cure of my seruice, to mee in the parfite blisse in doing, is desired in euery mannes heart, bee hee neuer so muche a wretch, but euery mã trauaileth by diuers study, and seek thilk blisse by diuers waies, but all the ends are knitte in felinesse of desire in the parfite blisse, that is suche ioye, whan men it haue gotten, there lineth no thing more to ben coueited: But how that desire of suche perfection in my seruice bee kindly set in louers heartes, yet her erronious opinions misfourne it by falsenesse of wening. And although mennes vnderstanding be misfourned, to know whych should been the way vnto my persone, and whither it abideth: yet wot they there is alone in euery wight, weneth by that thing that he coueyteth most, hee should come to thilke loue, and that is parfite blisse of my seruaunts, but than full blisse may not bee, and there lacke any thing of that blisse in any side. Eke it followeth than, that he that must haue full blisse, lack no blisse in loue on no side.

Therfore Lady (qd. I tho) thilk blisse I haue desired, and sooth to sayn this my self by waies of riches, of dignity, of power, and of renoume, wening me in tho thrages had ben thilke blisse, but ayenst the heere it turneth. Whã I supposed best thilk blisse haue het and come to the full purpose of your seruice, sodainly was I hindred, ⁊ throwen so fer abacke, that me thinketh an impossible to come there I left. I wol (qd. she) and therfore hast thou failed, for thou wentest not by the high way, a litle misgoing in the ginning

ginning, causeth mikell errour in the end, wherefore of thilke blisse thou failedest for haung of richesse, ne none of thother thinges thou nempnedst, mowen not make such parfit blisse in loue, as I shall shew. Therfore they be not worthy to thilke blisse, and yet somewhat must been cause and way to thilke blisse: ergo there is some sothe thing, and some way, but it is little in vsage, and that is not openly iknow. But what feleth in thine hart of the seruice, in which by me thou art entred: wenest aught thy selfe, yet be in the hie way to my blisse. I shal so shew it to thee, thou shalt not con say the cõtrary.

Good Lady (qd. I) altho I suppose it in my hart, yet would I heare thine wordes, how ye meanen in this matter. (qd. she) that I shall with my good will. The ilke blisse desired, somedeale ye knowen, altho it be not parfitely, for kindely intencion leadeth you thereto, but in three maner liuings, is all soch waies shewed. Euery wight in this world to haue this blisse, one of the ilk three waies of liues must proceed, which after opinions of great Clerkes, arne by names cleaped, beastialliche, reasonabliche, in vertuous: Manliche is worldliche, beastialliche is lusts and delitable, nothing restrained by bridle of reason: all that ioyeth and yeueth gladnes to the hart, and it be ayen reason, is likened to beastiall liuing, which thing followeth lustes and delights, wherfore in suche thing may not that precious blisse, that is maister of all vertues abide. Your fathers tofore you, haue cleped soch lusty liuings, after the flesh passions of desire, which are vnominable tofore Gods manne both. Then after determinacion of such wise, we accorden that such passions of desire, shull not been nempned, but holde for absolute from al other liuings and prouings, and so liueth into liuings, manliche and reasonable, to declare the matters begonne. But to make thee fully haue vnderstanding in manliche liuings. which is holden worldlich in these things, so that ignoraunce be made no letter. I woll (qd. shee) nempne these forsaid waies by names and conclusions.

First, riches, dignity, renowme, and power, shull in this worke be cleaped, Bodily goods, for in hem hath been a great throw mannes trust in stilines of loue, as in riches suffisaunce to haue maintained that was begonne, by worldly cattell in dignity, honour, and reuerence of hem that weren vnderput, by maistry thereby to obey. In renome glory of peoples praising, after lustes in their hart, without hede taking to quality and manner of doing, and in power, by trouth of Lordships maintenaunce, thing to procede forth in dooing. In all which things a long time, mans conetise in commune hath been greatly grounded, to come to the blisse of my seruice, but truly thei wer beguiled, and for the principall must needs faile, and in helping mow not auaile. Se why holdest him not poore that is ready? Yes parde (qd. I). And him for dishonoured that much folke dein to reuerence. That is soth (qd. I) and what him that his mights failen and mow not helpen. Certes (qd. I) me semeth of all men, he should be holden a wretch. And wenest not (qd. she) that he that is little in renoume, but rather is out of the praisings of mo men then a fewe, be not in shame? Forsooth (qd. I) it is shame & villany to him that coueiteth renome, that more folke not praise in name then praise. Soth (qd. she) thou saist sooth, but al these things are folowed of soch manner doing, and weden in riches suffisaunce, in power might, in dignity worshippe, and in renowme glory, wherefore they discended into discreuable wening, and in that seruice discreit is followed. And thus in general, thou and all soch other that so werchen, failen of my blisse, that ye long han delited: wherfore truly in life of reason, is the high way to this blisse, as I thinke more openly to declare hereafter. Neuer the later, yet in a little to comfort thy hart, in shewing of what way thou art entred thy selfe, and that thy Magarite may know thee set in the high way, I woll enforme thee in this wise. Thou hast failed of thy first purpose, because thou wentest wrong, and leftest the hie way on thy right side, as thus, thou lokedest on worldly liuing, and that thing thee beguiled & lightly therefore as a little assay thou fongedest, but when I tourned thy purpose, and shewed thee a part of the high way, tho thou abode therein, & no death ne ferdnes of none enemy might thee out of thilke way reue, but euer one in thine hart to come to thilke blisse, when thou wer arested, and first time emprisoned, thou were loth to change thy way, for in thy hart thou wedest to haue bin there thou sholdest, & for I had routh to seen thee miscaried, & wist wel thine ablenes my

ſernice to further and increaſe. I come my ſelf without other meane to viſit thy perſon in comfort of thy heart: and parde in my comming thou were greatly gladded, after which time, no diſeaſe, no care, no tene myzt moone me out of thy heart. And yet I glad and greatly enpited. How continually thou haddeſt me in mind, with good auiſement of thy conſcience, when thy king and his princes, by huge wozds and great, looked after variaunce in thy ſpeach, and euer thou wer redy foz my ſake, in pleaſaunce of that Margarite pearle, & many mo other, thy body to oblige in to Mareys doing, if any contraried thy ſawes, ſtedfaſt way maketh ſtedfaſt hart, with good hope in ỹ end. Truly I woll that thou it well know, foz I ſee thee ſo ſet, and not chaunging heart haddeſt in my ſernice, and I made thou haddeſt grace of thy king, in fozyeueneſſe of mikell miſdeed: to the gracious king art thou mikell holden, of whoſe grace and goodneſs ſometime hereafter I thinke to enſourme, when I ſhew the ground, where as moztal vertue groweth. Who bzouzt the to wozke? who bzought this grace about? who made thy hart hardy? Truly it was I, foz haddeſt thou of me failed, then of this purpoſe had neuer taken in this wiſe. And therfoze I ſay, thou might well truſt to come to thy bliſſe, ſithen thy giming hath been heard, but euer graciouſly after thy hearts deſire hath pzoceaded. Siluer fined with many heates, menne knowen foz true, and ſafely men may truſt in thee alway in werking. This diſeaſes hath pzoued, what way hence fozward thou thinkeſt to hold. Now in good faith Lady (qd. I tho) I am now in, me ſemeth it is the high way & the right. Yea foz ſooth (qd. ſhee) and now I woll diſpzoue thy firſt waies, by which many men wenen to get thilke bliſſe. But foz as much as euery hart that hath caught full loue, is tied with queint knittings, thou ſhalt vnderſtand that loue, and thilke fozeſaid bliſſe tofozne declared, in this pzouings, ſhal hot the knot in the hart. Well (qd. I) this impoſſeſſion I woll well vnderſtand. Now alſo (qd. ſhe) foz the knot in the hart, muſt be from one to another, and I know thy deſire: I woll thou vnderſtand theſe matters to been ſaid of thy ſelfe, in diſpzouing of thy firſt ſeruice, and in ſtrengthening of thilke that thou haſt vndertake to thy Margarite perle. A Goddes halfe (qd. I) right well I feie that all this caſe is poſſible and true, and therefoze I admitted all togither. Vnderſtanden well (qd. ſhe) theſe termes, & loke no contradiccion thou graunt. If God woll (qd. I) of all theſe things woll I not faile, & if I graunt contradiccion. I ſhould grant an impoſſible, and that were a foule inconuenience, foz which things, lady wois hereafter I thinke me to kepe.

WEll (qd. ſhee) thou knoweſt that euery thing is cauſe, wherethorough any thing hath being, that is cleped cauſed, then of riches cauſen knot in heart, thilke riches arne cauſe of the like pzecious thing beeing: But after the ſentence of Ariſtotle, euery cauſe is moze in dignity, then his thing cauſed, wherthzough it followeth, richeſſe to been moze in dignity then thilke knotte, but richeſſe arne kindly naughty, badde, and needy, and the like knotte is thing kindly good, moſt pzaiſed and deſired: Ergo thing naughtie, bad, and nedy, in kindly vnderſtanding is moze wozthy, then thing kindly good, moſt deſired and pzaiſed: The conſequence is faiſe, needs the antecedent mote been of the ſame condicion. But that richeſſes been badde, naughty, and needy, that woll I pzoue, wherefoze they mowe cauſe no ſuch thing, that is ſo glozious and good: the moze richeſſe thou haſt, the moze nede haſt thou of helpe hem to kepe. Ergo thou nedeſt in richeſſe, which nede thou ſhouldeſt not haue if thou hem wanteſt. Then muſt richeſſe been nedy, that in their hauing maken the needy to helpes, in ſurery thy riches to kepen, wherethzough followeth richeſſe to been needy.

Euery thing cauſing euils is badde and naughty: but riches in one cauſen miſeaſe in another they mowen not euenly ſtretche all about. Wherof commeth plee, debate, theft, begilings, but riches to winne, which things been bad, & by riches arne cauſed: ergo the like riches ben badde, which badnes and need, ben knit into riches, by a maner of kindly pzopertie, and euery cauſe and cauſed accozden, ſo that it followeth the like richeſſe, to haue the ſame accozdance, with badnes and mede, that their cauſe alketh. Alſo euery thing hath his being by his cauſe, then if the cauſe be deſtroyed, the being of cauſed is vaniſhed: And ſo if riches cauſen loue, and richeſſe weren

deſtroyed:

destroyed, the loue should vanish, but the like knot and it be true, may not vanish for no going of no richesse: Ergo riches is no cause of the knot. And many men as I said, setten the cause of the knotte in riches, the like knitten the riches, and nothing the euill: the like persons what euer they been, weenen that richesse is most worthye to be had, and that make they the cause: and so wene they thilke riches, be better than the person. Commonly such asken, rather after the quantity then after the quality, and such wenen as well by themself, as by other, that coniunccion of his life and of his soule is no more precious, but in as mokell as he hath of riches. Alas, how may he holden such things precious or noble, that neither han like ne soule, ne ordinance of werching limmes: such richesse been more worthy, when they been in gathering, in departing ginneth his loue of other mennes praising. And auarice gathering, maketh be hated, and ready to many out helpes: and when leueth the possession of such goods, and thei ginne vanish, then entereth sorow and tene in their hearts. O badde and straight ben thilke, that at their departing, maketh men tenefull and sorye, and in the gathering of hem, make menne ready: Moche folke at ones mowen not togither, moche thereof haue. A good guest gladdeth his host, and all his meiny, but he is a badde guest that maketh his host ready, and to be aferde of his guests going. Certes (qd. I) me wondereth therefore, that the common opinion is thus: he is worth no more then that he hath in chatell. O (qd. thee) looke thou be not of that opinion, for if gold or money, or other manner of riches, shinen in thy sight, whose is that? Not thine: and tho they haue a litle beauty, they be nothing in comparison of our kind, and therefore ye should not set your worthinesse in thing, lower the̅ your selfe, for the riches, the fairenesse, the worthines of thilke goods, if there be any such preciousnes in hem are not thine, thou madest hem so neuer, from other they come to thee, and to other they shull from thee: wherefore embracest thou other wightes goods, as tho they were thine? Kind hath draw hem by hemselfe. It is soth the goods of the earth, been ordained in your food and nourishing, but if thou wolt hold thee apaied with that suffiseth to thy kind, thou shalt not be in daunger of no such riches, to kind suffiseth little thing, who that taketh heed. And if thou wolt algates with superfluity of riches be athroted, thou shalt hastelich be anoyed, or els euill at ease. And fairnesse of fields, ne of habitacions, ne multitude of meiny, may not be reckoned as riches, that are thine owne, for if they be bad, it is great slaunder and villany to the occupyer, and if they be good or fair, the matter of the worke mā that hem made, is to praise. How should otherwise bounty be counted for thine, the like goodnesse and fairnes be proper to tho things themselfe, then if they be not thine, sorrow not when they wend, ne glad thee not in pompe and in pride, when thou hem hast, for their bounty and their beauties cometh out of their own kind, and not of thine owne person: as faire been they in their not hauing, as when thou hast hem: they bee not faire, for thou hast hem, but thou hast getten hem for the fairnes of themselfe. And there the balance of mē, is demed in riches outforth, weneth me to haue no proper good in themselfe, but seeth it in straunge things. Truly the condicion of good wening is in thee misfourned, to wene your noblenes be not in your selfe, but in the goods & beautie of other things. Parde the beasts that han but feeling soules, haue sufficiaunce in their owne selfe: and ye that ben like to God, seke̅ encrease of suffisaunce, from so excellent a kind, of so low things, ye doo great wrong to hem that you made lords, ouer all erthly things, and ye put your worthinesse vnder the nomber of the feete, of lower things and foule, when ye iudge thilke riches to be your worthines, then put ye your selfe by estimacion, vnder thilke foule things, and then leaue ye the knowing of your self, so be ye viler then any dombe beast, that cometh of shrewd vice. Right so thilke persons that louen none euill, for deare worthines of the person, but for strange goods, and saith the adornment in the knot lieth in soche thing, his errour is perillous and shrewd, and he wrieth moche venime, with much wealth, and that knotte may not be good when he hath it gotten. Certes thus hath riches with flickering sight annoyed many: and often when there is a throw out shrew, hee coueth all the gold, all the precious stones ꝑ mowen be foundē to haue in his bandon, he weneth no wight be worthy to haue soche things but he alone. How many hast thou knowe nowe in late time, ꝑ in their richesse,

suppo-

suppose sufficiance haue followed, & now it is all failed. Se lady (qd. I) that is for misse medling, and ot herwise gouerned thilke richesse, then thei should. Yea (qd. she tho) had not the flood greatly areised, and throwe to hemwarde both graueli and sand, hee had made no medling. And right as sea yeueth flood, so draweth sea ebbe, and pulleth ayen vnder wawe, all the first out throwe. but if good piles of noble gouernance in Loue, in wel meaning manner, been sadly grounded, to which holde thilke graueli, as for a while, that ayen lightly mow not it turne: and if the piles been true, the graueli and sand woli abide. And certes, full warning in loue shalt thou neuer, through hem get ne couer, that lightly with an ebbe ere thou beware, it will ayen meue.

In richesse, many men haue had teenes & diseases, which they should not haue had, if thereof they had failed. Through whiche now declared, partly it is shewed, that for richesse should the knotte in heart, neither been caused in one, ne in other: truely knot may been knit, and I trow more stedfast in loue, though richesse failed, & eis in richesse is the knot, and not in heart. And then such a knotte is faise, when the sea ebbeth and withdraweth the graueli, that soch riches voideth, thilke knot will vnknit. Wherefore no trust, no way, no cause, no parfite being is in riches, of no soch knot therefore an other way must we haue.

HOuor in dignity is wened, to yeuen a full knot. Ye certes (qd. I) & of that opinion ben many, for they sain dignity with honor and reuerence, causen heartes to encheinen, & so abled to be knit togither, for the excellẽce in soueraunty of soch degrees.

Now (qd. she) if dignity, honour, and reuerence, causen thilke knot in heart, this knot is good and profitable. For euery cause of a cause, is cause of a thing caused: Then thus, good things and profitable, been by dignitie, honor, and reuerence caused. Ergo they accorden, and dignities been good with reuerences and honour, but contraries mowen not accorden: wherefore by reason there should no dignity, no reuerẽce, none honour accord with shrewes, but that is faise: They haue been cause to shrewes, in many shrewdnesse, for with hem they acorden. Ergo from beginning, to argue ayenward, till it come to the last conclusion, they are not cause of the knot. Loe all day at ye, are shrewes not in reuerence, in honour, and in dignity? Yes forsooth, rather then the good. Then followeth it, that shrewes rather then good, shull been cause of this knot. But of this contrary, of all louers is beleeued, and for a sooth openly determined to hold.

Now (qd. I) faine would I heare, how such dignityes accorden with shrewes.

O (qd. she) that woli I shewe in manifold wise. Ye wene (qd. she) that dignities of office here in your city, is as the sunne, it shineth bright withouten any cloude: which thing, when they comen in the handes of malicious tyraunts, there commeth much harme, and more grieuance thereof, then of the wilde fire, though it brend all a streate. Certes, in dignity of office, the werkes of the occupier, shewẽ the malice and the badnesse in the person, with shrewes they maken manifolde harmes, and much people shamen. How often han rancours, for malice of the gouernour should been maintained? Hath not then soche dignities caused debate, rumours, and euils? Yes God wot, by such things haue been trusted to, make mennes vnderstanding encline to many queint things. Thou wottest well, what I meane. Yea (qd. I) therefore as dignitie such thyng in tene wrought, so ayenward the substaunce in dignity changed, relied to bring ayen good plite in doing. Doo way, doo way (qd. she) if it so betide, but that is seld that such dignity is betake in a good mans gouernance. What thing is to recke in the dignities goodnes? Parde the bountie & goodnes is hers, that usen it in good gouernaunce, and therefore cometh it, that honour and reuerence, should been done in to dignity, because of increasing vertue in the occupier, and not to the ruler, bicause of soueraignty in dignity. Sithen dignity may no vertue cause, who is worthy worship for such goodnesse? Not dignity, but person that maketh goodnes in dignity to shine. This is wonder thing (qd. I) for me thinketh, as the person in dignitie is worthy honour for goodnesse, so though a person for badnes, maugre hath deserued, yet the dignity leneth to be commended. Let be (qd. shee) thou errest right foule, dignity with badnes, is helper to performe the felonous doing:

doing: parde were it kindly good, or any property of kindly vertue, hadden in hemselfe, shrewes should hem neuer haue, with hem should they neuer accord. Water & fire that been contrarious, mowen not togider ben assembled, kind wol not suffer such contraries to ioyne. And sithen at ye by experience in doing, we seen that shrewes haue hem more often then good men, siker maist thou be, that kindly good in such things, is not appropred. Parde were they kindely good as well one as other, shouldden euenliche in vertue of gouernaunce ben worthy: but one faileth in goodnesse, an other doeth the cõtrary, and so it sheweth kindly goodnes, in dignity not be grounded. And this same reason (qd. she) may be made in generall, on all the bodily goods, for thei comen oft to throw out shrewes. After this he is strong, that hath might to haue great burthens, & he is light and swift, that hath soueraunty in running to passe other, right so is he a shrew on whom shrewd things & bad han most werching. And right as Philosophy maketh Philosophiers, and my seruice maketh louers: right so if dignities weren good or vertuous, they should make shrewes good, and tourne her malice, and make hem be vertuous, but that do they not, as it is proued, but causen rancour and debate. Ergo they bee not good but vtterly bad. Had Nero neuer ben Emperor, should neuer his daine haue be slaine, to maken open the priuity of his engendrure. Herodes for his dignity, slewe many childrer. The dignity of king John would haue destroyed all England. Therefore mokel wisdome & goodnes both, nedeth in a person, the malice in dignity, slily to bridle, & with a good bit of arest to withdraw, in case it would prance otherwise thē it should: truly ye yeue to dignities wrongfull names in your cleaping. They should hete not dignity, but monstre of badnes, & maintainer of shrewes. Parde shine the sunne neuer so bright, & it bring forth no heate, ne seasonably the herbs out bring of the earth, but suffer frosts & cold, & thearth baraine to ligge, by time of his compas, in circuit about, ye would wonder & dispraise that sunne. If the moone be at full, and sheweth no light, but dark and dimme to your sight appeareth, & make distruccion of the waters, woll ye not suppose it bee vnder cloud, or in eclipse & that some priuy thing vnknowen to your wits, is cause of such contrarious doing. Then if clerks that han full insight and knowing of such impediments, enforme you of the sooth, very ideots ye ben but if ye yeuen credence to thilke clerkes words. And yet it doth me tene, to seen many wretches reioycen, in such many planets. Truly little con they on Philosophy or els on my lore, that any desire hauen soch lighting planets, in that wise any more to shew. Good lady (qd. I) tell ye me how ye meane in these things. Lo (qd. she) the dignities of your city, sunne & moone, nothing in kind shewe their shining as they should. For the sun made no bremming heat in loue, but freseth enuy in mens harts, for feblenes of shining heat: and the moone was about vnder an old cloud, the linings by waters to destroy. Lady (qd. I) it is supposed they had shined as they should. Ye (qd. she) but now it is proued at the full, their beauty in kindly shining failed, wherefore dignity of himselfen hath no beauty in fairenesse, ne driueth not away vices, but increaseth, and so be they no cause of the knot. Now see in good truth, holde ye not such sonnes worthy of no reuerence and dignities, worthy of no worship, that maketh men to doe the more harmes? I not (qd. I.) No (qd. she) and thou se a wise good man, for his goodnes and wisenes, wolt thou not doe him worship? Therof he is worthy. That is good skill (qd. I) it is due to soche both reuerence and worship to haue. Then (qd. she) a shrew for his shrewdnes, altho he be put forth to forne other for ferd, yet is hee worthy for shrewdnes to be vnworshipped: of reuerēce no part worthy to haue, to contrarious doing belongeth, and that is good skill. For right as he be smiteth the dignities, thilke same thing ayenward him smiteth, or els should smite. And ouer this thou wost well (qd. shee) that fire in euery place, heateth where it be, and water maketh weat: why? For kindly werking is so iput in hem, to do soch things: for euery kindly in werking sheweth his kind. But though a wight had ben Maior of your Cite, many winter togither, and come in a strange place, there he were not knowen, he should for his dignity haue no reuerence. Then neither worship ne reuerence, is kindely proper in no dignitie, sithen they shoulden doen their kind, in soche dooing if any were. And if reuerence ne worshippe, kindely be not sette in dignities, & they more therein been shewed than good-

goodnesse, for that in dignitie is shewed, but it proueth that goodnes, kindly in hem is not grounded. I wis neither worship ne reuerence, ne goodnesse in dignitie, dooen none office of kind, for they haue none soche propertie, in nature of dooing, but by false opinion of the people. Loe, how sometime thilke that in your Citie weren in dignitie noble, if thou lift hem nempne, ther ben now ouerturned, both in worshippe, in name, & in reuerence, where ore such dignities, haue no kindely werching of worship, and of reuerence, he that hath no worthinesse on it selfe. Now it riseth, and now it vanisheth, after the variaunt opinion in false hearts of vnstable people.

Wherefore if thou desire the knot of this iewell, or els if thou wouldest suppose, shee should set the knotte on ther, for soche maner dignitie, then thou weenest beauty or goodnesse of thilke somewhat, encreaseth the goodnesse or vertue in the body: but dignitie of hem selfe ben not good, ne yeuen reuerence ne worship by their owne kinde, how should they then, yeue to any other a thing, that by no way mow they haue hem selfe? it is seen in dignity of the Emperour, and of many mo other, that they mowe not of hem selue, kepe their worship ne their reuerence, that that in a little while, it is now vp, and now doune, by vnsteadfast harts of the people. What bounty mow they yeue, that with Cloud, lightly leaueth his shining? Certes, to the occupier is mokell appeired, sithen soch doing doeth vilany, to him that may it not maintaine, wherefore thilke way to the knotte is croked: and if any desire to come to the knot, he must leaue this way on his left side, or els shall he neuer come there.

Auaileth aught (qd. shee) power of might, in maintenaunce of worthye, to come to this knot? Parde (qd. I) ye, for hearts ben rauished from soche maner thinges. Certes (qd. she) though a fooles heart is with thing rauished, yet therefore is no generall cause of the powers, ne of a siker parfite heart, to be looked after. Was not Nero the most shrewe, one of thilk that men rede, and yet had hee power to make Senatours, Justices, and Princes of many landes? Was not that great power? Yes certes (qd. I). Well (qd. she) yet might he not help himselfe out of disease, when he gan fall. How many ensamples canst thou remember of kings, great and noble, and huge power holden, and yet they might not kepe hem selue from wretchednesse. How wretched was king Henry Curtmantill er he died? Hee had not so much as to couer with his members: and yet was he one of the greatest kinges of all the Normandes offspring, and most possession had. O a noble thing and cleare is power, that is not founden mighty to kepe himselfe.

Now truely a great foole is he, that for soche thing, would set the knotte in thine heart. Also power of realmes, is not thilke greatest power, emongs the worldly powers reckened? And if soche powers han wretchednes in hemselfe, it foloweth other powers of lesser condicion, to been wretched, and then that wretchednesse, should bee cause of soch a knot. But euery wight that hath reason, wote well that wretchednesse by no way may been cause of no soch knot, wherefore such power is no cause. That powers haue wretchednesse in himself, may right lightly been preued.

If power lacke on any side, on that side is no power, but no power is wretchednes: for all be it so, the power of Emperours or kings, or els of their realmes (which is the power of the Prince) stretchen wide & brod, yet besides is there mokell folke, of whiche he hath no commaundement ne lordeship, and there as lacketh his power, his nonpower entereth, where vnder springeth, that maketh hem wretches. No power is wretchednesse, & nothing els: but in this maner hath kings more portion of wretchednes, than of power. Truely soch powers been vnmighty, for euer they been in drede, how the like power from lesing, may be keped of sorow, so drede sorily prickes, euer in their hartes: Litle is the power, which careth and ferdeth it selfe to maintaine. Unmighty is that wretchednes, which is entred by the ferdfull wenyng of the wretche himselfe: and knotte imaked by wretchednesse, is betwene wretches, & wretches all thing bewayen: wherefore the knotte should be bewailed, and there is no soch parfite blisse that we supposed at the ginning. Ergo power in nothing, should cause such knottes. Wretchednesse, is a kindely propertie in such power, as by way of drede, which they mowe not eschewe, ne by no way line in sikernesse. For thou woste well (qd. she) he is nought

nought mighty, that would not done that he may not done ne perfozm. Therfoze (qd. I) these kinges and lozdes that han suffisaunce at the full of men and other thinges, mowen wel ben holden mighty: their commaundements ben done, it is neuermoze denied. Foole (qd. she) oz he wot himselfe mighty oz wotte it not: foz he is nought mighty, that is blind of his might and wot it not. That is soth (qd. I.) Than if he wot it, he must needs been adzadde to leesen it. He that wote of his might is in doubt that he mote needs lese, and so ledeth him dzead to ben vnmighty. And if he retch not to lese, little is that wozth that of the lealing reason retcheth nothing: and if it were mighty in power oz in strength, ỹ lealing should ben withset, and whan it commeth to the lealing he may it not withsitte. Ergo thilk might is leud and naughty. Such mights arne ylike to posts and pillers that vpzight stonden, and great might han to beare many charges, and if they crook on any side, little thing maketh hem ouerthzow. This is a good ensample (qd. I) to pillers and posts that I haue sene ouerthzowed my selfe, and hadden they ben vnderput with any helps, they had not so lightly fall. Than holdest thou him mighty that hath many men armed and may seruaumtes, and euer he is adzad of hem in his hart, and foz he gaffeth hem somtime he mote the moze feare haue. Commonly he that other agasteth, other in hym ayenward werchen the same: and thus warnished mote he be, and of warnish the houre dzeade. Litle is that might and right leand, who so taketh heed. Than semeth it (qd. I) that such famulers about kings & great lozds, shull great might haue. Although a sipher in augrim haue no might in signification of it selue, yet he yeueth power in signification to other, and these cleap I the helps to apost, to kepe him from falling. Certes (qd. she) thilk skils ben leud. Why: but if the shozes ben well grounded, the helps shullē sliden and suffer the charge to fall, her might little auaileth. And some thinketh (qd. I) that a poste alone stonding vpzight vpon a basse, may lenger in great burthen endure, than crooked pillers foz all their helpes, and her ground be not siker. That is soth (qd. she) foz as the blind in bearing of the lame ginne stumble, both should fall, right so such pillers so enuironed with helpes in falling of the ground, faileth all togider, how oft thā such famulers in their most pzide of pzolperity ben sodainly ouerthzowen. Thou hast know many in a moment so farre ouerthzow, that couer might they neuer, whan the heauinesse of such tailing commeth by case of foztune, they mow it not eschew: and might & power, if there were any should of strength soch thynges void and weine, & so it is not. Lo thā which things is this power, that tho men han it they ben agast, and in no time of ful hauing be they siker: and if they wold weine dzead, as they mow not, litle is in wozthines. Fie therefoze on so noughty thing any knot to cause. Lo in aduersity, thilke been his foes that gloied and seemed frendes in wealth, thus arne his familiers his foes & his enemies: And nothing is werse ne moze mighty foz to annoy, than is a familier enemy, & these thyngs may they not weine, so truely their might is not wozth a cresse. And ouer all thing, hee that may not withdzawe the bzidel of his fleshly lustes and his wzetched complaints (now thinke on thy selfe) trewly he is not mighty: I can seen no way that lieth to the knotte. Thilk people than that setten their heartes vpon such mights and powers, oftē ben beguiled. Parde he is not mightye that may doe any thing, that another may done him the selue, and that men haue as great power ouer hym as hee ouer other. A iustice that demeth men, ayenward hath ben oft demed. Buserus slew his gestes, and he was slain of Hercules his gest. Hugest betraied many men, and of Collo was he betraied, he that with swearde smiteth, with swerd shall be smitten. Than gan I to studiē a while on these thynges, and made a countenance with my hand in maner to been hulpt. Now let seen (qd. she) me thinketh somewhat there is within thy soule, that troubleth thy vnderstanding, say on what it is. (Qd. I tho) me thinketh that although a man by power haue such might ouer me as I haue ouer other, that dispzooueth no might in my person. but yet may I haue power and might neuer the later. Se nowe (qd. shee) thine owne leaudnesse: He is mighty that may without wzetchednesse, and hee is vnmighty that may it not withsit: but than he that might ouer the, and he wol put on the wzetchednes, thou might it not withsit. Ergo thou seest thy selfe what followeth. But now (qd. she) wouldest thou not scozne and thou see a flie han power to

done harme to an other flie, and thilke haue no might ne ayen tourning himselfe to defend. Yes certes (qd. I). Who is a frailer thing (qd. she) than the fleshly body of a man ouer which haue oftentime flies, & yet lasse thing than a flie mokel might in greeuance and annoying, withouten any withstanding, for all thilke mannes mights. And sithen thou seest thine fleshly body in kindly power faile, how should than the accident of a thing ben in more surety of being than substantiall: wherefore thilke things that we cleape power, is but accident to the fleshlye body, and so they may not haue that surety in might, which wanteth in the substantiall body. Why there is no way to the knot, that looketh aright after the hie way as he should.

VErily it is prooued that richesse, dignity, and power beene not trew way to the knot, but as rath by such thungs ẏ knot, to be vnbound: wherfore on these things I rede no wight trust, to gette any good knot. But what should we say of renoume in the peoples mouths, should that been any cause, what supposest thou in thine heart?

Certes (qd. I) yes I trow, for your flie reasons I dare not safely it say. Than (qd. she) woll I prooue that shrews as rath shul been in the knot as the good, and that were ayenst kind. Faine (qd. I) would I ẏ heare, methinketh wonder how renoume should as well knit a shrew as a good person: renoume in euery degree hath auaunced, yet wist I neuer the contrary: should than renoume accord with a shrewe? It may not sinck in my stomack till I hear more. Now (qd. she) haue I not said alwaies, ẏ shrewes shull not haue the knot. What nedeth (qd. I) to rehearse ẏ any more, I wot wel euery wight by kindly reason, shrews in knitting wol eschew. Than (qd. she) the good ought thilk knot to haue. How els (qd. I.) It were great harm (qd. she) that ẏ good were weiued and put out of espoire of the knot, if he it desired. O (qd. I) alas, on such thing to thinke, I weene ẏ heauen weepeth to see such wrongs here ben suffred on earth: the good ought it to haue & no wight els. The goodnesse (qd. she) of a person may not ben know outforth, but by renoume of the knowers, wherefore he must be renoumed of goodnes to come to the knot. So must it be (qd. I) or els all lost that we carpen. Sothly (qd. she) that were great harme, but if a good man might haue his desires in service of thilke knot, and a shrew to be demed, & they beene not knowen in generall but by lacking and praising and in renoume, and so by the consequence it followeth, a shrew to ben praised and knit, and a good to bee forsake and vnknit. Ah (qd. I tho) haue ye lady been here abouten, yet woulde I see by grace of our arguments better declared, howe good & bad doe accorden by lacking and praising, mee thinketh it ayenst kind. Nay (qd. she) & that shalt thou see as yerne: these elements han cõtrarious qualities in kind, by which they mowe not accord no more than good & bad: and in qualities they accord, so ẏ cõtraries by quality, accordẽ by quality. Is not earth dry e, and water ẏ is next and betweene the earth is weat, dry & weat ben contrary and mowen not accord, & yet this discordaunce is bound to accord by cloudes, for both elements been cold. Right so the aire ẏ is next the water is weat, and eke it is whot. This aire by his heat cõtrarieth water ẏ is cold, but thilk contrariously is oned by moisture, for both be they moist. Also the fire ẏ is next the yearth, and it incloseth al about, is dry, wherethrough it contrarieth earth that is weat: and in heat they accord, for both they ben whote. Thus by these accordances, discordaunts been ioyned, and in a manner of accordaunce they accorden by connection, ẏ is knitting togider, of ẏ accord commeth a manner of melodye ẏ is right noble. Right so good and bad arne contrarye in doinges, by lacking and praising: good is both lacked and praised of some, and badde is both lacked and praised of some: wherefore their cõtrariously accord both by lacking & praising. Than followeth it though good be neuer so mokell praised, oweth more to beene knit than the bad: or els bad for the renoum ẏ he hath must be taken as well as ẏ good, and ẏ oweth not. No forsooth (qd. I.) Well (qd. she) than is renoume no way to ẏ knot: lo foole (qd. she) how clerkes writen of such glory of renoume. O glory, glory, thou art none other thing to thousandes of folke, but a great sweller of ears. Many one hath had full greate renoume by false opinion,

of variaunt people: And what is fouler than folke wrongfully to ben praised, or by malice of ỹ people guiltelesse lacked: Needs shame followeth thereof to hem that with wrong praiseth, & also to the deserts praised, and villany and reproof of him that disclaundreth.

Good child (qd. she) what echeth such renoume to the conscience of a wise man, that loketh and measureth his goodnes, not by sleuelesse words of the people, but by soothfastnesse of conscience: by God nothing.

And if it be fair a mannes name be eched by much folkes praising, and fouler thyng that no folke not praisen. I saied to thee a litle here before, ỹ no folk in strange countries nought praisen, suche renoume maye not comen to their eares, because of vnknowing, and other obstacles, as I said: Wherfore more folk not praisen, and that is right foule to him that renoume desireth, to wete lesse folke praisen than renoume enhaunce. I trowe the thanke of a people is nought worth, in remembraunce to take, ne it procedeth of no wise iudgemēt, neuer is it stedfast pardurable: It is vaine & fleing, with winde wasteth and encreaseth. Trewly such glory ought to be hated. If gentillesse be a cleare thing, renoume and glory to enhaunce, as in reckening of thy linage, than is gentillesse of thy kinne, for why it semeth that gentillesse of thy kinne, is but praysing and renoume that come of thine auncesters deserts, & if so be that praising and renoume of their deserts, make their cleare gentilnes, than mote they needs ben gentil for their gentill deeds, and not thou: for of thy selfe commeth not suche manner gentillesse, praising of thy deserts. Than gentillesse of thine auncesters ỹ forsaine is to thee, maketh thee not gentill, but vngentill, and reproued, and if thou continuest not their gentillesse. And therefore a wise man ones saied: Better is it thy kinne to been by thee gentilled, then thou to glorify of thy kinnes gentillesse, and hast no desert thereof thy selfe.

How passing is the beauty of fleshly bodies e more flitting than mouable floures of sommer. And if thine eien weren as good as the Lynx, ỹ may seene thorowe many stonewals, both and faire and foule in their entrailes, of no manner hew should appear to thy sight, that were a foule sight. Than is fairenes by feeblesse of eien, but of no kind, wherfore thilk should be no way to ỹ knot. Whan thilke is went ỹ knot wendeth after. Lo now at all proues, none of all these things now partitly ben in vnderstanding, to been way to the during blisse of the knot. But now to cōclusion of these matters, herkeneth these words. Very sommer is know from the winter: in shorter course drawe th the daies of December, then in the moneth of June: The springs of May faden and followen in October. These things be not vnbounden from their old kind they haue not lost her worke of their proper estate. Men of voluntarious will withlit that heauens gouerneth. Other things sufferen thynges patiently to werch: Man in what estate he be, yet would hee been chaunged. Thus by queint things blisse is desired, and the fruit that commeth of these springes, nis but anguish & bitter, although it be a while sweet, it may not bee withhold, hastely they depart: thus all day faileth things that fools wend. Right thus hast thou failed in thy first wening. Hee that thinketh to saile, and draw after the course of that starre, de polo antartico, shall he neuer come Northward to ỹ contrarystar of polus arcticus, of which things if thou take keepe, thy first outwaye going, prison and exile may be cleaped. The ground falsed vndermeath, and so hast thou failed. No wight I wene blameth him that stinteth in misdoing, and secheth redy way of his blisse. Now me thinketh (qd. she) that it suffiseth in my shewing the waies, by dignity, richesse, renome, & power, if thou look clearly arn no waies to the knot.

EVery argument Lady (qd. I tho) that yee han maked in these fore nempned matters, mee thinketh hem in my full witte conceiued, shall I no more if God will in the contrary bee beguiled: But faine would I and it were your will, blisse of the knot to mee were declared, I might feele the better how my heart might assent to pursue the ende in seruice, as hee hath begun. O (qd. she) there is a melody in heauen, which clerkes clepen harmony, but that is not in breaking of voice, but it is a maner swete thing of kindly werching, ỹ causeth ioy out of nomber to reckon, and that is ioined by reason and

by wisedome, in a quantity of proporcion of knitting. God made all thing in reason and in wit of proporcio of melody, we now not suffice to shew. It is written by great clerkes and wise, that in earthly thynges lightly by study, and by trauaile, the knowing may be getten: but of such heaueniye melodye, mokell trauaile woll bring out in knowing right litle. Sweetenes of this paradise hath you rauished, it semeth ye slepten, rested from all other diseases so kindely is your hearts therein ygrounded. Blisse of two heartes in full loue knit, may not aright ben ymagined: euer is their contemplacion in full of thoughty studye to pleasaunce, matter in bringing comfort euerich to other. And therefore of earthly thinges, mokel matter lightly commeth in your lerning. Knowledge of understanding that is nigh after ye, but not so nigh the couetise of knitting in your harts: More souerain desire hath euery wight in litel hearing of heuenly conning, than of mokell materiall purposes in earth. Right so it is in property of my seruaunts, that they been more affiched in stering of litle thing in his deyze, than of mokel other matter, lasse in his cõscience. This blisse is a maner of sowne delicious, in a quaint voice touched, and no dinne of notes: there is none impression of breaking labour. I can it not otherwise nempne, for wanting of priuy wordes, but Paradise terrestre full of delicious melody, withouten trauaile in sown perpetuall seruice, in ful ioy conceited to endure. Only kind maketh harts in understanding so to sleep, that otherwise may it not ben nempned, ne in other maner names for liking sweetenes can I not it declare, all suger and hony, all minstralsie and melody beene but soote and gaule in comparison, by no manner proporcion to recken, in respect of this blissfull ioy. This armony, this melody, this perdurable ioy may not be in doing, but betweene heauens & elements, or tway kindly harts, full knit in trouth of naturall understanding, without wening and disceit, as heauens and planets, which things contunually for kindly accordaunces, forzeteth all contrarious meuings, that into passiue diseases may sowne, euermore it thirsteth after more working. These things in proporcion be so wel ioined, þ it vndoeth all thing, which into badnesse by any way may be accompted. Certes (qd. I) this is a thing precious and noble. Alas that falsenesse euer or wantrust should euer be maintained, this ioy to void. Alas þ euer any wretch should throw wrath or enuy, iangling dare make to shoue this melody so farre abacke, that openly dare it not ben bled: truly wretches ben fulfilled with enuy and wrath, and no wight els. Flebring and tales in such wretches dare appeare openly in euery wights ear with full mouth so charged, mokell malice mooued many innocents to shend, God would their soule therwith were strangled. Lo, trouth in this blisse is hid and ouer all vnder couer him hideth: He dare nat come a place for waiting of shrewes. Commonly badnes, goodnesse amaistreth with my selfe and my soule this ioy would I buy, if the goodnes were as much as the nobly in melody. O (qd. she) what goodnes may bee accompted more in this materiall world, truly none that shalt thou vnderstand. Is not euery thing good that is contrariaunt and distroying yuel? How els (qd. I) Enuy, wrath, and falsenes ben generall (qd. she) & þ wot euery man being in his right mind, þ knot þ which we haue in this blesse, is contrariaunt and distroieth such maner yuels. Ergo it is good, what hath caused anye wight to do any good deed? Find mee anye good, but if this knot bee the chiefe cause: Needs mote it be good, þ causeth so many good deeds. Euery cause is more, and worthier than thing caused, and in þ mores possession, all things lesse ben counted. As the king is more than his people, and hath in possession all his realme after: Right so the knot is more than all other goodes, thou might reckē all things lasse, & þ to him iongeth oweth into his mores causes of worshipp and of wil do turne, it is els rebel & out of his mores defending to void. Right so of euery goodnesse into the knot and into the cause of his worshipp oweth to tourne. And truly euery thing that hath being profitably is good, but nothing hath to been more profitably than this knot: Kyngs it maintayneth, and hem their powers to maintaine: It maketh misse to beene amended, with good gouernaunce in doing. It cloketh hearts so togider, þ rancour is out thrested. Who that it lengest kepeth, lengest is gladded. I trow (qd. I) heretikes, and misse meaning people hencefor ward woll maintaine this knot, for therethrough shull they been maintayned, and vtterly woll tourne, and

leaue

leaue their old yuel vnderstanding, and knit this goodnes, and profer so ferre in seruice, that name of seruauntes might they haue. Their iangles shal cease, me thinketh hem lacketh matter now to alledge. Certes (qd. Loue) if they of good will thus tourned as thou sayest wollen trewly pertourne, yet shull they bee abled party of this blisse to haue: and they woll not, yet shull my seruaunts the warre well sustaine in my helpe of maintenaunce to the end. And they for their good trauail shullen in reward so ben meded, that endelesse ioy body and soule togider in this shullen abiden, there is euer action of blisse withouten possible corrupcio, there is action perpetual in werk without trauel, there is euerlasting passise without any of labour: cõtinuall plite without ceasing coueited to endure. No tongue may tell ne heart may thinke the least point of this blisse. God bring me thider (qd. I thã.) Continueth well (qd. she) to the end, & thou might not faile than, for though thou speed not here, yet shal the passion of thy martred life ben written, and radde tofore the great Jupiter that God is of routh, an high in the hollownes of heauen, there he sit in his trone, and euer thou shalt forward ben holden among all these heauens for a knight, that mightest with no penance ben discomfited. He is a very martir that liuingly going is gnawen to the bones. Certes (qd. I) these ben good words of comfort, a little mine heart is reioiced in a merry wise. Ye (qd. she) and he that is in heauẽ seeth more ioy, than whan he first heard therof speake. So it is (qd. I) but wist I the sooth, ỳ after disease comfort wold follow with blisse, so as ye haue oftẽ declared, I wold wel suffer this passion with the better cheare, but my thoughtful sorrow is endelesse, to think how I am cast out of a welefare, & yet daineth not this yuel none heart none herde to me ward, thorow which thinges would greatly me by waies of comfort disport, to weten in my selfe a litle with other me ben ymoned: and my sorrowes peisen not in her balaunce the weight of a pease: Slungs of her daunger, so heauily peisen, they drawe my caules so hie, that in her eien they semen but light and right litle.

O, for (qd. she) heauen with skies ỳ foule cloudes maken and darke weathers, with great tempests and huge, maketh the mery dayes with soft shining sonnes. Also the yeare with drawoeth floures and beauty of hearbs and of earth. The same yeares maketh springes and iolity in Uere so to renouel with painted colours, that earth semed as gay as heauen. Seas that blasteth and with wawes throweth ships, of which the liuing creatures for great peril of hem dreden: right so the same seas maketh smooth waters and golden sailing, and comforteth hem, with noble hauen ỳ first were so serde. Hast thou not (qd she) learned in thy youth that Jupiter hath in his warderobe bothe garments of ioy and of sorow? What wost thou howe soone he woll tourne of thee the garment of care, and clothe thee in blisse? Parde it is not ferre fro the. Lo an old prouerbe alledged by many wise: Whan bale is greatest, than is bote a nie boye. Wherof wilt thou dismay? hope wel and serue wel, and that shall thee saue, with thy good bileue. Yea, yea (qd. I) yet see I not by reason how this blisse is comming, I wot it is cõtingent, it may fall on other. O (qd. she) I haue mokell to done to cleare thine vnderstanding, and void these errours out of thy mind, I wol proue it by reason thy wo may not alway enduren. Euery thing kindely (qd. shee) is gouerned and ruled by the heauenly bodies, which hauen full werching here on earth, & after course of these bodies, all course of your doings here ben gouerned & ruled by kind. Thou wost well by course of planets all your daies proceden, and to euerich of singular houres be enterchanged stoundmele about, by submitted working naturally to suffer, of which changes commeth these transitory times, that maketh reuoluing of your years thus stoundmeale, euery hath full might of working, till all seuen han had her course about. Of whiche workings and possession of hours, ỳ daies of the week haue take her names, after denominacion in these seuen planets. As your sunday ginneth at ỳ first houre after noone on the saturday, in which houre is than the son in ful might of working, of whom sunday taketh this name. Next him foloweth Uenus, & after Mercurius, & thã ỳ Moon, so thã Saturnus, after whõ Jouis, & than Mars & ayen than the Son, & so forth be xxiiii. houres togider, in which houre gunning in the ii. day stant the Moon, as maister for that time to rule, of whom munday taketh his name, and this course foloweth of all other daies generally in doing. This

course of nature of these bodyes chaunging, stinten at a certain tearm, limitted by their first kind, & of hem all gouernments in this elemented woꝛld pꝛoceeden, as in spꝛings, constellacions, engendꝛures, & all that folis woen kind and reason, wherfoꝛe the course that followeth soꝛrow and ioy, kindly moten enterchaungen their times, so that alway on wele as alway on wo may nat endure. Thus seest thou apertly thy soꝛrowe into welemote ben chaunged, wherefoꝛe in suche case to better side euermoꝛe encline thou shouldest. Truly next the end of soꝛow anon entreth ioy, by manner of necessity, it woll ne may none other betide, & so thy contingence is disploued: if thou hold this opinion any moꝛe, thy wit is right leaud. Wherfoꝛe in full cõclusion of all this, chilke Margarite thou desirest, hath been to thee deare in thy heart, and foꝛ her hast thou suffered many thoughtfull diseases, hereafter shall wee cause of mokell mirth and ioy, and loke how glad canst thou ben, and cease all thy passed heauinesse with manifold ioyes. And than woll I as blithly heare thee speaken thy mirths in ioy, as I now haue yheard thy soꝛows, and thy complaints. And if I mow in ought thy ioy encrease, by my trouth on my side, shal nat bee leaued foꝛ no maner trauaile, that I with al my mights, right blithly woll help and euer been ready you both to please. And thã thanked I that lady with all goodly maner that I woꝛthily coud, and truly I was greatly reioiced in mine heart, of her faire behests, and pꝛoferred me to be flaw in all that she mee would oꝛdain while my life lasted.

ME thinketh (qd. I) that ye haue right wel declared, that way to the knot should not beene in none of these displouing things, and now oꝛder of our purpose this axeth, that ye should mee shew if any way be thither, and which if like way should ben, so ỹ openly may be seyn ỹ very hie way in ful confusion of these other things.

Thou shalt (qd. she) vnderstand that one of thꝛee liues (as I first said) euery creature of mankind is spꝛongen, and so foꝛth pꝛoceedeth. These liues be thoꝛow names departed in thꝛee maner of kinds, as bestialliche, manlyche, and reasonabliche, of which two beene vsed by fleshly body, and the thirde by his soul. Bestial among reasonables is foꝛboden in euery lawe and euery sect, both in Christen and other, foꝛ euery wight displeseth hem that liueth by lusts and delites, as him that is thral and bounden seruaunt to things right foule, such been counted werse than men, he shall nat in their degree beene reckened, ne foꝛ such one allowed. Heretikes sain they chosen like bestiall, that voluptuously liuen, so that (as I first said to thee) in manly and reasonable liuings, our matter was to declare, but manly life in liuing after flesh, oꝛ els fleshly waies to chese may nat blisse in this knot be conquered, as by reason it is pꝛoued. Wherefoꝛe by reasonable life hee muste needes it haue sith away is to this knotte, but nat by the first tway liues, wherfoꝛe needs mote it ben to ỹ third, and foꝛ to liue in flesh but nat after flesh, is moꝛe reasonabliche than manliche reckened by clerkes. Therfoꝛe how this way commeth in I woꝛl it blithly declare.

Se now (qd. she) ỹ these bodily goods of manlich liuings, yelde soꝛowfully stounds and smert and houres. Who so wel remember him to their endes, in their woꝛchinges they ben thoughtfull and soꝛy. Right as a bee that hath had his hony, anone at his flight beginneth to sting: So thilk bodily goods at the last mote away, and thã sting they at her going, wherethꝛough entreth & clean voideth all blisse of this knot.

Foꝛsoth (qd. I) me thinketh I am wel serued, in shewing of these woꝛds. Although I had litle in respect among other greate and woꝛthy, yet had I a faire parcell, as mee thought foꝛ the time, in foꝛthering of my sustenance, which while it dured, I thought me hauing mokell hony to mine estate. I had richelle sufficiantly to weiue nede, I had dignity to be reuerẽced in woꝛship. Wherme thought ỹ I had to keep from mine enemies, and mee seemed to shine inglozy of renoumie, as manhood axeth in mean foꝛ no wight in mine administration, coud none guiles ne treachery by soth cause on me putte. Lady your seruice weren well ỹ of tho confederacies maked by my souerainess, I nas but a seruant, & yet mokel meane folke woll fully ayenst reason thilk matters maintain, in which maintenaunce glozien themselle, and as ofte ye hauen said, therof ought nothing in yuel to be said to mewards, sithen as repẽtãt I am turned, & no moꝛe I think, neither tho things ne none such other to sustene, but vtterly distroye without medling maner, in al my mights. Now am I nowe

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cast out of al swetenes of blisse, and mischeuously stongen my passed ioye. Sorowfully must I bewaile, and liue as a wretch. Euery of tho ioyes is turned into his contrary: for riches, now haue I pouerty: for dignity, now am I imprisoned: in steade of power, wretchednes I suffer: and for glorye of renome, I am now dispised and foulliche hated: thus hath farne fortune, that sodainly am I ouerthrowen, and out of all wealth dispoiled. Truly me thinketh this way in entree is right hard. God graunt me better grace ere it be all passed, thother way lady me thought right sweete. Now certes (qd. Loue) me lift for to chide. What aileth thy darke dulnesse? Woll it not in eletenes ben sharped. Haue I not by many reasons to thee shewed, sothe bodily goodnes failen to yeue blesse, their might so ferforth woll not stretch? Shame (qd. she it is to say) thou lyest in thy words. Thou ne hast wist but rizt few that these bodily goods had al at once, commenly they dwellen not togither. Hee that plenty hath in riches, of his kinne is ashamed: another of linage right noble and well know, but pouerty him handleth, hee were leuer vnknowe. Another hath these, but renome of peoples prailing mote he not haue, ouer all he is hated, and defamed of things right foule. Another is faire & semely, but dignity him faileth: and he that hath dignity is croked or lame, or els misshapen, and foully dispised. Thus partable these goods dwellen commonly in one houshold ben they but sild. Lo how wretched is your trust, on thing thing that woll not accorde. Me thinketh thou clepest thilke plite thou were in filnesse of fortune. & thou saist for ỳ that filnes is departed, thou art a wretch. Then foloweth this vpon thy words, euery soule resonable of mã may not die, & if death endeth filnes, & maketh wretches as needs of fortune maketh it an end. Thã soules after death of the body, in wretchednes should liuen, But we know many that han getten the blisse of heauen after their death. Howe then may this life maken hem blisfull, that when it passeth, it yeueth no wretchednes, & many times blisse, if in this life he cõtinue as he should. And wolt thou accompt with fortune, that now at the first she hath doen the tene & sorow: if thou loke to the maner of all glad things and sorowful, thou maist not nay it, that yet, and namely now thou shadest in noble plite in a good ginning, with good forth going her after. And if thou wen to be a wretch, for sothe welth is passed, why then art thou not well fortunate, for badde things & auguis wretchednes been passed. Art thou now come first into the hostry of this life, or els the both of this worlde, art thou now a sodain gest into this wretched exile? Weneste there be any thing in this yearth stable? Is not thy first arest passed ỳ brought thee in mortall sorow? Been these not mortall things agon, with ignorance of beastiall witte, and hast receiued reason in knowing of vertue? What comfort is in thy heart? The knowing sikerly in my seruice be grounded: And wost thou not well as I said, that death maketh ende of all fortune? What then, standest thou in noble plite, little hede or reckening to take, if thou let fortune passe ding, or els ỳ she flie whẽ her list, now by thy liue. Parde a mã hath nothing so lefe as his life, & for to hold that he doeth all his cure & diligent trauaile. Then say I thou art blisfull and fortunate sely, if thou knew thy goodes, that thou hast yet beloued, which nothing may doubt, that they ne ben more worthy than thy life? What is that (qd. I) good contemplacion (qd. she) of wel doing in vertue, in time comming both in pleasaunce of me, and of thy Margarite perle: hastily thine heart in full blisse, with her shalbe cased. Therefore dismay the not, fortune in hate greuously ayenst thy bodily person, ne yet to great tempest hath she not sent to thee, sithen the holding cables & ankers of thy life, holden by knitting so fast, ỳ thou disco̅fort the nought of time ỳ is now, ne dispaire thee not of time to come, but peuen the cõfort in hope of wel doing, & of getting again the double of thy lesing, with increasing loue of thy Margarite perle therto. For this hiderto thou hast had all her full dangier, & so thou might amend all that is misse, & all defaults that sometime thou didest, & that now in all thy time to that like Margarite in full seruice of my lore, thine heart hath continued, wherefore she ought much the rather, enclose fro her dangerous seet. These things been yet knit, by the holding anker in thy liue, & holden mote they: To God I pray all these things at full ben performed. For while this anker holdeth, I hope thou shalt safely escape, & while thy true meaning seruice about bring, in dispite of al false meaners, that thee of new haten, for this true seruice, thou art now entered.

Certain (qd. I) amõg things I asked a question, which was the way to the knotte. Truly lady how so it be, I tempt you with questions & answers, in speaking of my first seruice, I am now in full purpose in the prick of the hart, that thilke seruice was an unprisonment, and alway bad and naughty, in no manner to be desired. Ne that in getting of the knot, may it nothing auaile. A wise gentil hart loketh after vertue, and none other bodily ioyes alone. And because tofore this, in tho waies I was set, I wote well my selfe I haue erred, and of the blisse failed, and so out of my way hugely haue I run. Certes (qd. she) that is soth, and there thou hast misswent, eschew that path from hence forward I rede. Wonder I truly, why the mortall folke of this world seche these waies outforth, and it is priued in your self. Lo how ye ben confounded with error and folly. The knowing of very cause and way, is goodnes and vertue. Is there any thing to thee more precious then thy selfe? Thou shalt haue in thy power, that thou wouldest neuer lese, and that in no way may be take fro thee, and thilke thing is that is cause of this knotte. And if death mow it not reue, more than an earthly creature, thilk thing then abideth with thy selfelone. And so our conclusion, to make such a knot thus gette, abideth with this thing, and with the soul, as long as they last. A soul dieth neuer, vertue and goodnesse euermore with the soule endureth, and this knot it partit blisse. The this soule in this blisse endles shall endure. Thus shul harts of a true knot been eased: thus shull their soules been pleased: thus perpetually in ioy shull they sing. In good trouth (qd. I) here is a good beginning, yeue vs more of this way. (Md. she): said to thee not long sithen, that resonable life was one of thre things, and it was proued to ỹ soul. Euery soule of reason, hath two things of stering life, one in vertue, and another in the bodily working: and whan the soule is the maister ouer the body, then is a manne maister of himselfe: and a man to be a maister ouer himself, liueth in vertue & in goodnesse, and as reason of vertue teacheth. So the soule and the body working vertue togider, liuen resonable life, which clerkes clepen felicity in liuing, and therein is the high way to this knot. These old Philosophers, that hadden no knowing of Diuine grace of kindly reason alone, wenden that of pure nature without any helpe of grace, me might haue yboned the other liuings, resonably haue I liued: and for I thinke herafter, if God wol (and I haue space) thilk grace after my leude knowing declare: I leaue it as at this time. But (as I saied) he that out foorth the loketh after the wayes of this knotte, coming with which he should know the way inforth, slepeth for the time: wherfore he that wol this way know, must leaue the looking after false waies outforth, and open the yen of his conscience, and vnclose his heart. Seest not he that hath trust in the bodily life, is so busie bodily wounds, to anoint in keping from smert (for all out may they not be healed) that of wounds in his true vnderstanding, he taketh no heed, the knowing eue forth slepeth so hard, but anone as in knowing awake, then ginneth the priuy medicines, for healing of his true intent, inwardes lightly healeth conscience if it be well handled. Then must nedes these wayes come out of the soule by stering life of the body, and els may no manne come to parfite blisse of this knot: and thus by this way hee shall come to ỹ knot, and to the parfit shinesse that he wend haue had in bodily goods outforth. Ye (qd. I) shall he haue both knotte, riches, power, dignity, & renowme in this manner way? Ye (qd. she) ỹ shall I shew thee. Is he not rich that hath sufficance, and hath ỹ power that no man may amaistrein? Is not great dignity to haue worship & reuerence? And hath he not glory of renowme, whose name perpetuall is during, & out of nomber in comparacion? These be the things that men wenen to getten outforth (qd. I). Yea (qd. she) they ỹ loke after a thing that nought is, thereof in all ne in party long mow they gapen after: that is sooth (qd. I:) therefore (qd. she) they that seche gold in grene trees, and wene to gader precious stones among vines, and laine her nets in mountaines to fish, & thinke to hunt in depe seas after hart and hind, & seeken in yearth thilke things that surmounteth heauen. What may I of hem say? But folish ignorance milleadeth wandring wretches by vncouth waies that shullen be forletten, and maketh hem blind fro the right path of true way, that should been vsed. Therefore in generall errour in mankind, departeth thilke goods

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by misse seching, which he should haue hole and he sought by reason. Thus goeth he begiled of that he sought, in his hode mē haue blow a iape. Now (qd. I) if a man be vertuous, & all in in vertue liueth, how hath he al these things? That shal I proue (qd. she) What power hath any man to let another of liuing in vertue? For prisonment or any other disease, he take it pacientlý, discomfiteth he not, the tyraunt ouer his soule, no power may haue: then hath that mā so tormented such power, that he nill be discomfited ne ouercome may he not ben, sithen pacience in his soule ouercometh, and as not ouercomen. Such thing that may not be a maistred, he hath neede to nothing, for he hath suffisaunce inow to helpe himself. And thilke thing that thus hath power and suffisaunce, and no tiraunt may it reue, & hath dignity to set at naught all thinges, here it is a great dignitye that death may amaistry. Wherfore thilke power suffisaunce so enclosed with dignity, by all reason renome must haue. Thus is thilke riches with suffisaunce ye should looke after: this is thilke worshipfull dignity ye should coueit: this is the like power of might in which ye should trust: this is thilke renome of glory, that endlesse endureth, and all nis but substance in vertuous liuing. Certes (qd. I) all this is sooth, and so I see well that vertue with full gripe, encloseth all these things. Wherfore in sooth I may say, by my trouth, vertue of my Margarite, brought me first into your seruice, to haue knitting with that iewell, not sodaine longings ne folkes small wordes, but only our conuersacion togider: and then I seing thentent of her true meaning, with flourishing vertue of pacience, that she vsed nothing in euill, to quite the wicked lesings that false tongues oft in her haue laied. I haue sey it my selfe, goodly forgeueneesse hath sponge out of her hart, vnity and accord aboue all other things, she desireth in a good meke manner, and suffereth many wicked tales.

TRuly lady, to you it were a great worship, that soche things by due chastisement were amended. Ye (qd. shee) I haue thee excused, all soche thinges as yet mowe not be redressed: thy Margarites vertue, I commend well the more, that pacientlý soch anroyes suffereth. Dauid king was meke and suffered mokell hate, and many euill speaches: no dispite ne shame, that his enimies him didden, might not moue pacience out of his heart, but euer in one plite uuercy he vsed. Wherfore God him selfe toke reward to the things, and thereon such punishment let fal. Truly by reason it ought be ensample of drede, to all manner peoples mirth. A man vengeable in wrath, no gouernaunce in punishment ought to haue. Plato had a cause his seruaunt to scourge, and yet cleaped he is neighbour, to performe the doing, himselfe would not, least wrath had him amaistred, & so might he haue laid on to much: euermore grounded vertue sheweth the intent fro within him. And truly I wot well for her goodnes and vertue, thou hast desired my service, to her pleasaunt well the more, & thy selfe therto fully hast profered. Good lady (qd. I) is vertue the hie way to this knot, that long we haue handled? Ye forsooth (qd. she) & without vertue, goodly this knotte may not be gotten. Ah now I see (qd. I) how vertue in me faileth, & I as a sere tree, without burioning or fruit alway welke, and so I stond in dispaire of this noble knot, for vertue in me hath no maner working. A wide where about haue I trauailed. Peace (qd. she) of thy first way thy trauailes in idel, and as touching the second way, I se wel thy mening. Thou wouldest conclude me if thou couldest bicause I brought thee to seruice, & euery of my seruants I helpe to come to this blisse, as I said here beforne: and thou saidest thy selfe, thou mightest not be holpen as thou wenest, bicause that vertue in thee faileth. And this blis perfitly without vertue, may not be gotten, thou wenest of these wordes, cōtradiccion to folow. Warde at ỳ hardest I haue no seruant, but he be vertuous in dede & thouzt I brouzt thee in my seruice, yet art thou not my seruant: but I say, thou might so werch in vertue herafter, that then shalt thou be my seruant, & as for my seruant accounted. For habite maketh no Monke, ne wearing of gilt spurres maketh no knight. Neuer the later, in cōfort of thine hart, yet woll I otherwise answer. Certes lady (qd. I tho) so ye must needes, or els I had nigh caught soch a cordiacle for sorrow, I wot it wel I should it neuer haue recouered. And therfore now I pray to informe me in this, or els I hold me without recouery. I may not lōg indure, til this lesso be learned, & of this mischicfe ỳ remedie knowen. Now (qd. she) be not wroth, for there is no manne on liue, that

that may come to a precious thing, long coueted, but he sometime sucker tenefull diseases, and woenest thy selfe to been vnlike to all other. That may not ben: and with the more sorrow that a thing is getten, ȳ more hee hath ley the like thing afterwardes to kepe, as it fareth by children in schoole, that for learning arne beaten when their lesson they forgeten, commonly after a good disciplining with a yerde, they kepe right well doctrine of their schole.

Right with these wordes, on this lady I threw vp mine eyen to see her countenance and her cheare, & she aperceiuing this fantasie in min heart, gaune her semblaunt goodly on me cast and said in this wise.

It is well knowne, both to Reason and Experience in dooing, euery actiue woorcheth on his passiue, and when they ben together, actiue and passiue, been ycleaped by these Philosophers, if fire be in place, chasing thing able to be chafed or heat, and the like things been set in such a distaunce, that the one may werche, the other shall suffer. The like Margarite thou desirest, is full of vertue and able to be actiue in goodnesse: But euery hearb sheweth his vertue outforth from within, the Sunne yeueth light that things may be seye.

Euery fire heateth thilke thing that it neighed, and if it be able to be heate, vertue of this Margarite outforth weyeth, and nothing is more able to suffer woorching, or worke catche of the actife, but passife of the same actife, and no passife to vertues of this Margarite, but thee in all my donet can I find, so that her vertue must needes on thee werche, in what place euer thou be, within distaunce of her worthinesse, as her very passife thou art closed: but vertue may thee nothing profite, but thy desire be perfourmed, and all thy sorrowes ceased. Ergo through werching of her vertue thou shalt right easily been holpen, and driuen out of all care, and welcome to this long by thee desired.

Lady (qd. I) this is a good lesson, in ginning of my ioy: But wete ye well forsooth, though I suppose she haue much vertue, I would my spousaile were proued, and then may I liue out of doubt, and reioyce me greatly in thinking of tho vertues so shewed. I heard thee say (qd. she) at my beginning, when I receiued thee first for to serue that thy iewell, thilke Margarite thou desirest, was closed in a muskle, with a blewe shell. Ye forsoth (qd. I) so I said, and so it is. Well qd. she, euery thing kindly sheweth it selfe, this iewell closed in a blew shell, excellence of colours, sheweth vertue from within, and so euery wight should rather looke to the proper vertue of things, then to his forraine goods. If a thing be ingendred of good matter, commonly and for the more part it followeth, after the congealement vertue of the first matter, and it be not corrupt with vices, to proceed with increase of good vertues: eke right so it fareth of bad. Truly great excellence in vertue of linage, for the more part discendeth by kind to the succession in vertues to follow. Wherfore I say, the colours of euery Margarite, sheweth from within the finesse in vertue.

Kindly heauen, when merry weather is aloft, appeareth in mannes eye of colour in Blewe, steadfastnesse in peace, betokening within and without: Margarite is ingendred by heauenly dewe, and sheweth in it selfe by fineneſſe of colour, whether the engendrure were maked on morow or on eue: thus saith kind of this perle. This precious Margarite that thou seruest, sheweth it self discended by nobley of vertue from his heauenliche dewe, nourished and congealed in mekenesse, that mother is of all vertues, and by workes that menne seen withouten the signification of the colours, been shewed mercy and pity in the hart, with peace to al other: and all this is icloſed in a Muskle, who so readily these vertues looken. All thing that hath soule, is reduced into good by meane things, as thus: Into God man is reduced by soules reasonable, & so forth beasts, or bodies that mow not mouen, after place been reduced into man, by beastes meue that moouen from place to place: so that thilke bodies that han feling soules, and moue not from places, holden the lowest degre of soling things in feling, and such been reduced into manne by meanes. So it followeth the Muskle as mother of al vertues, haite the place of mekenesse, to his lowest degree discendeth downe of heauen, and there by a manner of virgine ingendrure, arne these Margarites ingendred, & afterward congeled. Made not mekenes so low the hie heauen, to inclose and catch out

thereof

thereof so noble a dew, that after congealement, a Margarite with endles vertu and euerlasting ioy, was with ful vessel of grace yeuen to euery creature, that goodly would it receiue. Certes (qd. I) these things been right noble, I haue er this heard these same sawes. Then (qd. she) thou wost well these things been sooth: Ye forsooth (qd. I) at the full. Now (qd. she) that this Margarite is full of vertue, it is well prooued: wherefore some grace, some mercy emong other vertues, I wot right well on thee shal discend. Ye (qd. I) yet would I haue better declared vertues in this Margarite kindly to been grounded. That shall I shew thee (qd. she) and thou wouldest it learne: Learne (qd. I) what needeth such woordes: wete ye not well Lady your selfe, that all my cure, all my diligence, and all my might, haue tourned by your counsaile, in pleasance of that perle, al my thought, and all my study, with your helpe desireth, in worshipe the like iewell, to increase all my trauaile, and all my busines in your seruice, this Margarite to glad in somchalue: me were leuer her honour, her pleasaunce, and her good cheare, thorow me for to be maintained and kept, and I of sothe thing in her liking to bee cause, then all the wealth of bodily goodes ye could recken. And would neuer God, but I put my self in great iopardy of all that I would, that is now no more but my life alone, rather than I should suffer thilke iewell in any point been blemished, as fer as I may suffer, and with my mights stretch. Such thing (qd. she) may mokel further thy grace, and thes in my seruice auaunce. But now (qd. Loue) wilt thou graunt me thilke Margarite to been good: O good good (qd. I) why tēpt ye me and tene with soch maner speach: I would graunt that though I should anon die, and by my trouth fight in the quarrell, if any wight would counterplead. It is so much the lighter (qd. Loue) to proue our intent. Ye (qd. I) but yet would I heare, how ye would proue, that she were good by reasonable skill, that it mowe not been denied, for although I knowe, and so doth many other, manifold goodnesse and bertue, in this Margarite been printed, yet some menne there been, that no godnesse speaken: and where euer your woords ben heard, and your reasons been shewed, such euill speakers Lady, by auctority of your excellence, shullen been stopped and ashamed. And more thei that han none acquaintance in her person, yet mow they knowe her vertues, and ben the more informed in what wise they mow set their harts, when hem list into your seruice any entree make: for truely all this to begin, I wote well my selfe, that thilke iewell is so precious perle, as a womanly woman in her kind, in whō of goodnes, of vertue, and also of aunswering, shape of limmes, and features so well in all points according, nothing faileth: I leue that kind her made with great study, for kind in her person nothing hath forget, & that is well seen. In euery good wights hart, she hath grace of commending, and of vertuous praising. Alas that euer kinde made her deadly, saue onely in that I wote well, that Nature in forming of her in nothing hath erred.

Certes (qd. Loue) thou hast well begonne, and I aske thee this question: Is not in generall euerye thing good? I not (qd. I). No (qd. she) saue not GOD euery thing that he made, and werne right good. Then is woonder (qd. I) how euill things commen a place, sithen that all things weren right good. Thus (qd. she) I woll declare euerich quality, and euery action, and euery thing that hath any maner of being, it is of GOD, and GOD it made, of whome is all goodnes, and all being, of him is no badnesse: badde to be is naught: good to be is somewhat, and therfore good and being, is one in vnderstanding. How may this be (qd. I) for often han shrewes me assailed, and mokell badnesse therein haue I founden, and so me semeth bad, to be somewhat in kind. Thou shalt (qd. she) vnderstand that such manner badnesse, which is vsed to purifie wrong doers is somewhat, and God it made, and being hath, and that is good: other badnes no being hath vtterly, it is in the negatiue of somewhat, and that is naught, & nothing being.

The parties essentiall of beeing, arne saied in double wise, as that it is, and these parties been found in euery creature, for all thing a this halfe the first beeing, is beeing thorough participacion, taking partie of beeing, so that euery creature is difference betweene being, and of him thorough whom

whom it is and his owne being: right as euery good is a maner of being, ſo is it good through being, for it is naught other to be: and euery thing though it be good, it is not of himſelfe good, but is good by that, it is ordinable to the great goodnes. This dualitie after Clerkes determiſſion, is founden in euery creature, be it neuer ſo ſingle of onhed. Ye (qd. I) but there as it is ſaied, that God ſaue euery thing of his making, and were right good, as your ſelf ſaid to me, not long time ſithen. I aſke whether euery creature is ſaid good, through goodnes vnformed, either els formed, and afterward if it be accept vtterly goode. I ſhall ſay thee (qd. ſhe) theſe great paſſed clerkes, han diuided good, into good being alone, and that is nothing but good, for nothing is good in that wiſe but God. Alſo in good by participatiō, and that is icleaped good, for farre fet, and repreſentatiue of goodly goodnes, and after this manifold good is ſaide, that is to ſay, good in kind, and good in gender, and good of grace, and good of ioy.

Of good in kind, Auguſtine ſaith, al that been, been good: but peraunter thou wouldeſt wete, whether of hemſelfe it be good, or els of anothers goodnes, for natural goodnes of euery ſubſtance, is nothing els than his ſubſtaunciall being, which is ycleaped goodnes, after compariſon that he hath to his firſt goodnes, ſo as it is inductatiue, by meanes into the firſt goodnes. Boece ſheweth this thing at the full, that this name Good, is in generall name in kind, as it is compariſoned generally to his principall end, which is God, knot of all goodnes. Euery creature cryeth, God vs made, and ſo they han full apeted to thilke God by affection, ſoch as to hem belongeth: and in this wiſe al things been good, of the great God, which is good alone. This wonder thing (qd. I) how ye haue by many reaſons proued, my firſt way to be errour and miſgoing, and cauſe of badneſſe and feble meaning, in the ground ye alledged to be roted: whēce is it that ſoch badnes hath ſprings, ſithen all things thus in general ben good, and badneſſe hath no beeing, as ye haue declared: I wene if all things been good, I might then with the firſt way, in that good haue ended, and ſo by goodnes haue comen to bliſſe in your ſeruice deſired. All thing (qd. ſhe) is good by being in participacion, out of the firſt goodneſſe, which goodnes is corrupt by badneſſe and bad meaning maners: God hath in good things, that they been good by being, and not in euill, for ther is abſence of rightfull loue, for badneſſe is nothing only but euill will of the wier, and through giltes of the doer: wherefore at the ginning of the worlde, euery thing by himſelfe was good, and in vniuerſall thei weern right good. An ye or an hand is faire and better in a body ſet in his kindly place, then from the body diſcouered. Euery thing in his kindly place being kindly, good doth werche, and out of that place voided, it diſſolueth and is defouled him ſriue. Our noble GOD in gliterand wiſe by armonie this world ordeined, as in pourtraitures, ſtoried with colours meddled, in whiche blacke, and other darke colours, commenden the golden and the Azured painture, euery put in kindly place, one beſide an other, more for other glittereth: right ſo little faire, maketh right faire more glorious, and right ſo of goodnes, & of other things in vertue. Wherefore other badde, and not ſo good peries as this Margarite, that we han of this matter, yeuen by the aire little goodnes & litle vertue, right mokell goodneſſe and vertue in thy Margarite to been proued, in ſhining wiſe to be found and ſhewed. How ſhold euer goodnes of peace haue ben know, but if vnpeace ſomtime reigne, and mokell euill worthe: How ſhould mercy ben proued, and no treſpas were, by due iuſtificacion to be puniſhed: Therfore grace and goodnes of a wight is found, the ſorrowfull harts in good meaning to endure, ben comforted, vnite, and accorde betwene harts knit in ioy to abide.

What weneſt thou that I reioyce, or els account him emong my ſeruaunts, that pleaſeth Pallas, in vndoing of Mercurie, albeit that to Pallas be hee knitte by tutie of Lawe, not according to the reaſonable conſcience: and Mercurie in dooing haue grace to been ſuffered: or els him that weneth the Moone, for fairnes of the euening Starre. Lo, otherwhile by nights light of the Moone, greatly comforteth in darcke thoughtes and blinde. Underſtanding of loue yeueth great gladneſſe: Who ſo liſte not bileue, when a ſoth tale is ſhewed, adue and a deblis his name is entred. While folk and worthye in gentilleſſe, both of vertue and of liuing, yeuen full credence in ſoothnes of loue with a good hart, there as good

euidence

endlete by experience in doing, sheweth not the contrary. Thus mightest thou haue ful pleasse in thy Margarites goodnes, by commaundement of other ielwels badnesse, and yuelnesse in doing. Stoundmeals diseases peueth seuerall houres in ioy.

Now by my trouth (qd. I) this is well declared, that my Margarite is good, for sithen other ben good, and she passeth many other in goodnes and vertue, wherthrough by manner necessary she must be good: and goodnes of this Margarite is nothing els but vertue, wherfore she is vertuous, and if there failed any vertue in any side, there were lacke of vertue: bad nothing els is ne maye bee, but lacke and want of good and goodnesse, and so should she haue that same lacke, that is to sain bad, and that may not be, for she is good, & that is good mee thinketh all good: and so by consequence me seemeth vertuous, and no lacke of vertue to haue. But the Sonne is not know but hee shine, ne vertuous herbes but they haue her kind werching, ne vertue but it stretche in goodnes or profite to another, is no vertue. Thā by all waies of reason, sithen mercy and pity ben most commended among other vertues, and they might neuer ben shewed refreshment of helpe, & of comforte, but now at my most need, and that is the kinde werking of these vertues: trewly I wene I shal not vary from these helps.

Fire and if he yeue none heat, for fire is not demed. The Son but he shine, for Son is not accounted. Water but it wet, ỳ name shall ben chaunged. Vertue but it werch, of goodnes doth it faile, and into his contrary the name shal be reuersed, and these ben impossible: wherfore the contradictory that is necessarye, needes must I leaue. Certes (qd. shee) in thy person & out of thy mouth these words lien wel to ben said, and in thine understanding to be leaued, as intent of this Margarite alone: and heare now my speech in conclusion of these words.

IN these things (qd. she) that me list now to shew openly, shall be found the matter of thy sickenesse, and what shall bee the medicine ỳ may bee thy sorrowes lisse & comfort, as well thee as all other that amisse haue erred, and out of the waye walked, so that any drop of good will in amendement been dwelled in their heartes. Prouerbes of Salomon openly teacheth, how sometime an innocent walked by the way in blindnesse of a darke night, whom met a woman (if it be lefely to say) as a strūpet arraied, readily purueied in tourning of thoughts with vaine tanglings, and of rest inpacient dissimulacion of my tearmes, saying in this wise: come and be we dronke of our sweet paps, vse we coueitous collings. And thus drawen was this innocent, as an oxe to the larder. Lady (qd. I) to me this is a quaint thing to vnderstande: I praye you of this parable declare me the entent. This innocent (qd. she) is a scholer learning of my lore, in seeching of my blisse, in which thyng the day of his thought tourning encline th into eue, and the sonne of very light failing, maketh darke night in his cunning. Thus in darkenesse of many doubts he walketh, and for blindnesse of vnderstandyng, he ne wote in what way he is in: forsooth such one may lightly ben beguiled. To whom came loue fained, not clothed of my liuery, but vnlefull lusty habite, with soft speech and merry, and with faire honied words heretikes and mismeaning people, sklaren and wimplen their errours. Austine witnesseth of an Heretike that in his first beginning, he was a man right expert in reasons, and sweete in his words and the werks miscrden. Thus fareth fained loue in her first werchinges: thou knowest these thynges for trewe, thou hast hem proued by experience. Somtime in doyng to thine owne person, in which thing thou hast found matter of mokell disease. Was not fayned loue readily purueied, thy wits to cath and turn thy good thoughts: trewly she hath wounded the conscience of many, with flourishing of mokell tangling words: and good worth thanked I it for no glose, I am gladde of my prudence thou hast so manly her banned. To me art thou much holden, that in thy kind course of good meanyng I retourne thy mind: I trow ne had I shewed thee thy Margarit, thou haddest neuer retourned. Of first in good partite toy was neuer fayned loue impacient, as the water of Syloe, which euermore floweth with stilnesse and pryuy noise till it come nigh the brincke, and than gineth it so out of measure to boine, with nouellerics of chaunging stormes, that in

course of euerye renning, it is in point to spill all his circuit of cankes. Thus fained loue pzincly at the fullest of his flowyng, new stozmes debate to araise. And all be it that Mercurius often with whole vnderstandyng, knowen such perrilous matters, yet Venerians so lusty been and so leaud in their wittes, that in such thyngs right litle oz naught done they feele, and wziten and crien to their fellows: here is blisse, here is ioy, and thus into one same errour, mokell folke they dzawen. Come they saine, and be we dzonken of our pappes, that been fallas & lying glose of which now they not souke milke of health, but deadly venim and poyson, cozrupcion of sozrow. Wilke of fallas, is venum of disceit: Wilke of lying glose is venim of cozrupcion. Lo what thyng commeth out of these pappes: vse we coueited collinges, desire we and meddle we false wozdes with sote, and sote with false, trewly this is the sozrinelle of fained loue, needs of these surfets, sicknesse must follow.

Thus as an oxe to thy langozing death were thou dzawen, ỹ sote of the smoke hath thee all defaced. Euer the deper thou sometime wadest, the sooner thou it found: yf it had thee killed it had be little wonder. But on that other side my true seruaunt not faynen ne disceiue con, soothly their doyng is open, my foundement endureth, be the burthen neuer so great, euer in one it lasteth: it yeueth lyfe and blisfull goodnesse in the last ends, though the ginnings ben sharpe. Thus of two contraries, contrary been the effects. And so thilke Margarite thou seruest, shall seen thee by her seruice, out of perrilous tribulacion delinered, bicause of her seruice into new disease fallen, by hope of amendement in the last ende, with ioye to be gladded, wherefoze of kind pure, her mercy with grace of good helpe, shall she graunt, and els I shall her so straine, that with pity shall she ben amaistred. Remember in thine heart how hozribly sometyme to thine Margarite thou trespasest, and in a great wise ayenst her thou fozfetest: clepe ayen thy minde, and knowe thine owne gultes. What goodnesse, what bountye, with mokell following pity found thou in that time? were thou nat goodlye accepted into grace? By my plucking was she to fozyeuenes enclined. And after I her stirred to dzaw thee to house, and yet wendest thou vtterly foz euer haue ben refused. But well thou wost, sithen that I in such sharp disease might so greatly auaile, what thinkest in thy wit? How ferre may my witte stretche and thou lach not on thy side I wol make the knot: Certes in thy good bearing I woll accord with the Psalter, I haue found Dauid in my seruice true, and with holy oyle of peace and of rest long by him desired, vtterly he shall be annointed.

Trust well to me, and I woll thee not faile, The leaning of ỹ first way with good hart of continuaunce, ỹ I see in thee grounded, this purpose to perfozme, dzaweth me by manner of constraining, that needs must I been thine helper: although mirth a while be taried, it shall come at such season, that thy thought shall ben ioyed, and would neuer God, sithen thine hart to my reasonnes arne assented, & openlye hast confessed thine amisse goyng, and now criest after mercye but if mercy followed: thy blisse shall been ready ybis, thou ne west how soon.

Now be a good child I rede. The kind of vertues in thy Margarite rehearsed, by stregth of me in thy perso shul werch. Comfozt thee in this, foz thou maist not miscary. And these wozds said she streight her on length and rested a while.

Thus endeth the second book, and hereafter followeth the third booke.

Of number sain these clerks ỹ it is naturall some of discreet things, as in telling one, two, thze, and so fozth: but among all numbers thze is determined foz most certain. Wherefoze in nũber certain this werke of my busy leudnes, I think to end and perfourme.

Enlample by this wozld in thzee tymes is deuided: Of which the first is cleaped Demacian, that is to say, going out of true way, and all that tho dieden, in hell were they punished foz a mannes sinne, till grace and mercy set hym thence, and there ended the first time. The second time lasteth from the comming of merciable grace, vntill the end

end of transytozy time, in which is shewed the true way in forgoing of the badde, and that is yclaped time of grace: and that thing is not yeuen by desert of yelding, one benefit for another, but only through goodnes of the yeuer of grace in thilke time.

Who so can wel understand, is shapen to be saued in soules blisse. The third tyme shal gin vanishen transitozy things of worlds han made theyr end, and that shall been in ioy, glozy, and reste both body and soule, that wel han deserued in the time of grace. And thus in that heauē togither shul they dwell perpetually, without any ymaginatife yuel in any halue. These times are figured by tho three daies, that our God was closed in yearth, and in the third arose, shewing our resurrection, to ioy and blisse of tho that it deserue, by his merciable grace. To this leud booke in three matters accordaunt to tho times, lightly by a good inseer may been understand, as in the first errour of misse going is shewed with sorowfull pine, punished is cried after mercy. In the second is grace in good way pursued, whiche is failyng without desert, thilke first misse amending in correction of tho errours and euen way to bring with comfort of welefare, into amendment wering. And in the third ioy and blisse, graunted to him that well can deserue it, and hath sauour of understanding in the time of grace.

Thus in ioy of my third booke shall the matter be till it end. But speciall cause I haue in my heart to make this processe of a Margarit pearle, that is so precious a gem with cleare and itell of which stones or iewel, the tongues of vs English people turneth the right names, & clepeth hem Margarite pearles: thus varieth our speth from many other languages. For trewly Latin, French, and many mo other languages clepeth hem Margery pearles, ỳ name Margarite or Margrit pearles: wherefore in ỳ denommacion I woll me accord to other mens tongues, in ỳ name cleaping. Thele clerkes ỳ treaten of kinds, and studien out the property there of things, saine ỳ Margarit is a litle white pearl, throughout holow and round, and vertuous, and on ỳ sea sides in the more Britain in muskell shelles of the heauenly dew the best ben engendred: in which by experience ben found three fair vertues. One is it, yeueth comfort to the feeling spirites in bodily persones of reason. Another is good, it is profitable healthy ayenst passions of sory mens hearts. And the third it is needfull and noble in staunching of blood, there elles too much would out ren. To which pearl and vertues me list to liken at this time Philosophy, with her three speces, ỳ is naturall and morall, and reasonable: of which thynges heareth what sain these great clerks. Philosophy is knowing of deuinely & mãly things ioyned with study of good liuing, and this stant in two thynges, that is cunning and opinion: cunning is whan a thing by certaine reason is conceiued. But wretches, & fooles and leaud men, many will conceiue a thyng and mountaine it as for a sooth, though reason be in the contrary, wherfore cunning is a straunger. Opinion is while a thing is in none certaine, and hidde from mens very knowledging, and by no parfite reason fully declared, as thus: if the sonne be so mokel as men wenē, or els if it be more than the earth. For in soothnes ỳ certaine quantity of ỳ planet is vnknown to earthly dwellers, and yet by opinion of some men it is holden for more than midde earth. The first spece of Philosophy is naturall, which in kindly things treaten, and sheweth causes of heauē, and strength of kindly course: as by Arsinetrike, Gesmetry, Musicke, and by Astronomy, teacheth waies and course of heauens, of planets and of starres about heauen and earth, and other elementes. The second spece is moral, which in order of liuing manners teacheth, & by reason prooueth vertues of soule most worthy in our liuyng, which been Prudence, Iustice, Temperaunce, and strength. Prudence is goodly wisedome in knowing of thynges. Strength voydeth all aduersities aliche euen. Temperaunce distroyeth bestiall liuing with ealie bearing. And Iustice rightfully iudgeth, and iudging departeth to euery wight that that is his owne. The thirde spece tourneth into reason of understanding, all things to be said soth and discussed, & that in two things is deuided: one is Art, another is Rhetorike, in which two all laws of mans reason been grounded or els maintained. And for this booke is all of loue, and thereafter beareth his name, and Philosophy and law must here to accorden by their clergiall discriptions: as Philosophy for loue of wisedome is declared: Law for mauntainance of peace is hold, and thele

with loue must needs accoꝛden, therfoꝛe of hem in this place haue I touched. Oꝛder of homely things and honest maner of liuing in vertue, with ryghtfull iudgement in causes, & profitable administracion in communalties of realmes and cities, by euenhead profitably to raine, nat by singular auauntage, ne by priuy enuy, ne by sollein purpose in couetise of woꝛship oꝛ of goods, been disposed in open rule shewed, by loue, Philosophy, and law, and yet loue tofoꝛn all other. Wherfoꝛe as susterne in vnity they accoꝛde and one end ꝑ is peace and rest, they causen nourishing, and in the ioy mauntainen to endure. Now than, as I haue declared: my booke accoꝛdeth with discripcion of three thynges, and the Margarit in vertue is likened to Philosophy, with ꝑ three speces. In which matters euer twayne accoꝛdant with bodily reason, and the third with the soule: But in conclusion of my booke and of this Margarite pearle, in knitting togider law by three sundry manners shall be likened, ꝑ is to say, law, right, & custome, which I wol declare, al ꝑ is law, cometh of Gods oꝛdinaunce by kindly woꝛching, and thilke things oꝛdayned by mans wits arn yclepped right, which is oꝛdained by many maners, and in constitucion wꝛitten: But custome is a thing ꝑ is accepted foꝛ right oꝛ foꝛ law, there as law right failen, and there is no differẽce, whether it come of scripture oꝛ of reason. Wherefoꝛe it sheweth ꝑ law is kindly gouernaunce: right commeth out of mans probable reason: and custome is of common vsage by length of time vsed, and custome nat wꝛite is vsage, and if it be wꝛit constitucion it is ywꝛitten & ycleaped: But law of kind is common to euery nation, as cõiunction of man and woman in loue, succession of childꝛen in heritaunce, restitution of thing by strength taken oꝛ lent, and this law among all other hait the soucraineſt gree in woꝛship, which law begã at the beginning of reasonable creature, it varied yet neuer foꝛ no chaunging of time: cause foꝛsooth in oꝛdayning of law, was to constrain mans hardines into peace, and withdꝛawing his yuell will, and turning malice into goodnesse, and that innocence sikerly withouten tenefull annoy among shꝛewes, safely might inhabite by protection of safe conduct, so that shꝛewes harm foꝛ harm by bridle of ferdnesse shoulden restraine. But foꝛsooth in kindly law nothing is commended, but such as Gods will hath confirmed, ne nothing denied but cõtrariously of gods will in heauen: eke than all lawes oꝛ custome, oꝛ els constitution by vsage, oꝛ wꝛiting, that contrarien lawe of kinde, vtterly beene repugnaunt and aduersarye to our Gods wil of heauen. Truly law of kind foꝛ Gods own lusty will is verily to maintain, vnder which law (and vnwoꝛthy) both profesſe and reguler arn obediencer and bounden to this Margarite pearle, and by knot of loues statutes and stablishment in kind, which that goodly may not ben withsetiẽ. Lo vnder this bonde am I constrayned to abide, and man vnder liuing law ruled, by that law oweth after deserts to ben rewarded by paun oꝛ by mede, but if merry weyue the paine: so than be part, reasonfully may bee sey, that mercy both right and law palseth, the entent of all these matters, is the least cleare vnderstanding, to weten at the ende of this thirde booke full knowing thorow Gods grace, I thinke to make neuer the later, yet if these things han a good and a sleight mseer which ꝑ can souke honny of the hard stone, oile of ꝑ dꝛy rock, may lightly feele nobley of matter in my leud ymagination closed.

But foꝛ my booke shall bee of ioy (as I said) and I so ferre set from thilke place, fro whence gladnesse shoulde come, my coꝛd is to shoꝛt to let my boket ought catch of that water, and fewe meme be abouten my coꝛd to eche, and many in full purpose beene readye it shoꝛter to make, and to enclose the enter, that my boket of ioy nothing shoulde catch, but empty retourne, my carefull foꝛrows to encrease, and if I die foꝛ paine, that were gladnesse at their heartes. Good loꝛd send mee water into the top of these mountaines, and I shall dꝛink therof my thꝛusts to stanch: & sey these bee comfoꝛtable wels into health of goodnes of my sauiour am I holpen. And yet I say moꝛe, the house of ioy to me is not opened. How dare my soꝛrowfull ghost than in any matter of gladnesse thinken to treate? foꝛ euer sobbings & complaints be ready retret in his meditacions, as werbles in manifolde stounds comming about I not than. And therfoꝛe what maner of ioy could endite, but yet at doꝛe shal I knocke, if the key of Dauid would ꝑ locke vnbit and bꝛing mee in, which ꝑ childꝛens tongues both openeth and closeth. Whole spirit, where hee well woꝛcheth, departing goodly

goodly as him liketh. Now to goddes laud and reuerence, profit of the readers, amendment of maners of the hearers, encreasing of worship among loues seruaunts, releuing of my hart into grace of my iewell, and friendship pleasaunce of this pearle. I am stered in this making, and for nothing els: and if any good thing to mennes liking in this scripture be found, thanketh the maister of grace which that of ꝑ good and all other is authour, and principall doer. And if any thing be insufficient or els misliking, with ꝑ that ꝑ leudnesse of mine vnable conning, for body in disease annoyeth ꝑ vnderstanding in soule, a diseasely habitacion letteth the wits many things, and namely in sorow. The custome neuer the later of loue, be long time of seruice in tearmes I thinke to pursue, which been lucely to yeue vnderstanding in other things. But now to enform thee of this Margarites goodnesse, I may her not halfe praise. Wherfore not she for my booke, but this book for her is worthy to be commended, tho my book be leud: right as things not for places, but places for things ought to be desired and praised.

NOw (qd. loue) trewly thy words I haue well vnderstond. Certes me thinketh hem right good, & me wondreth why thou so lightly passest in the law. Sothly (qd. I) my wit is leud & I am right blind, and ꝑ matter deep, how should I thā haue waded, lightly might I haue drēched and spilt there my selfe. Yea (qd. she) I shall help thee to swim. For right as law punisheth breakers of precepts, and ꝑ contrary doers of the written constitutions: right so ayēward law rewardeth and yeueth mede to hem ꝑ law strengthen. By one law this rebel is punished, and this innocēt is mede, the shrew is imprisoned and this rightfull is crowned. The same law ꝑ ioyneth by wedlocke without forsaking, the same law yeueth libell of departicion bicause of deuorce, both demed and declared. Yea yea (qd. I) I find in no law to mede and reward in goodnes, the guilty of deserts. Foole (qd. she) guilty conuerted in your law, mikell merit deserueth. Also Paul of Rome was crowned, that by him the maintainers of Pompeius werē known and distroied: and yet forgon was this Paulin cheefe of Pompeius counsail. This law in Rome hath yet his name of measuring in mede, ꝑ bewray-

ing of ꝑ conspiracy, ordained by tho Senatours ꝑ death Julius Celar is accounted into Catons rightwilenesse, for euer in trouth flourisheth his name among ꝑ knowers of reason. Perdicas was crowned in the heritage of Alexander ꝑ great, forgetelling of a priuy hate ꝑ king Porrus to Alexander hadde. Therfore euery wight by reason of law after his rightwilenesse apertly his mede may challenge: and so thou ꝑ maintainest law of kind, & therefore disease hast suffered in the law, reward is worthy to be rewarded and ordained, and apertly thy mede might thou chalenge. Certes (qd. I) this haue I well learned, and euer henforward I shal draw me thereafter in one heed of will to abide this law both maintaine & keepe, and so hope I well endure into your grace, wel deseruing in o worthip of a wizt, without needefull compulsion ought medefully to be rewarded. Truly (qd. Loue) that is soth, and tho by constitucion good seruice into profit and auauntage stretch, vtterly many men it demen to haue more desart of mede, thā good wil nat compelled. Se now (qd. I) how may men holdē of this ꝑ cōtrary. And what is good seruice? O, you wold I hear this questiō declared, I shal say thee (qd. she) in a fewe wordes: reasonable workings in plesance & profite of thy soueraine. How should & this perform (qd. I) right wel (qd. she) & heare me now a litle. It is hardly (qd. she) to vnderstand that right as matter by due ouerchangings foloweth his perfectiō & his form: right so euery man by rightful werkings ought to folow ꝑ lefful desires in his hart, and se forgon to what end he deserueth, for many times he ꝑ toketh nat after thendes, but vttery therof is vnknown, befalleth often many yuels to done, where-throughout er he beware shamefully he is confounded, thend therof neden to be before loked to, euery desire of such forsight in good seruice thre things specially nedeth to be rulers in his workes. First ꝑ he do good, next ꝑ he do by election in his own hart, and the third ꝑ he do godly without en any surquedry in thoughts. That your werks shulden be good in seruice, or in any other acts, auctorities many may be alleged, neuer ꝑ later, by reson thus may it be shewed. Al your works be cleped fetōd & mouē in vertue of ꝑ first werther, which in good works wrouzt you to procede, & right so your werkes mouen into vertue of the last ende, and right

in the first worʒking were nat, no man shuld in the second werch Right so but ye feled to what end, and seen their goodnes closed, ye should no moze retch what ye wzought but the ginning gan with good, and there shall it ceale in the last end, if it be well considzed. Wherefoze ẏ middle, if other waies it dzaw than accozdaunt, to the ends, there stinteth the course of good, and another manner course entreth, and so it is a party by himselue, & euery part be not accozdaunt to his all, is foule and ought to be eschewd, wherefoze euery thing that is wzought & bee not good, is not accozdaunt to the endes of his all whole, it is foule, and ought to be withdzawn. Thus the persons that neither done good ne harm, shamen foule their making: Wherefoze without wozking of good actes in good seruice, may no man been accepted. Truly the like ẏ han might to do good, and done it not, ẏ crown of wozship shal be take fro hem, & with shame shut they be anulled. And so to make one werke accozdant with his ends, euery good seruaunt by reason of consequence must doe good needs. Certes it sufficeth not alone to doe good, but goodly withall follow, ẏ thanke of goodnes els in nought he deserueth: For right as all your being, come from ẏ greatest good, in whom all goodnesse is closed, right so your endes ben direct to the same good. Aristotle determineth ẏ end & good ben one, & cõuertible in vnderstanding, and he ẏ in will doth away good, & he ẏ loketh not to the end loketh not to good, but he ẏ doth good & doth not goodly, dzaweth away thy direction of the ende not goodly, must needs be bad. Lo badde is nothing els, but ablẽce oz negatiue of good, as darknes is ablence oz negatiue of light. Thã he ẏ doth goodly directeth thilk good into ẏ end of bad. So must thing not good follow, eke badnes to such folke oft folowweth. Thus contrariaunt wozkers of thende ẏ is good, ben wozthy ẏ contrary of the end that is good to haue. How (qd. I) may any good deed be done, but if goodly it help. Yes (qd. Loue) ẏ deuill doth many good deeds, but goodly he leaueth behind, foz euen badly & in disceinable wise he wozketh. Wherfoze the contrary of the end him followeth. And doe he neuer so many good deedes, because goodly is away, his goodnesse is not reckened. Lo than tho a man doe good, but he do good, but he do goodly thend in goodnesse woll not follow, & thus in good seruice both good deed & goodly done muste ioine togider, and ẏ it bee done with free choise in heart: and els deserueth he nat the merit in goods, ẏ woll I proue. For if thou doe any thing good by chance oz by happe, in what thing art thou thereof wozthy to be cõmended, foz nothing by reason of that, tourneth into thyp zailing ne lacking. Lo thilk thing don by hap by thy wil is nat caused, & therby should I thanke oz lake deserue: & sithen that fayleth, the end which ẏ wel should reward, must needs faile. Clerks saine, no mã but willing is blessed, a good deed ẏ he hath done is not done of fre choise willing, without which blessednesse may nat follow. Ergo neither thanke of goodnesse ne seruice in ẏ is contrary of the good end, so thã to good seruice longeth good deed goodly done, thorow free choise in heart. Trewly (qd. I) this haue I wel vnderstand. Well (qd. she) euery thing thus done sufficiently by law ẏ is cleped iustice, after reward claime. For law & iustice was ozdayned in this wise suche deserts in goodnes after quantity in doing, by mede to reward, & of necessity of such iustice, ẏ is to say, right wisenes was free choise in deseruing of wel oz of yuel graunted to reasonable creatures. Euery man hath free arbitrement to chose good oz yuel to perfoum. Now (qd. I tho) if I by my good will deserue this Margarit pearl, & am therto cõpelled, and haue free choise to doe what me liketh: So he is thã holde as me thinketh to reward thentent of my good wil. Gods forbode els (qd. Loue) no wight meneth otherwise I trow, fre wil of good hert after mede deserueth. Hath euery man (qd. I) free choise by necessary maner of wil in euery of his doings, ẏ him liketh by Gods proper purueiaunce, I wold see ẏ wel declared to my leud vnderstanding, foz necessary & necessity ben wozds of mokel intẽcion, closing (as to say) so mote it be needes, & otherwise may it nat betide. This shalt thou lerne (qd. she) so thou take heede in my speeche. If it were nat in mans owne liberty of fre will to do good oz bad but to the one tied by bond of gods pzeozdinance: Than do he neuer so wel it were by needefui compulsion of thilke bonde and nat by free choice, whereby nothing he deliereth, & do he neuer so yuell it wer nat mã foz to wite, but onelich to him that suche thing ozdained hem to don. Wherfoze he ne ought foz bad be punish, ne foz no good deed be rewarded, but of necessity of riztwisenes was

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therefore free choise of arbitrement, put in mannes proper disposicion: truly if it were otherwise, it contraried Gods charity, that badnesse and goodnes, rewardeth after desert of paine, or of mede. Me thinketh this woonder (qd. I) for God by necessity forewote all thinges comming, and so mote it needs be: and thilke things that ben doen, be our free choice comen nothing of necessity, but onely by will: how may this stande togider? and so me thinketh truly, that free choice fully repugneth Gods forewoting. Truely Lady, me semeth they mowe not stand togither.

Then gan loue nigh me nere, and with a noble countenance of visage & lims, dressed her nie my sitting place. Take forth (qd. she) thy penne, and readily write these woords, for if God woll, I shall hem so informe to thee, that thy leudnesse, which I haue understand in that matter, shall openly be cleared, and thy sight in full looking therein amended. First, if thou thinke that Gods prescience, repugne libertie of arbitrie of arbitrement, it is impossible that they should accord in onhead of sothe to understanding. Ye (qd. I) forsooth so I it conceiue. Well (qd. she) if thilke impossible were away, the repugnance that semeth to be therein, were vtterly removed. Shew me the absence of that impossibility (qd. I). So (qd. she) I shall. Now I suppose that they mow stand togither, prescience of God, whome followeth necessity of things comming, and liberty of arbitrement, through which thou beleuest many thinges, to bee without necessity. Both these propocions be soth (qd. I) and well mow stand togider, wherefore this case as possible I admitte. Truly (qd. she) and this case is impossible. How so (qd. I). For hereof (qd. she) followeth & wareth another impossible. Proone me that (qd. I). That I shall (qd. she) for some thing is comming without necessity, and God wot that tofore, for all thing coming he before wot, & that he before wote of necessity is coming: as he before wot, be the case by necessary maner then, or els thorowe necessity, is something to be without necessity, & whiderto euery wizt that hath good understanding, is seen these thinges to be repugnant. Prescience of God, which that followeth necessity, and liberty of arbitrement, fro which is removed necessity, for truly it is necessary, that God haue forewoting of thing, withouten any necessitie comming. Ye (qd. I) but yet remeue ye not away fro mine understanding, the necessity following Goddes before woting, as thus. God before wote me in seruice of Loue, to be bounden to this Margarite pearle, and therefore by necessity, thus to loue am I bound, and if I not had loued, through necessitie had I been kept from all loue deeds. Certes (qd. Loue) because this matter is good & necessary to declare, I thinke herein well to abide, & not lightly to passe. Thou shalt not (qd. she) say all onely God before wote, me to be a louer or no louer, but thus: God before wote me to be a louer, without necessity. And so it followeth, whither thou loue or not loue, euery of hem is and shalbe. But nowe thou seest the impossibility of the case, and the possibility of thilke that thou wendest had been impossible, wherefore the repugnaunce is annulled. Yea (qd. I) & yet doe ye not away the strength of necessity, when it is said, though necessity it is me in loue to abide, or not to loue without necessity, for God before wote it. This manner of necessity forsooth, semeth to some men into coaction, that is to sayne, constraining, or els prohibition, that is defending: wherfore necessitie is me to loue of will. I vnderstand me to be constrained, by some priuy strēgth, to the will of louing, and if no loue to be defended from the will of louing, and so thorow necessity me semeth to loue for I loue, or els not to loue, if I not loue, wherthrough neither thanke ne maugre, in tho thinges may I deserue.

Now (qd. she) thou shalt wel vnderstand, that often we saine thing, through necessity, to be that by no strength, to be neither is coarted, ne constrained, and thorow necessity not to be, that with no defending is removed, for we saine, it is thorow necessity, GOD to be immortalle nought deadliche, and it is necessity, GOD to be rightfull, but not that any strength of violent maner constraineth him to be immortall, or defendeth him to be vnrightfull, for nothing may make him dedly or vnrightfull. Right so if I say through necessity is thee to be a louer or els none, only through will, as God before wete. It is not to vnderstand, that any thing defendeth or forbid thee thy will, which shall not be, or els constraineth it to be, which shalbe: ỹ same thing

forloth God before wote, which he beforne seeth, any thing commend of only wil, that will neither is constrained ne defended thorough any other thing. And so thzough liberty of arbitrement it is do, that is doen of will. And truly my good child, if these thinges be well vnderstand, I wene that none inconuenient shalt thou find, betwene gods forwetting, & liberty of arbitrement, wherefore, I wote well they may stand togither. Also furthermore, who that vnderstanding of prescience, properliche considereth, thorough the same wise, that any thing be afore wist, is said for to be comming, it is pronounced, there is nothing toforne wist, but thing coming, forwoting is but of trouth, doubt may not be wist: wherefore, when I sey, that God toforne wote any thing, thorough necessity is thilke thing to be comming, all is one if I sey, if it shalbe, but this necessitie neither constraineth ne defendeth any thing to be, or not to be. Therfore sothly if loue is put to be, it is saied of necessitie to be, or els for it is put not to be, it is affirmed not to be of necessity: not for that necessity constraineth or defendeth, loue to be, or not to be. For when I say, if loue shall be of necessity it shalbe, here followeth necessitye. The thing toforne put, it is as much to say, as if it were thus pronounced, that thing shall be: none other thing signifieth this necessity but onely thus, that shall be may not togider be and not be. Euenliche also it is soth loue was, and is, and shall be, not of necessity, and nede is to haue be all that was, and nedefull is to be all that is, and comming to all that shall be: and it is not the same to say, loue to be passed, & loue passed to be passed, or loue present to be present and loue to be present, or els loue to be comming, and loue comming to be comming: diuersity in setting of wordes, maketh diuersity in vnderstanding, altho in the same sentence, they accorden of signification, right as it is not all one: loue swete to be swete, & loue to be swete: for much loue is bitter & sorrowfull ere hearts been ealed, and yet it gladdeth thilk sorrowfull hart on soch loue to thinke. Forloth (qd. I) otherwhile I haue had mokell blisse in hart of loue, ỳ stoundmeale hath me sorily anoyed: and certes ladye for I see my selfe thus knitte, with this Margarite pearle, as by bond of your seruice, & of no liberty of will, my hart will now not accord this seruice to leue. I can demin in my selfe none otherwise, but thorow necessity am I costained in this seruice to abide. But alas then, if I thzough nedefull compulsion, maugre me be with holde, litle thanke for all my great trauaile haue I then deserued. Now (qd. this lady) I say as I sayed: We liberth this matter to declare at the full, and why: For many men haue had diuers fantasies & reasons, both on one side thereof, & in the other. Of which right sone I trow, if thou wilt vnderstand, thou shalt conceue the sentence to the party more probable by reason, and in soothe knowing, by ỳ I haue of this matter maked an end. Certes (qd. I) of these things long haue I had great lust to be learned, for yet I wene Gods will and his prescience, accordeth with my seruice, in louing of this precious Margarite pearle. After whome euer in my heart, with thurlting desire wete I do bren, vnwasting I langour and sade, and the day of my destiny, in death or in ioy I vnbide, but yet in the end I am comforted by my supposaile in blisse, and in ioy to determine after my desires. That thing (qd. Loue) hastily to thee neigh, God grant of his grace and mercy, and this shalbe my prayer, till thou be likened in heart at thine owne wil. But now to enforme thee in this matter (qd. this Lady) thou wost where I left, ỳ was, loue to be swete, and loue swete to be swete, is not all one for to say: For a tree is not alway by necessity white, sometime er it were white, it might haue be not white: and after time it is white, it may be not white: but a white tree euermore nedefull is to be white: for neither toforne ne after it was white, might it be togider white and not white. Also loue by necessity is not present as now in thee, for er it wer present it might haue be, ỳ it should now not haue be, and yet it may be, that it shal not be present: but thy loue presēt, which to her Margarite ỳ hath bound, nedeful is to be presēt. Truly some doing of actiō, not by necessity is coming farre toforn it be, it may be that it shall not be coming: thing forloth coming nedefull is to be coming, for it may not be that coming shall not be coming. And right as I haue said of present & of future times, the same sentence in soothnes is of the preterit, that is to say, time passed, for thing passed must needs be passed, and ere it were it might haue not be, wherfore it should not haue passed. Right so when Loue coming,

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is saied of loue that is to come, nedefull is to be that is said, for thing comming neuer is not comming, and so oft the same thing, we saine of the same, as when we saine euery man is a man, or euery louer is a louer, so must it be needes, in no way may he be man, and no man togither. And if it be not by necessity, that is to say, nedeful all thing comming to be comming, then some thing comming is not comming, and that is impossible, right as these termes nedefull, necessity, and necessary, betoken and signifying needes to be, & it may not otherwise be. Right these tearmes, impossible signifieth, that thing is not, and by no way may it be then through perte necessity, all thing comming is comming, but that is by necessity, followeth with nothing to be constrained. Lo when that comming is saied of thing, not alway thing through necessity is, altho it be comming. For if I say to morrow, loue is coming in this Margarites heart, not therefore through necessity shall thilke loue be, yet it may be that it shall not be, altho it were comming. Neuerthelater, somtime it is soth, that some thing be of necessity, that is said to come: and if I say to morrow by comming the rising of the Sonne: If therfore with necessity, I pronounce cõming of thing to come, in this maner loue to morne comming in thine Margarite, to thee warde by necessity is comming, or els the rising of the Sonne to morne comming through necessity is comming. Loue soothly, which may not be of necessity alone following, thorough necessity comming it is made certaine. For future of future is said, that is to saine, comming of comming is said: as if to morrow comming, is through necessity coming it is. Arising of the sunne through twoo necessities in comming, it is to vnderstand, that one is to forgoing necessity, which maketh thing to be, therfore it shall be, for nedeful is that it be. Another is following necessity, which nothing constraineth to be, and so by necessity it is to come, why: for it is to come.

Now then, when we saw, that God before, wote thing comming nedefull, is to be comming, yet therefore make we not in certaine, euermore thing to be through necessity comming. Soothly thing comming may not be, not comming by no way, for it is the same sentence of vnderstanding: as if we say thus: If God before wotte any thing, needfull is that to be comming. But yet therfore followeth not that prescience of God, thing through necessity to be coming: for altho God before wot all things comming, yet not therefore he before wot euery thing comming through necessity. Some things he before wote comming of frewill, out of reasonable creature. Certes (qd. I) these termes, nede & necessity, haue a queint maner of vnderstanding, they woulden dullen many mens wits. Therefore (qd. she) I woll hem openly declare, and more clearely then I haue tofore ere I depart hence. Here of this matter (qd. she) thou shalt vnderstãd that right as it is not nedefull, God to wiln that he will, no more in many things is not nedefull, a man to wilne that he woll. And euer right as nedefull is to be, what that God woll, right so to be it is nedefull, that man woll in tho thinges, which that God hath put into mans subiection of willing: as if a man will loue, that he loue: and if he ne woll loue that he loue not, and of such other things in mans disposition. For why: now then that God woll may not be, when he woll the will of man through no necessity to be constrained, or els defended for to wilne and he wol effect to folow the wil, than is it nedefull wil of man to be free, and also to be that he woll. In this manner it is soth that through necessity is mans werke in louing, that woll do altho he woll it not with necessitie. (qd. I than) how stant it in loue of thilke will, sithen men louen willing of free choise in hart. Wherefore if it be thorow necessity, I pray you lady of an answer this question to assoile. I woll (qd. she) answer thee bliuely: right as men wil not thorow necessity, rist so is not loue of will thorow necessity, ne thorow necessity worcht the ilk same wil, for if he would it not with good wil, it should not haue been wrought, although that he doeth it is nedefull to be doen. But if a man doe sinne, it is nothing els but to will, that he should not: right so sinne of will, is not to be manner necessary doen, no more then wil is necessary. Neuerthelater this is sothe, if a man woll sin, it is necessary him to sinne, but though thilk necessity, nothing is constrained ne defended in the will, right so thilke thing that frewil wol and may, and not may, not wiln, & nede full is that to wilne he may not wilne, but thilke to wilne nedefull is, for impossible to him it is one thing, and the same to wilne,

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he may not wilne, but thilk to wilne nedefull is: for impossible to him it is one thing and the same to wilne, and not to wilne.

The werke forsooth of will, to whome it is yeue, that it be that he hath in will, and that he will not, voluntary of spontane it is, for by spontany will it is dooe, that is to say with good will, not constrained: then by will not constrained, it is constrained to be, and that is it may not togither be. If this necessity maketh liberty of will, which that afore they were, they might have ben eschewed and shonned: God then, whiche that knoweth all truthe, and nothing but truth, all these things, as they arne spontanie, or necessary sight, and as he seeth so thei been: and so with these things well considered, it is open at the full, that without all manner repugnance, God before wote all maner things been doen by free will, which afore they weren, might have been neuer they should be, and yet been they thorow a manner necessity, from free will distendeth.

Hereby may (qd. she) lightly been know that not all thinges to bee is of necessitye, though God have hem in his prescience, for some things to be is of liberty of will: and to make thee to have full knowing, of gods before weting, heare me (qd. she) what I shall say. Bluthly ladye (qd. I) me list this matter entirely to understand. Thou shalt (qd. she) understand, that in heuen is Gods being, although he be ouer all by power, yet there is a biding of diuine person, in whiche heauen is euerlasting presence, withouten any moueable time there, foole have I not sated tofore this, as time hurteth, right so ayenward time healeth and rewardeth: & a tree oft failed, is hold more in dainty, whē it fruit forth bringeth.

A Marchaunt that for once leasing in the Sea no more to auenture thinketh, he shall neuer with auenture come to richesse: so oft must menne on the Okes mite, till the happy dent have entred, whiche with the Okes owne sway maketh it to come all at once. So oft falleth the lethy water on the hard rocke, till it have thorough pearsed it. The euen draught of the wyer drawer, maketh the wyer to ben euen, & supply werching, & if he stinted in his draught the wyer breaketh asonder. Euery tree well springeth, when it is well grounded and not often remooued. What shall this fruit be (qd. I) now it ginneth ripe? Grace, qd. she) in parfit ioy to indure. And therewith thou begon. Grace (qd. I) me thinketh I should have a reward for my long trauaile? I shall tell thee (qd. she) tribucion of thy good wins, to have of thy Margarit perle, it beareth not the name of mede, but only of good grace, & that commeth not of thy desert, but of thy Margarites goodnesse and vertue alone. (Qd. I) should all my long trauaile have no reward, but through grace, and sometime your seluen said, rightwisenesse euenliche rewardeth to quite one benefit for an other. That is sooth (qd. Loue) euer as I saied as to him that dooth good, which to doen he were neither holden, ne yet cōstrained. That is sooth (qd. I). Truly (qd. shee) all that euer thou doest thine Margarite perle of will, of loue, and of reason thou owest to doen it, yet is it nothing els but yelding of thy debte, in quiting of thy grace, which she thee lent, whē ye first met. I wot (qd. I) right litle grace to me she deliuered. Certes it was harde grace, it hath nigh me astrangled. That it was good grace I wot well thou wilt it graunt ere thou departe hence. If any man yeue to another wight, to whom that he ought not, & whiche that of himselfe nothing may have, a garment or a coat, though hee weare the coat, or els thilk cloathing, it is not to put to him that was naked, the cause of his clothing, but to him onely that was yeuer of the garment. Wherfore I say, thou ỳ were naked of loue, and of thy selfe none haue mightest, it is not to put to thine owne person, sithen thy loue came through thy Margarite pearle. Ergo she was yeuer of the loue, although thou it vse, and there sent she the grace, thy seruice to beginne. She is worthy the thanke of this grace, for she was the yeuer.

All the thoughtes, busie dooinges, and pleasaunce in thy might and in thy wordes, that thou canst deuise, been but right little in quiting of thy debte: had shee not been, such thing had not been studied. So all these matters kindly drawen homeward to this Margarite pearle, for from thence were they borowed, all is holy her to wit the loue that thou hauest, and thus quitest thou thy debt, in that thou stedfastly seruest. And kepe well that loue, I rede thee, that of her thou hast borowed, and vse it in her seruice, thy debt to quite, and then art thou able right sone to have grace, wherefore after mede, in none halue maiest thou looke.

Thus

Thus thy ginning and ending, is but grace alone, and in thy good deserving thy debt thou acquitest: without grace is nothinge worthe, what so euer thou werche. Thank thy Margarite of her great grace that hitherto thee hath guided, and pray her of continuance, forth in thy werkes hereafter, and that for no mishap thy grace ouerthwartly tourne. Grace, glory, and ioy, is coming through good folks deserts, and by getting of grace therein shullen end. And what is more glory, or more ioye than wil dome, and loue in parfite charity which God hath graunted to all tho that wel can deserue. And with that this Ladye all at once start into mine hast: here woll I onbide (qd, she) for euer, and neuer woll I gone hence, and I woll keepe thee from medding, while me list here onbide: thine entremeting manners, into steadfastnes shullen be chaunged.

Soberliche tho threw I by mine eyen, and hugely tho was I astonied of this sodaine aduenture, and faine would I haue learned how vertues shulden ben knowen, in which things I hope to God, hereafter she shall me enformen, and namely sithe her resting place is now so nigh at my will: and anon all these things that this ladye said, I remembred me by my self, and reuolued the lines of mine vnderstanding wits. Tho found I fully all these matters, perfitly there writte, how misse rule by fained loue, both reaimes and cities hath gouerned a great throw. How lightly me might the fautes espie, how rules in loue should been vsed, how sometime with fained loue soule I was beguiled, how I should loue haue knowe, and how I shall in loue with my seruice proceed.

Also furthermore, I found of perdurable letters, wonderly there grauen, these matters, which I shall nempne. Certes, none age ne other thing in yearth, may the least fillable of this in no point deface, but clearly as the Sunne, in mine vnderstanding soule they shinen. This may neuer out of my minde, how I may not my loue kepe, but through willing in hart: wilne to loue may I not, but I louing haue. Loue haue I none, but through grace of this Margarite perle. It is no manner doubt, that will woll not loue, but for it is louing, as will woll not rightfully, but for it is rightfull it selue. Also will is not louing for he woll loue, but he woll loue for he is louing: it is all one to will to be louing, and loungs in possession to haue. Right so will woll not loue, for of loue hath he no party, and yet I dente not louing, will wilne more loue to haue, which that he hath not, whē he wold more thā he hath, but I say he may no loue wilne, if he no loue haue, through whiche thilk loue he should wilne: but to haue this louing will, may no manne of himselfe, but onely through grace tofore going: right so may no man it keepe, but by grace following. Consider now euery manne aright, and let seen if that any wight of himselfe, mow this louing well get, and he therof first nothing haue: for if it should of himself spring, either it must be willing or not willing. Willing by himselfe may he it not haue, sithen him faileth the matter þ should it forth bring, the matter him faileth: why? He may therof haue no knowing, till whē grace put it in his heart. Thus willing by himselfe, may he it not haue, & not willing may he it not haue. Parde euery conceipt of euery reasonable creature, otherwise will not grant: will in affirmatife with not willing by no way now accord. And although this louing woll come in mine heart by freneste of arbitrement, as in this booke fully is shewed, yet owe I not therefore as much alow my frewill, as grace of that Margarite to me leaned, for neither might I without grace tofore going, and afterward following, thilke grace get ne kepe, & lese shall I it neuer but if frewill it make, as in willing otherwise then grace hath me granted. For right as when any person taketh willing to be sober, & throweth that away, willing to be dronke, or els taketh will of drinking out of measure: which thing anon as it is doen, maketh through his own gilt by frewill, that leseth his grace. In which thing therefore, vpon the nobley of grace I mote trusten, and my busie cure set the like grace to keepe, that my frewill otherwise thā by reason it should werche, cause not my grace to void: for thus must I both loose to frewill and to grace. For right as naturall vsage in ingendring of children, may not been without father, ne also but with the mother, for neither father ne mother, in begetting may it lacke: right so grace and frewill

will accorden, and without hem both may not louing, will in no partye been getten. But yet is not free will, in getting of that thing so mokel thankewortthy as is grace, ne in the keping thereof so much thanke deserueth, and yet in getting and keping both doen they accord. Truly often time grace, freewill helpeth in fordooing of contrary things, that to willing loue not accorden, and strength will aduersities to withstitte, wherfore altogither to grace oweth to ben accepted, that my willing deserueth: Freewill to louing in this wise is accorded. I remember me well how all this book (who so heed taketh) considereth all thinges, to werchings of mankinde euenly accordeth, as in turning of this word loue, into troth, or els rightwisenesse, whether that it like: For what thing that falleth to man, in helping of free arbitrement, thilke rightwisenes to take, or els to kepe, through which a man shall be saued, of whiche thing all this booke mencion hath maked in euery poinct thereof, grace oweth to be thanked.

Wherefore I say, euery wight hauing this rightwisenesse, rightfull is, and yet therefore I seele not in my conscience, that to all rightfull is behoten the blisse euerlasting, but to hem that been rightfull, withouten any vnrightfulnes. Some man after some degre, may rightfully ben accounted as chast men in liuing, and yet ben they iangiers, and full of enuye pressed: to hem shall this blisse neuer been delinered. For right as very blesse is without all manner nede, right so to no man shal it be yeuen, but to the rightful, void from all maner vnrightfulnesse founde, so no man to her blisse shall ben followed, but he be rightfull and with vnrightfulnes not bounde, and in that degree fully be know. This rightfulnesse in as much as in himselfe is, of none euill it is cause, and of all manner goodnes truely it is mother. This helpeth the spirit, to withstitte the leude lustes of fleshly liking: this strengtheneth and maintaineth the lawe of kinde, and if that otherwhile me weneth harme of this precious thing to followe, therethrough is nothing the cause, of somewhat els commeth it about, who so taketh hede. By rightfulnes forsooth werne many holy sainctes, good sauour in swetenesse to God almighty, but that to some folks, they were sauour of death into deadly ende, that come not of the sainctes rightwisenes, but of other wicked mens badnes hath proceaded. Truly the like will which that the lady of Loue me learned, affection of will to nempne, which is in willing of profitable thinges, euill is it not, but when to fleshly lusts it consenteth ayenst reason of soul: but that this thing more clerely be vnderstand, it is for to know, whence and how the like will is so vicious and so ready euill deedes to performe.

Grace at the ginning, ordained thilk will in goodnes euer to haue endured, and neuer to badnes haue assented: menne should not bileue, that God thilk will maked to be vicious. Our first father, as Adam and Eue for vicious appetites, and vicious wille to soche appetites consenting, been not one thing in kinde, other thing is done for the other. And how this will first into man first assented, I hold it profitable to shewe: but if the first condicion of reasonable creature woll be considered and apertly loked, lightly the cause of such will may been shewed. Intencion of God was, that rightfully and blessed, should reasonable nature been maked, himselfe for to kepe, but neither blissfull ne rightfull might it not be, withouten will in hem both. Will of rightfulnes is the like same rightfulnes as heretofore is shewed, but will of blisse is not the like blisse, for euery manne hath not thilke blisse, in whom the will thereof is abiding. In this blisse after euery vnderstanding, is sufficiaunce of conenable commodities, without any manner nede, whether it be blisse of Angels or els the like, that grace first in Paradise suffered Adam to haue. For although Angels blisse be more than Adames was in Paradise, yet may it not be denyed, that Adam in Paradise ne had sufficiance of blis: for right as great hart is without all maner of coldnesse, and yet may another hart more heate haue: right so nothing defended Adam in Paradise to been blessed, without all maner need.

Although Angels blisse be much more, forsooth it followeth not lasse then another to haue therefore him needeth, but for to want a thing, which that behoueth to been hadde, that may nede ben cleaped, and that was not in Adam at the first ginning, God and the Margarite weten what I meane. Forsooth where as is neede, there is wretchednesse, good without cause to fornegoing, made not reasonable creature wretched

ched, for him to vnderstande and loue hadde he first maked. God made therfore man blis-sed without all manner indigence, togi-ther and at ones tooke reasonable creature blysse, and will of blisfednesse, and will of rightfulnesse, whych is rightfulnesse it seine, and liberty of arbitrement, that is free will, with whych thilk rightfulnesse may he kepe and lese. So and in that wise ordamed thilk two, that will whych that instrumente is cleaped, as heretofore mencion is maked, shoulde vse thilke rightfulnesse, by teachyng of his soule to good manner of gouernaunce, in thought and in wordes, and that it should vse the blisse in obedient manner, withouten any incommodity. Blisse forsoth into mans profite, and rightwisenesse into his worshipp God deliuered at ones: but rightfulnesse so was yeuen that man myght it lese, whyche if hee not lost had not, but continuallye haue it kept, he shuld haue deserued the auaunce-mente into the fellowshippe of Angels, in which thyng if hee that lost, neuer by him-selfe forward should hee it mowe ayenwarde recouer: and as well the blisse that hee was in, as Aungels blisse that to him wardes was coming, should be none at ones, and he depryued of them both. And thus fill man vnto likenesse of vnreasonable beestes, and with hem to corrupcion and vnlustie appe-tites was hee vnder throwne, but yet will of blysse dwelleth, that by indigence of good, whych that he lost through great wretched-nes, by right shuld he ben punished. And thus for he wexed ryghtfulnesse, lost hath hee his blisse: but faile of his desire in his owne com-modity may he not, and were commodityes to his reasonable nature, which he hath lost may he not haue. To false lustes, whych been beestiall appetites he is turned: foly of vncon-ning hath him begiled, in wening that thilk ben the comodities that owen to ben desired. This affection of will by liberty of arbitre-ment is induced to wilne thus thing that he should not, and so is will not maked yuel, but vnrightful, by absence of rightfulnes, whych thyng by reason euer shoulde hee haue. And freenesse of arbitremente may hee not wilne whan hee it not haueth, for while hee it had, thilke halpe it not to kepe: so that wythout grace may it not ben recouered. Will of com-moditie, in as much as vnrightfull it is ma-ked, by willing of yuel lustes, willyng of goodnesse may he not wilne: for will of in-strumente to affection of will is thralled, sithen þ other thing may not it wilne, for wyll of instrument to affection desireth, and yet ben both they will cleped: for that instrument woll, through affection it wilneth, and affec-tion desireth thilke thing wherto instrument him leadeth. And so free will to vnlusty affec-tion full seruaunte is maked, for vnrightful-nesse may het not relese, & without rightful-nes ful fredome may it neuer haue. For kind-ly libertye of Arbitrement without it, beyne and ydel is forsooth. Wherefore yet I say, as often haue I said the same, whan instrument of will loste hath rightfulnesse, in no manner but by grace may he ayen return rightfulnes to wilne. For sithen nothing but rightfulnes alone shuld he wilne, what that euer he wil-neth without rightfulnes, vnrightfully he it wilneth. These than vnrightfull appetites and vnthrifty lustes whych the flies desireth, in as mokel as they ben in kind, ben they not bad, but they ben vnrightfull and badde, for they ben in reasonable creature, wheras they beyng in no way should been suffred. In vn-reasonable beestes neither been they yuell ne vnrightful, for there is their kind being.

KNowen may it wel ben now, of these thynges toforne de-clared, that man hath not al-way thilk rightfulnes, which by duty of right euermore ha-uen hee should, and by no way by him selfe may he it get ne keepe, and af-ter hee it hath if hee it lese, recouer shall he it neuer, without especiall grace: wherfore the commune sentence of the people in opinion, that euerye thyng after destenie is ruled, false and wicked is to beleeue: For though predestination be as well of good as of bad, sithe that it is said God hauneth maoe, which hee neuer ne wrought, but for hee suffereth hem to be maked, as thilke he hardeth whan he nought misayeth, or led into temptacion whan he not deliuereth, wherfore it is none inconuenient if in that manner wee said, God to forne haue destenied both badde, and her badde workes: whan hem ne their yuell deedes neither amendeth, ne therto hem grace leaueth. But specyallye the predestinacion of goodnes, alone is said by these great clerks, for in him God doth that they ben, and that in goodnesse they werchen. But the negatife hereof in badnesse is holden, as the ladie of loue hath mee learned, who so aright in this booke looketh. And vtterly it is to wetch,

that predestination properly in GOD may not been demed, no more than before weting. For in the chapiter of goddes before weting, as loue me rehearsed, all these matters apertely may been founden. All thinges to God been nowe togither and in presence during. Trewly presence and predestinacion in nothing disacorden, wherefore as I was learned, how goddes before weting and free choice of will mow stonden togither, me thinketh the same reason me leadeth, that destany and freewill accorden, so that neither of hem both to other in nothing contrarieth. And reasonabliche may it not been deemed, as often as any thing falleth freewill werching, as if a man another man wrong fully anoyeth, wherfore he him sleeth, that it be constrained to that ende, as mokell folke crieth and saieth: Lo, as it was destemed of God tofore know, so it is thorowe necessite fall, and otherwise might it not betide. Trewly neither hee that the wrong wrought, ne he that himselfe venged, none of thilke things thorow necessity wrought: for if þ with fre will there had it not willed, neither had wrought that he perfourmed: and so vtterly grace that fre will in goodnes bringeth and kepeth, and fro badnes it tourneth, in all thing most thanke deserueth.

This grace maketh sentence in vertue to abide, wherefore in body and in soule in full plenty of coming, after their good deseruing in the euerlasting ioye, after the day of dome shull they endlesse dwell, and they shull been learned that in kingdome with so mokell affect of loue and of grace, that the lest ioye shall of the greatest in glorie receyue and been gladded as if hee the same ioy had. What woonder sith God is the greatest loue, and thee ne ought to looke things with reasonning to prooue, and so is instrument of will, wil: and yet varieth he from effect and bing both. Affection of will also for will is cleped but it varieth from instrument in this manner wise, by that name, liche whan it commeth into mind, anon right it is in willing desired, and the negatife therefof with willing nil not accorde: this is closed in heart, though blage and instrument sleepe. This sleepeth whan instrument and bs waken: and of such manet affection truly, some man hath more, and some man lesse. Certes true louers wenen euer therof to little to haue. False louers in litteil wenen haue right mokell. Loe instrumente of will in false and trewe bothe euenlich is propozeyoned, but affection is more in some place than in some, because of goodnes þ followeth, that I think hereafter to declare. Use of this instrument is wil, but it taketh his name whan wilned thing is in doyng. But vtterly grace to catch in thy blisse, desired to ben rewarded. Thou must haue than affection of will at the ful. and vse whan his time asketh wisely to been governed. Sothly my Disciple without feruent affection of will may no man ben saued: this affection of good seruice in good loue, may not been grounded, without feruente desyre to the thyng in will conceited. But hee that neuer reccheth to haue or not to haue, affection of will in that hath no resting place. Why: for whan thyng commeth to mind and it bee not taken in heed to commen or not come, therefore in that place affection faileth: and for thilke affection is so little, thorow which in goodnesse he shoulde come to his grace, the litlenesse will it not suffer to auaile by no waye into his helpes: Certes grace and reason thilke affection followeth. This affection with reason knitte, dureth in euerich trew hearte, and euermore is encreasyng, no ferdnesse, no strength maye it remoue while trouth in heart abideth. Sothly whan falshed ginneth enter, trouth draweth away, grace and ioy both, but than thilke falshed that trouth hath thus voided hath vnknitte the bonde of vnderstandinge reason, bitweene will & the hearte. And who so that bond vndoth, and vnknitteth will to bee in other purpose than to the first accorde, knitteth him with contrary of reason, and that is vnreason. Lo, than will & vnreason bringeth a man from the blisse of grace, whiche thyng of pure kind, euery man ought to shonne & to eschew, and to the knot of will & reason confirme. Me thinketh (qd. she) by thy studient lookes, thou wenest in these wordes mee to contrarien, from other sayinges here tofore in other place, as whan thou were somtime in affection of will, to thinges that nowe han brought thee in disease, whiche I haue thee counsailed to void, & thine hert discouer, & there I made thy will to ben chaunged, which now thou wenest I argue to withhold and to kepe. Shortly I say þ reuers in these wordes may not ben found: for though dronkenesse be forboden, men shul not alway ben drinklesse. I trow right for thou thy will out of reason shoulde not tourne, thy will in one reason should not vnbind. I say thy will

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in thy first purpose with discretion was closed: Consyder wel eft of the remnaunt what the good is: Certenly that will and reason should be knit together was frend of reason; after time thine hert is attendaunt to thē both, thou might not change, but if that from rule of reason parte in which variaunce to come to thilke blisse desired: contrariously thou werchest and nothing may know will and reason but loue alone. Than if thou hold loue, thou weuest the bond that knitteth reasones of eis right lightly, yet ouer gone eloper: wherfore thou seest openly that loue holdeth this knot, and enquireth hem to be bound, whose things as a ring in circuit of worthy been knit in thy soule without departing. Ah let be, let be (qd. I) it needeth not of this to reherse ale to make my soule is yet in parfite blisse, in thinking of that knot.

NOw trewly lady I haue my ground wel vnderstonde, but what thing is thilke spire that into a tree should wexe: Expowne vs that thing, what yet therof mean. That shal I (qd. she) blithly, and take good heed to the wordes I thee rede. Continuaunce in thy good seruice, by long processe of time in full hope abiding without any chaunge to twine in thine hert: this is the spire, which if it bee wel kept and gouerned, shal so hugely spring, till the fruit of grace is plentuously out sprongen: For although thy will be good, yet may not therfore thilke blisse desired hastely on thee discenden, it muste abide his seasonable time. And so by processe of growing, with thy good trauaile, it shall into more & more wexe, till it be found so mighty, that winds of yuell speeche, ne stormes of envy, make not the trauaile ouerthrowe, ne frostes of mistruste, ne hailes of ielousy right littel might haue in harming of soch springes. Euery young setling lightly with smal stormes is apeired, but whā it is worsen somedele in greatnesse, than han great blastes and weathers but little might, any disauantage to them for to werch. Mine own soueraine lady (qd. I) and wealth of mine heart, & it were liking vnto your noble grace, therethrough nat to bee displeased, I suppose ye erren, now ye maken ielousie envy, and disfourbour to hem that been your seruauntes. I haue learned ofte tofore this time, that in euery louers heart great plenty of ielousies greues been sowe, wherefore me thinketh ye ne ought in no manner account thilke thinge among these other wicked vsures and venimous serpents, as envy, mistrust, & yuel speech. O foole (qd. she) mistrust with folly, with yuell will medlen gendreth that wicked paddle. Certely if they were distroied ielousie vnloue were for euer, and yet some manner of ielousye, I woote well is ready in all the hearts of my trew seruauntes, as thing to be ielous ouer himselfe, ideal for bee cause of his vnone diseise.

This ielousye in ful thought, euer shuld be kept for frednes to lese his loue by mistrusting that owe his owne doing in lewdnesse, or eis thus. Least she that thou seruest so trustily ben beset there her better liketh, yet of all the good seruice she compteth nat a cresse. Thrise it ioustes in heart for acceptable qualitees ben deemed: these oughten euery trew louer by kindely, euer more haue in his minde, till fully the grace & blisse of my seruice bee on him discended at will. And he that than ielousie catcheth, or eis by vnsetting of his owne foolishe wilfulnesse mistrusteth, trouth with fantasy of venim, he is soule beguiled. Yuel wil hath grounded thilke matter of sorowe in his lewd soule, & yet not for than to euery wight shuld me not trust, ne euery wight fully misbeleue, the meane of these thinges woch to be vsed. Nothly without cautelful euidence, mistrust in ielousye, should not bee vsened in no wise person commonly soch lewd wickednes shuld me not finde. He that is wise and with yuell will not be atamered, can abide wel his time till grace & blisse of his seruice folowing haue him so mokell eased, as his abiding tofore hande hath him diseased. Certes Lady (qd. I tho) of nothing me wondreth, sithen thilke blisse so precious is and kindly good & wel is, and worthy in kind, whan it is medled with loue and reason, as ye tofore haue declared. Why, anon as the one is spronge, why springeth not the tother? & anon as the one cometh, why receiueth not the other? For euery thing that is out of his kindely place, by full appetite, euer commeth thiderward kindly to draw, & his kindely being thereto him constraineth. And the kindely stede of this blisse, is in suche wil medled to vnbide, and nedes in it should haue his kindely beyng. Wherefore me thinketh anon as that wil to be shewed and kind him profereth, thilke blisse should him hye thilke will to receiue, or eis kind of goodnesse worchen not in hem as they should. Lo, be the Sonne neuer so ferre, euer it hath his kinde

werching in erth: great weight on hie on loft carried, stinteth neuer till it come to this resting place. Waters to the see ward euer ben they drawing, thing that is light blithly will not sincke, but euer ascendeth & upward dyaweth. Thus kind in euery thing his kindly course, & his being place shweth: Wherfore bee kind on this good will, anent as it were sprong, this blisse should therein discend, yet kind would they dwellieden togider, & so haue ye said your selfe. Certes (qd. she) thyne heart sitteth wonder sore this blisse for to haue, thine heart is sore agreued that it taryeth so long, and if thou durstest, as mee thinketh by thine wordes, this blisse wouldest thou blame. But yet I say, thilke blisse is kindely good. and his kindely place in that will to vnbide. Neuer the later, there comming togider after kindes ordinaunce nat sodainly may betide, it must abide time, as kind yeueth him leaue, for if a man, as this will medled gonne him shewe, and thilke blisse in hast followed, so lightly comming houlde lightly cause going. long time of thrusting, causeth drinke to bee the more delicious whan it is atasted. Howe is it (qd. I than) that so many blisses see I all day at mine eye, in the first moment of a sight with such will accord. Ye, and yet other whyle with will assenteth, singularly by himselfe their reason faileth, trauaile was none, seruice had no time. ¶ This is a queint manner thyng, how such doing commeth about. O (qd. shee) that is thus, the earth kindely after seasons and times of the yeare, bringth forth innumerable hearbes and trees bothe profitable and other, but such as men might leaue though they were in nought in nourishing to mannes kind seruen, or els suche as tourmen soone vnto mennes confusion, in case that thereof they atast, commen forth out of the yearth by their owne kinde, withouten any mannes cure or any businesse in trauaile: and the like hearbs that to mennes liuelode necessarily seruen without, whiche goodlys in this life creatures mowen not enduren, and must beene nourished to mankind, without great trauaile, great tilthe, and long abiding time, commen not out of the yearth, and it with seed tofore ordained such hearbs to make spring and foorthe growe. Right so the parfite blisse, that wee haue in meaning of during time to abide, maye nat come so lightly, but with great traueile and right besy tilth, and yet good seed to be sow, for oft the croppe fayleth of badde seede, bee it neuer so well trauailed. And thilke blisse thou spoke of so lightye in comming, trewely is nat necessarye ne abiding: and but if the better bee stamped, and the venomous venime out wronged, it is likely to empoysonen all tho that therof tasten. Certes right bitter ben the hearbes that shewen first the peare of her owne kind. Well the more is the harvest that yeeldeth many grains, tho long and sore it hath ben trauailed. What wouldest thou demen if a man woulde yeue thyre quarters of nobles of gold, that were a precious gift? Ye certes (qd. I.) And what (qd. she) thye quarters full of peeries? Certes (qd. I) that were a rich gift. And what (qd. she) of as mowe azure? (qd. I) a precious gift at full. Were not (qd. she) a noble gifte of all these at ones? In goode faithe (qd. I) for wanting of English naming of so noble a worde, I cannot for preciousnesse yeue it a name: Rightfully (qd. shee) hast thou deemed, and yet loue knitte in vertue, passeth all the gold in this earthe. Good will accordant to reason, with no maner property may bee counteruailed, all the azure in the worlde is not to accounte in respecte of reason, loue that with good will and reason accordeth, with none earthely riches maye not been amended. This yeft hast thou yeuen I knowe it my selfe, and thy Margarite thilke gifte hath receiued, in which thing to reward shee hath her selfe bounde. But thy gifte as I saied, by no manner riches may bee amended wherefore with thing that may nat be amended thou shalt of thy Margarites rightwisenesse be rewarded. Right suffered yet neuer but euery goode deede sometyme to bee yold, all woulde thy Margarite with no reward thee quite: Right that neuer more dieth, thy mede in merite woll purvey. Certes such sodaine blisse as thou first nempnest, right will hem reward as the well is worthy, & though at thine eye it seemeth the reward the desert to passe, righte can after send such bitternesse euenly it to reward: so the sodaine blisse by alwaies of reason in great goodnes maye not be accounted, but blisse long, both long it abideth, and endelesse it woll last. Se why thy will is endelesse, for if thou louedeste euer, thy will is euer there to abide and neuer more to chaunge: euenhead of reward must been done by right: than must needs thy grace and this blisse endelesse in ioy to vnbide. Euenlyche disease asketh euenlyche ioye, whyche hastely thou shalte haue. Ah (qd. I) it sufficeth not than alone good wille, bee it neuer so well

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with reason medled, but if it bee in good seruice long trauayled. And so thyough seruice should men come to the ioy, and this me thinketh should bee the weyring tree of which yee first meued.

VEry trouth (qd. she) hast thou nowe conceiued of these thynges in thyne hearte, hastely shalt thou bee able herye ioye and parfite blisse to receiue. And nowe I wote well thou desyrest to know the manner of byaunches, that out of the tre should spying. Therof lady (qd. I) heartely I you pray: For than leue I wol, that right soone after I shall ataste of the fruite that I so long haue desired. Thou hast heard (qd. she) in what wise this tree tofore this haue I declared, as in ground and in stocke of weyring. First the ground should be thy frewill full in thyne heart, and ꝑ stocke (as I saide) should be continuaunce in good seruice, by long time in trauaile, till it were in greatnesse right well woxen. And whan this tree soche greatnesse hath caught, as I haue rehearsed, the byaunches then that the fruite should fooyth byng. speeche must they be needes in voice of prayer, in complaining wise vsed. Out alas (qd I tho) he is sorowfully wounded that hideth his speeche, and spareth his complaints to make, what shall I speake that care: but paine euen like to hel, sore hath me assailed, and so ferforth in paine me thyong, that I leue my tre is scer & neuer shall it fruit fooyth byng. Certes he is greatly eased, that dare his preuy mone discouer to a true fellow, that conning hath and might wherethyough his plaint in any thing maye be amended. And mokel more is he ioied that with hart of hardnesse, dare cõplaine to his lady what cares that hee suffreth, by hope of mercy with grace to be auaunced. Truly, I say for mee, sithe I came this Margarite to seruc, durst I neuer me discouer of no maner disease, & wel the later hath mine heart hardied soch things to done, for the great bounties & woxthy refreshments ꝑ she of her grace goodly, without any desert on my halue ofte hath me reckened, and nere her goodnesse ꝑ moze with grace and with mercye meddled, which passen al deserts, trauels, & seruinges, that I in any degree might endite, I would wene I should be without recouer in getting of this blisse for euer. Thus haue I stilled my my disease, thus haue I couered my care, that I byen in sorowful anoy, as gledes and coles waste a fire vnder deed asben. Wel the hoter is ꝑ fire, that with asben it is ouerlein: right long this wo haue I suffered. Lo (qd. Loue) how thou fares! me thinketh the paise fuel hath atoncred thy wits, as fast as thou hiest forward, anon sodainly backward thou moues. Shal nat yet all thy leudnesse out of thy braines, dul been thy skilfull vnderstandinges, thy will hath thy wit so amaistred. Wost thou not well (qd. she) but euery tree in his seasonable time of bourioning shew his blomes from within, in signe of what fruite should out of hun spying, els the fruit for that yere men halt deliuered, be ꝑ ground neuer so good. And though ꝑ stock be mighty at ꝑ ful, & ꝑ byaunches seer & no burionsihew, farwel ꝑ gardiner he may pipe with an yue leaf his fruit is failed. Wherfore thy byanches must burionẽ in presence of thy lady, if thou desire any fruit of thy ladies grace, but beware of thy life, ꝑ thou no wodelay vse, as in asking of things that stretchen into shame, for than might thou not speed by no way ꝑ I can espy. Vertue wol not suffer villany out of himselfe to spring. Thy woxds may not be queint ne of subtel maner vnderstanding. Freelwitted people supposen in such poesies to be begiled, in open vnderstanding must euery woxd bee vsed. Voice without cleare vnderstanding of sentence, saith Aristotle, right nouzt pointeth in hert. Thy woxds then to abide in hert and cleaue in ful sentence of trew meaning platly must thou shew & euer be obedient, her hestes & her wils to perfoxme, and be thou in such a witte to wete by a looke euermoze what she meaneth. And hee ꝑ list nat to speake, but stilly his disease suffer: what wõder is it tho he neuer come to his blisse: who that trauelleth vnwist, and coueiteth thing vnknow, vnweting he shal be quited, & with vnknow thing rewarded. Good lady (qd. I) than) it hath oft be seen, ꝑ weathers & stoxmes so hugely haue fall in burioning time, & by perte durelle han beaten of the springs so clean, wherthyough ꝑ fruit of thilk yere hath failed. It is a great grace whã burions han good wethers, their fruits fooyth to byng. Alas, than after suche stoxmes how hard is it to anoid, till efte wedying & yeres hã maked her circute cours all about, ere any fruit be able to be tasted he is shent for shame, that foule is rebuked of his speeche. Hee that is in fire byenning sore smarteth for disease: Him thinketh full long er ꝑ water come that should the fire quenche.

While men gon after a leth, the body is buried. Lo how semely this fruit wexeth, me thinketh that of tho fruites may no man atast, for pure bitternesse in sauour. In this wise both fruit & the tre wasten away togider, though mokell bely occupation haue be spent to bring it so ferforth, that it was able to spring. A litle speche hath maked that all this labour is in ydel. I not (qd. she) wherof it serueth thy question to assoile, me thinketh the now duller in wittes, than whan I with the first mette, although a man be lewd commonly for a foole he is not demed, but if he no good wol learn: sottes & fools let lightly out of mind, the good that men teacheth hem. I said therfore thy thork must be strong, and in greatnesse well hearted, the tre is full feble ẏ at the first dent faileth: and although fruit faileth one yeare or two, yet shall suche a season come one time or other, that shall bring out fruit that is nothing preterit, ne passed there is nothing future ne coming but all things togider in that place been present euerlasting without any meuing, wherefore to God al thing is as now: & though a thing be not in kindly nature of things as yet, and if it should be hereafter, yet euermore we shul say God it maketh be time present, and now for no future ne preterit in him may be fond. Wherefore his weting & his before weting, is all one in vnderstanding. Than if weting and before weting of god putteth in necessite to all things which hee wot or before wot ne thing after eternity, or els after any time he woll or doth of liberty, but all of necessity, which thing if thou wene it be ayenst reason not thorow necessity, to be or not to be, all thing that God wot or before woot, to be or not to be, & yet nothing defendeth any thyng to be wist or to be before wist of him in our wils or our doinges to be done, or els comming to be for free arbitrement. Whan thou hast these declaracions wel vnderstand, than shalt thou find it reasonable at proue, & that many things be not thorow necessity, but thorow liberty of will, saue necessity of free will, as I tofore said: and as me thinketh all vtterly declared. Me thinketh lady (qd. I) so I shoulde you nat displease, and euermore your reuerence to keepe, that these thinges contrarien in anye vnderstandyng, for ye saine sometime is thorowe libertye of will, and also thorow necessity. Of this haue I yet no sauour, without better declaracion. What wonder (qd. she) is there in these things, sithen all day thou shalt see at thine eye, in many thynges receiuen in hemselfe reuers, thorow diuers reasons, as thus. I pray thee (qd. she) which thynges been more reuers than commen and gone: for if I bid thee come to me, and thou come, after whē I bid the go and thou go, thou receiuest fro thy first comming. That is sooth (qd. I) and yet (qd. shee) in thy first alone by diuers reason was full reuersing to vnderstande. I s howe (qd. I) That shall I shew thee (qd. she) by ensample of things that haue kindly mouing. Is there any thyng that meueth more kindly than doth the heauens tw, which I clepe ẏ son. Sothly (qd. I) me seme that most kindly to moue. Thou saiest sooth (qd. she) Than if thou looke to the sonne, in what part her be vnder heauen, euermore he heigheth him in mooning from thilke place, and heigheth meuinge towarde the ilke same place, to thilke place from which hee goeth he heigheth comming, and without any ceasing to that place he neigheth frō which he is changed & withdraw. But now in these things after diuersity of reason, reuers in one thing may be say without repugnance. Wherfore in the same wise, without any repugnaunce by my reasons tofore maked, all is one to beleue: something to be thorow necessity coming for it is comming, and yet with no necessity constrained to bee comming, but with necessity that commeth out of free will, as I haue said. Tho list me a little to speak, & gan stint my peine of my writing, & said in this wise. Trewly Lady as me thinketh, I can allege authorites great that contrarien your sayinges. Job saith of mannes person, thou hast putte his tearme, which thou might nat passe. Than saye I that no man may shorte ne length the daye, ordained of his doing, all tho somtime to vs it semeth some man to doe a thing of free wil, wherthrough his death he henteth. Nay forsooth (qd. she) it is nothing ayenst my saying for God is nat beguiled, ne he seeth nothing whether it shall come of liberty or els of necessity, yet it is said to be ordained at God immouable, whiche at man or it bee done may bee chaunged. Such thynge also is that Poule the Apostle saieth of hem that tofore werne purposed to bee Saints, as thus, which that God before wist, & hath predestined, conformes of ymages of his sonne, that he should been the first begeten, that is to say, here amonges manye brethren, & whome hee hath predestined, him

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he hath cleped, & whome he hath cleped, hem he hath iustified, and whome he hath iustified, hem he hath magnified. This purpose after which they been cleped saincts, or holy in the euerlastinge present, where is neither time passed, ne time comming, but euer it is oncly present, and now as mokell a moment, as vii. thousand Winter, and so ayenward withouten any meuing, is nothing lich tempozel presence, for thing that there is euer present. Yet emonges you men, ere it be in your presence, it is mouable through libertie of arbitrement. And right as in the euerlastinge presente, no maner thing was, ne shalbe, but onely is, and now here in your tempozell time, some thinge was and is, and shalbe, but mouing stounds, and in this is no manner repugnance. Right so in the euerlasting presence, nothing may be chaunged: and in your tempozell time, other while it is proued mouable, by libertie of will, or it bee doe, withouten any inconuenience thereof to followe. In your tempozell time is no such presence, as in the tother, for your present is doen, when passed and to come ginnen entre, which times here emongs you, euerich eally foloweth other, but the presence euerlasting, dureth in oneheed, withouten any imaginable changinge, and euer is present & nowe.

Tenely the course of the planettes, and ouerwhelmunges of the Sunne, in dayes and nightes, with a newe ginning of his circute after it is ended, that is to same, one yere to folowe another. These maken your transitorie times, with changing of liues, and mutation of people. But right as your tempozel presence, coueiteth euery place, and al thinges in euery of your times bee contained, and as nowe both say and wist to Gods very knowing. Than (qd I) me wondreth why Poule spake these wozdes, by voice of signification in time passed, that GOD his saintes befoze wist, hath predestined, hath cleped, hath iustified, and hath magnified, mee thinketh hee should haue saide tho wozdes in time present, and that had beene moze accozdaunte, to the euerlasting presente, then to haue spoken in preterit voice of passed vnderstanding. O (qd loue) by these wozdes, I see well thou hast litle vnderstanding of the euerlasting presence, or els of my befoze spoken wozdes, for neuer a thing of tho thou hast nempned, was to foze other, or after other, but all at ones euenliche, at the God been, and all together in the euerlasting presente, bee nowe to vnderstandinge, the eternall presence, as I saied, hath inclose togider in one, all times, in which close and one all things, that been in diuers times, and in diuers places tempozell, without posteritie or prioritie, beene closed therein perpetuall nowe, and maked to dwell in present sight. But there thou saiest that Poule should haue spoke thilke foresaide sentence bee time present, and that moste should haue beene accozdant, to the euerlasting presence, why gabbest thou to thy wozdes? Sothly, I sate, Poule moued the wozdes, by signification of tyme passed, to shewe fully that thilke wozdes, were not put for tempozell signification, for all thilke time were not thilke sentence tempozalliche bozne, which that Poule pronounced, God haue tofoze know, and haue cleped then magnified, wherethrough it may well be know, that Poule vsed tho wozdes of passed signification, for neede and lacke of a wozd in mans bodily speach, betokening the euerlasting presence. And therefoze wozd is moste semelich in likenesse to euerlastinge presence, he tooke his sentence for thinges, that here befozne beene passed, vtterly be immouable, like to the euerlasting presēce. As thilk that been, there neuer mowe not been present, so things of time passed, ne mowe in no wise not been passed: but all thinges in you tempozall, presence that passen in a little while, shullen beene not present. So then in that it is moze similitude to the euerlasting presence, signification of time passed, that of time tempozall present, and so moze in accozdaunce. In this manner what thing of these that ben done through free arbitrement, or els as necessarie, holye write pronounceth, after eternitie he speaketh, in which presence is euerlasting sothe, and nothing but sothe immouable nat after time, in which naught alway been your willes and your actes, & right as while they be not, it is not nedefull hem to be, so oft it is not nedefull, that sometime they shoulde be. As how (qd I) for yet neuer I be lerned, by some ensample. Of loue (qd she) woll I nowe ensample make, sithen I knowe the hed knott in that pelke. Lo, sometime thou writest no arte, ne art then in no will to write, and right as while thou writest not, or els wolte not write, it is not nedefull thee to write, or els wiln to write.

And for to make thee knowe vtterly, that thinges beene otherwise in the euerlastinge presence, than in tempozall time: see nowe my good child, for somthing is in the euerlasting

presence, then in tempozall time, it was not in eternite time, in eterne presence shall it not be. Then no reason defendeth, that some thing ne may be in time tempozall mooving, that in eterne is immooueable. Fozsoth it is no moze contrary ne reuers, foz to be moueable in time tempozell, and moueable in eternity, then not to be in any time, and to be alway in eternity, and haue to be, oz els to come in time tempozell, and not haue be, ne nought comming to be in eternite. Yet neuer the later, I say not something to be neuer in time tempozell, that euer is eternite, but all onely in sometime not to bee. Foz I say not thy loue to mozne in no time to be, but to day alone I bende ne it to be, and yet neuer the later, it is alwaye in eternitie.

Also (qd. I) it semeth to me, that comming thing, oz els passed, here in your tempozall time to be, in eternitie euer nowe, and present oweth not to be demed, and yet followeth not thilke thing, that was oz els shall bee, in no manner thereto ben passed, oz els comming: then vtterly shull wee deny, foz there without ceasing, it is in his present manner. O (qd. she) mine owne disciple, now ginnest thou able to haue the name of my seruant. Thy wit is clered, away is now errour of cloud in vncunning, away is blindnes of loue, away is thozt-full study, of medling manners, hastily shalte thou enter into the ioye of mee, that am thine owne maistres.

Thou hast (qd. she) in a fewe wozdes well and clearely concluded mokell of my matter. And right as there is no reuers, ne contrariousie in tho doinges, right so withouten any repugnaunce, it is saied, some thing to be moueable in time tempozell, and foz it be, that in eternitye dwelleth immooueable, not afoze it be, oz after that it is, but without ceasing, foz right naught is there after time that same is there euerlasting, that tempozaliche sometime nis, and tofoze it be, it may not be, as I haue saied. Now soothly (qd. I) this haue I well vnderstande, so that nowe me thinketh that prescience of God, and free arbitrement, withouten any repugnaunce accozden, & that maketh the strength of eternity, whiche encloseth by presence, during all times, and all thinges that been, han been, and shull been in any time.

I would now (qd. I) a little vnderstande, sithen that all thinge thus befoze wotte, whether thilke weting be of tho thinges, oz els thilke thinges been to been of Gods weting, and so of GOD nothing is: and if euerie thing bee through Gods weting, and thereof take his being, then should GOD bee maker and aucthour of badde werkes, and so he should not rightfully punish euill dounges of mankinde. (Qd. loue) I shall tell thee, this lesson to learne, mine owne true seruaunt, the noble Philosophicall Poet, in English, which euermoze him busieth and trauailerh tight foze, my name to encrease, wherefoze all that willen me good, owe to doe him worshippe and reuerence both, trewly his better ne his peere, in schoole of my rulers coude I neuer finde: He (qd. she) in a treatise that hee made of my seruant Troilus, hath this matter touched, and at the full this question assoiled. Certainly his noble saying, can I not amend: in goodnesse of gentilmanlich speach, without any manner of nicity of flateriers imagination, in wit and in good reason of sentence, hee passeth all other makers. In the booke of Troilus, the answer to thy question maiest thou learne, neuer the later, yet may lightly thine vnderstanding somedeale been learned, if thou haue knowing of these to forenaide thinges, with that thou haue vnderstanding of two the last chapiters of this second booke, that is to saie, good to be some thing, and badde to want all manner beeing, foz badde is nothing els, but absence of good, and that God in good maketh that good deedes been good, in euill hee maketh that they been but naught, that they been badde: foz to nothing is badnesse to be. I haue (qd. I tho) inough knowing therein, me needeth of other things to heare, that is to say, how I shall come to my blisse so long desired.

In this matter tofoze declared (qd. Loue) I haue wel shewed, ỹ euery man hath fre arbitrement of things in his power to doe, oz vndoe what him liketh. Out of this ground must come the Spire. that by procesſe of time shall in greatnesse spzede, to haue bzanches & blossoms, of waxing fruict in grate, of which the tast and the sauour, is endles blisse in ioy euer to onbide. Now Lady (qd. I) that tree to set same would I learne. So thou shalt (qd. shee) ere thou depart hence. The first thing thou must set thy werke on ground liker and good, accozdaunte to thy spzinges. Foz if thou desire grapes, thou goest not vnto the Hasell ne foz to fetchen roses, thou seekest not on Okes:

and

and if thou shalte haue hony sonkels, thou leauest the fruite of the soure Docke. Wherefore if thou desire this blisse in perfite ioye, thou must set thy purpose there verrue folowe-eth, and not to looke after the bodily goodes, as I saied when thou were writing in thy second booke. And for thou hast set thy selfe in so noble a place, and vtterly lowed in thine harte, the misgoing of thy first purpose, this settelest is the ealier to springe, and the more lighter thy soule in grace to be filled. And truely thy desire, that is to saye, thy will, algates mote ben stedfast in this matter, without any chaunging, for if it be stedfast, no man may it holde. Yes parde (qd I) my will may beene tourned by frendes, and disease of manace, and threatning in leting of my life, and of my limmes, and in many other wise, that nowe commeth not to mynd. And also it mote ofte been out of thought, for no remembrance may holde one thing continually in harte, bee it neuer so lustie desired. Nowe see (qd shee) thou thy will shall followe, thy free will to be grounded, continually to abyde: It is thy free will that thou louest and hast loued, and yet shalt louen this Margarite perle, and in thy will thou thinkest to holde it. Then is thy will knitte in loue, not to chaunge for no newe lust beside: This will teacheth thine harte, from all manner varying. But then although thou be threatened in death, or els in otherwise, yet is it in thine arbitrement to choose, thy loue to voyde, or els to holde: and thilke arbitrement is in a manner a iudgement, betweene desire and thy harte. And if thou deme to loue, thy good will faileth, then art thou worthie no blisse, that good will shoulde deserue: and if thou choose continuaunce in thy good seruice, then thy will abydeth, needes blisse folowing of thy good will, must come by strength of thilke iudgement: for thy firste will that taught thine harte to abyde, and halt it from thes chaunge, with thy reason is accorded. Truely this manner of wil thus shall abyde, impossible it were to turne if thy harte be true, and if euery man diligently, the meaninges of his will consider, hee shall well vnderstande, that good will knitt with reason, but in a false harte neuer is voyded: for power and might of keeping this good will, is through liberte of arbitrement in harte, but good will to keepe maye not faile. Eke then if it faile, it sheweth it selfe, that good will in keping is not there. And thus false wil that putteth out the good, anon constraineth the harte, to accorde in louinge of thy good will, and this accordaunce betweene faise wil and thine harte, in falsitie beene likened togither. Yet a little will I saye thee in good will thy good willes to raise and strength. Take hede to me (qd shee) how thy willes thou shalt understonde.

Right as ye han in your bodie diuers mebers, and fiue sundrie wittes, euerich apart to his owne doing, which thinges as instrumentes ye vsen, as your handes apart to handle, feete to goe, tongue to speake, eye to see right so the soule, hath in him certaine strenges and strengthes, which he vseth as instruments to his certaine doinges. Reason is in the soule, which he vseth thinges to know and to prooue, and will, which hee vseth to wilne: And yet is neither will ne reason all the soule, but euerich of hem is a thing by him selfe in the soule. And right as euerich hath thus singuler instrumentes by hem selfe, they han as well diuers aptes, and diuers manner vsinges, and thilke aptes mowen in will bene cleped affections.

Affection is an instrumet of willing in his apetites. Wherefore moste folke saine, if a reasonable creatures soule, any thing feruently wilneth, affectuously he wilneth, and thus may wil by terme of equinocas, in three waies been vnderstand: one is instrument of willing, an other is affection of this instrument: and the thirde is vse, that setteth it a werke. Instrument of willinge is the like strength of the soule, whiche ther constraineth to wilne, right as reason is instrumet of reasons, which ye vsen when ye loken. Affection of this instrument is a thinge, by which ye bee drawe desirously any thinge to wilne in coueitous maner, all be it for the tyme out of your mind: as if it come in your thought thilke thinge to remember, anone ye been willing thilk to doen, or els to haue. And thus is instrument will, & affection is will also, to wilne thing as I said: as for to wilne health, when will nothinge theron thinketh: for anon as it cometh to memorie, it is in will, and so is affection to wilne slepe, when it is out of mind, but anon as it is remembred wil wilneth slepe, whe his time cometh of the doing. For affection of wil, neuer accordeth to sickenes, ne alway to wake: Right so in a true louers affection of willing instrument, is to wilne truth in his seruice. and this affection alway abydeth, although he be sleeping or threted, or els not thereon thinking, but anone as it commeth to minde, anone

he

hyg steadfast in that will to abide. Use of this instrument forsooth is an other thing by himselfe, and that haue ye not but when ye be doing, in willed thing by affect or instrument of will, purposed or desired, and this manner of usage in my learning, wilely ruled to be ruled. from waiters with enuie closed from speters full of tangling woyds; from proud folke and hautaine, that lambes and innocentes both scornen and despisen. Thus in doing, varieth the actes of willing eueriche from other, & yet both they cleped will, and the name of will bestowen thereto haue, as instrument of their will; when per tinne into purpose of any thing to doen, be it to sitten to stande, or any such thing els. This instrument may den had, although affect and usage be left out of doing, right as ye haue sight and reason, and yet alway ble ye greatest wilsom me in hem shall he be, and they in God. Now then when all false folke be ashamed, which weenen all bestialte and yearthly thing, be soverer and better to the bodie, than heauenlyis to the soule: this is the grace and the fruict that I long haue desired, it doeth me good the sauour to smell. Christ now to thee I cry of mercy & of grace, and graunt of thy goodnes to euery maimer reader, full understanding in this leud pamflet to haue; and let no man wene other cause in this woerke, then is verily the sooth: for enuie is euer ready all innocents to shend, wherfore I would that good speech enuie euermore hinder. But no man wene this werke be sufficiently maked, for GODS werke passeth mans, no mans wit to parfite werke may by no way pricuate thend: how should I then so leud, aught wene of perfection any end to gete. Neuer the later grace, glory, and laud, I yelde and put with worshipfull reuerences, to the sothfast God in thre, with vnitie closed, which that the heauie langour of my sickneese, hath tourned into myth of health to recouer: for right as I was sorowed, through the gloton cloud of manifold sickly sorrow, so mirth ayen comming health hath me gladded and greatly comforted. I beseech and pray therfore, and I crie on Gods great pity, and on his mokell mercy, that this present scourges of my flesh, now make medicine, and leche craft of my inner mans health. so that my passed trespace and teenes through weping of mine eyen been wash, and I voided from all manner disease, and no more to wepe hereafter. I now be kept through Gods grace: so that Gods hande which that mercifully me hath scourged, hereafter in good plite, from thente mercifully me kepe and defend. In this booke be many pytnie thinges wimpled and folde, vneth shall lend men the plites vnwinde, wherefore I pray to ỳ holy ghost, he lens of his ointments, mens wits to clere, and for Gods louerie man wonder, why or how this quiction come to my mind, for my great lusty desire was of this lady to ben informed, my leudnesse to amend. Certes I know not other mine maistres, what I should aske, or in answere, what I should say, I am so lewd my selfe, that mokell more learning yet me behoueth. I haue made therefore as I could, but not sufficiently as I would and as matter haue me sentence, for my dull wit is hindred, by stepmother forgetting, and with cloude of vncunning, that stoppeth the light of my margarite perle, wherefore it may not shine on me as it should. I desire not only a good reader, but also I coueit and pray a good booke amender, in correction of wordes and of sentence: and only this mede I coueit for my trauaile, that euery insect and heaper of this leude fantasie, deuout horisons and prayers, to God the gread iudge yelden, and praien for me, in that wise that in his dome, my sins now ben released and forgeuen: he that prayeth for other, for himselfe trauaileth. Also I pray that euery man parfitely mow knowe, through what intencion of heart this treatise haue I drawe. How was it the sightful Manna in desert, to children of Israell was spirituell meate: bodily also it was, for mens bodies it nourisheth. And yet neuer the later, Christ it signified. Right so a iewell betokeneth a gemme: and that is a stone vertuous or els a pearle. Margarite a woman betokeneth grace, learning, or wisedome of God, or els holy Church. If bread through vertue is made holy flesh, what is that our God saith? It is the spirit that queeth life, the flesh of nothing it profiteth. Flesh is fleshly vnderstanding: Flesh without grace and loue naught is worth. The letter sleeth, the spirite queeth lifelich vnderstanding. Charitie is loue, and loue is charity, God graunt vs all therein to be frended. And thus the Testament of Loue is ended.

¶ Here endeth the Testament of Loue.

The

The lamentation of Mary Magdaleine.

PLonged in the wawe of
moztall distresse
Alas foz wo, to whom shal
I complein
Oz who shall deuoid this
great heuinesse
Fro me woful Mary, wo-
full Magdalein
My lozd is gon, alas who wzought this trein
This sodain chance pereeth my hart so depe
That nothing can I do, but waile and wepe.

My lozd is gone, ỹ here in graue was laied
After his great passion, and death cruell
Who hath him thus againe betraied:
Oz what man here about can me tell
Where he is become, the Pzince of Israell
Jesus of Nazareth, my ghostly socour
My parfite loue, and hope of all honour.

What creature hath him hence caried
Oz how might this so sodainly befalle
I would I had here with him taried
And so should I haue had my purpose all
I bought ointments full pzecious and rotall
Wherewith I hoped his cozps to anointed
But he thus gone, my mind is disponted.

While I therefoze aduertise and behold
This pitous chance, here in my pzesence
Full little maruaile though my hart be cold
Considzing so, my Lozds absence
Alas that I so full of negligence
Should be found because I come so late
All men may say I am infoztunate.

Cause of my sozow you may vnderstond
(Quia tulerunt dominum meum)
Another is, that I ne may fond
I wote nere, Vbi posuerunt eum
Thus I must bewaile, Dolorem meum
With hartie weping, I can no better deserue
Till death appzoch, my hart foz to kerue.

My hart oppzest with sodaine auenture
By cruent anguish is bewzapped so
That long this life I may not endure
Such is my paun, such is my moztall wo
Neuertheless, to what partie shall I go
In hope to find mine owne Turtill true
My liues ioy, my loucrain Lozd Jesu.

Sith all my ioy, that I call his pzesence
Is thus remoued, now I am full of mone
Alas the whyle, I made no pzouidence
Foz this mishap, wherfoze I sigh and grone
Succour to find, to what place might I gon
Fain I would to some man my heart breake
I not to whome I may complain oz speake.

Alone here I stand, full sozie and full sad
Which hoped to haue seen my lozd and king
Small cause haue I to be merry oz glad
Remembzing this bitterfull departing
In this wozld is no creature liuing
That was to me so good and gracious
His loue also then gold moze pecious.

Full soze I sigh, without comfozt again
There is no cure to my saluacion
His bzenning loue my hart so doth constrain
Alas here is a wofull permutation
Whereof I find no ioy noz consolation
Therefoze my paine all onely to confesse
With death I feare woll end my heauiues.

This wo and anguish is intollerable
If I bide here life can I not sustain
If I go hence my paines be vncurable
Where him to find I know no place certain
And thus I not of these things twain
Which I may take, & which I may refuse
My hart is wounded heron to think oz muse.

A while I shall stand in this mourning
In hope if any vision would appeare
That of my loue might tell some good tiding
Which into ioy, might chaunge my weping
I trust in his grace & in his mercy dere (chere
But at the least, though I therwith me kill
I shall not spare to waile and wepe my fill.

And if that I die in such auenture
I can no moze but welcome as my chaunce
My bones shall rest here in this sepulture
My life, my death, is at his ozdinance
It shall be told in euerlasting remembzaunce
Thus to depart, is to me no shame
And also thereof I am nothing to blame.

Hope against me hath her course itake
There is no moze, but thus shall I die
I se right well my Lozd hath me fozsake
But in my conceipt, cause know I none why
Though he be farre hence, and nothing nye

yet

Yet my wofull hart after him doth seke
And causeth teares to ren doun by my cheke.

Thinking alas, I haue lost his presence
Which in this world was all my sustenance
I crie and call with harrie diligence
But there is no wight gueth attendance
Me to certifie of mine enquirance,
Wherefore I will to all this world bewraie
How that my lord is slaine and borne away.

Though I mourne it is no great wonder
Sith he is all my ioy in speciall
And now I thinke we be so farre a sonder
That him to see I feare neuer I shall
It helpeth no more after him to call
Ne after him to enquire in any coste
Alas how is he thus gone and loste.

The Iewes I thinke full of miserie
Set in malice, by their busie cure
With force & might of gilefull trecherie
Hath entermined my Lords sepulture
And borne away that precious figure
Leauing of it nothing, if they haue done so
Warred I am, alas what shall I do.

With their vengeaunce insaciable
Now haue they him entreated so
That to report it is to lamentable
They beate his bodie from toppe to the toe
Neuer man was borne that felte such woe
They wounded him alas with all greuance:
The blood doun relled in most habundance.

The bloodie rowes stremed doun ouer all
They him assailed so maliciously
With their scourges and strokes beastiall
They spared not, but smote incessantly
To satisfie their malice they were full busie
They spit in his face, they smote here & there
He groned ful sore, and sweat many a tere.

Thei crouned him with thornes sharp & kene
The vaines rent, the blood ran doun a pace
With blood ouercome were both his eyen
And borne with strokes was his blessed face
They him intreated, as men without grace
They kneled to him, & made many a scorne
Like helhounds they haue him all to torne.

Upon a mightie crosse in length and brede
These tormentors shewed their cursednesse
They nailed him without pitie or drede
His precious blood brast out in largenesse
They strained him along, as men merciless
The very ioynts all to mine apparence
Rued a sonder, for their great violence.

All this I beholding with mine eyen twain
Stode there beside with rufull attendance
And euer me thought, he being in that paine
Loked on me, with dedly countenance
As he had said in his special remembrance
Farwel Magdale, depart must I nedes heng
My harte is Tanquam cera liquescens.

Which rufull sight when I gan beholde
Out of my witte I almoste distraught
Tare my heere, my hands wrang and folde
And of ỳ sight my hart dranke such a draught
That many a fall swouning there I caught
I bruised my body, falling on the ground
Whereof I fele many a greuous wound.

Then these wretches, ful of all frowardnesse
Gaue him to drink Eisel tempred with Gall
Alas, that poison ful of bitternesse
My loues chere caused then to appall
And yet thereof might he not drinke at all
But spake these words, as him thought best
Father of heauen, Consummatum est.

Then kneled I doune, in paines outrage
Clipping ỳ crosse within mine armes twaine
His blood distilled doune on my visage
My clothes eke the droppes did distain
To haue died for him I would full fain
But what should it anaile if I did so
Sith he is, Suipensus in patibulo.

Thus my Lord full dere was all disgised
With blood pain and woundes many one
His veines brast, his ioynts all to rued
Parting asonder the flesh fro the bone
But I sawe he hing not there alone
For Cum iniquis deputatus est
Not like a man, but like a leprous beest.

A blind knight men called Longias
With a speare approched vnto my souerain
Launsing his side full pitously alas
That his precious hart he claue in twain
The purple blood eke fro the hartes vain
Doune railed right fast, in most rufui wise
With chrystal water brought out of Paradise

When I beheld this wofull passion
I wote not how, by sodain auenture
My hart was perced with very compassion
That

That in me remained no life of nature
Strokes of death I felt without measure
My deaths wound I caught, with woo oppreſt
And brought to point as my hert ſhould breſt

The wound, hert, and blood of my darling
Shal neuer ſlide fro my remoriall
The bitter paines alſo of tourmenting
Within my ſoule be grauen principall
The ſpeare alas, that was ſo ſharp withall
So thrilled my hert, as to my feling
That body and ſoule were at departing

As ſoon as I might I releued vp againe
My breath I coud not very wel reſtore
Feling my ſelfe drowned in ſo great paine
Both body & ſoule me thought wer all to tore
Violent fals greued me right ſore
I wept, I bled, and with my ſelf I fared
As one that for this life nothing had cared

I looking vp to that rufull Rood
Saw firſt the viſage pale of that figure
But ſo pitous a ſight ſpotted with blood
Saw neuer yet no liuing creature
So it exceded the bounds of meaſure
That mans mind with all his wits fiue
Is nothing able, that pain for to diſcriue

Than gan I there mine armes to imbrace
Uplifting my hands ful mourningly
I ſighed and ſore ſobbed in that place
Both heuen and erth might haue herd me cry
Weping, and ſaid alas inceſſauntly
Ah my ſwete hert, my ghoſtly paramour
Alas I may nat thy body ſocour

O bleſſed lord, how fierce and how cruell
Theſe curſed wights now hath thee ſlaine
Kerfing alas thy body euerideli
Wound within wound, ful bitter is thy pain
Now would that I might to thee attaine
To naile my body faſt vnto thy tree
So that of this pain thou might go free

I cannot report ne make no reherſaile
Of my demening, with the circumſtaunce
But wel I wot the ſpeare with euery naile
Thirled my ſoule by inward reſemblaunce
Which neuer ſhal out of my remembraunce
During my life it wol cauſe me to waile
As oft as I remember that battaile

Ah ye Iewes, worſe than dogs rabiate
What moued you thus cruelly him to aray
He neuer diſpleaſed you nor cauſed debate
Your loue and true herts he coueited aye
He preched, he teched, he ſhewed ỹ right way
Wherfore ye like tyraunts wood & wayward
Nowe haue hym thus ſlayne for his rewarde

Ye ought to haue remẽbred one thing ſpeciall
His fauour, his grace, and his magnificence
He was your Prince borne, and lord ouer all
Howbeit ye tooke him in final reuerence
He was ful meeke in ſuffring your offence
Neuertheles ye deuoured him with one aſſẽt
As hungry wolues doth the lambe innocent

Where was your pite, o people mercileſſe
Arming your falſhood and treaſon
On my lorde ye haue ſhewed your woodneſſe
Like no men, but beeſts without reaſon
Your malice he ſuffred all for the ſeaſon
Your payne wol come, thinke it nat to ſlacke
Man without mercy of mercy ſhal lacke

O ye traitours & maintainers of madneſſe
Unto your foly I aſcribe all my paine
Ye haue me depriued of ioy and gladneſſe
So dealing with my lord and ſoueraine
Nothing ſhould I need thus to complaine
If he had liued in peace and in tranquilite
Whom ye haue ſlain through your iniquite

Farewel your nobleneſſe ỹ ſomtime did raine
Farewel your worſhip glory and fame
Hereafter to line in hate and diſdaine
Marualle ye not, for your treſpace & blame
Unto ſhame is tourned all your name
Upon you now wol wonder euery nation
As people of moſt vile reputation

Theſe wicked wretches, theſe hounds of hel
As I haue told plaine here in this ſentence
Were not content my deere loue thus to quel
But yet they muſt embeſile his preſence
As I perceiue by couert violence
They haue him conueied to my diſpleaſure
For here is lakt but naked ſepulture

Wherfore of trouth and rightfull iudgement
That their malice again may be acquited
After my verdite and auiſement
Of falſe murder they ſhal be endited
Of theft alſo, which ſhal not be reſpited
And in all haſt they ſhall be hanged and drawe
I wol my ſelfe plead this cauſe in the lawe

Alas if I with trew attendaunce

Had still abidden with my lords corse
And kept it stil with trew perseuerannce
Than had nat befal this woful deuorse
But as for my pain welcome and no forse
This shal be my song whersoeuer I go
Departing is ground of all my wo

I see right wel now in my paines smert
There is no wound of so greenous dolour
As is the wound of my carefull hert
Sith I haue lost thus my paramour
All swetenesse is turned into sour
Wirth to my hert nothing may conuey
But he that beareth therof both lock and key

The ioy excellent of blissed paradise
May me alas in no wise recomfort
Song of Angel nothing may me suffice
As in mine hert now to make disport
All I refuse, but that I might resort
Unto my loue, the wel of goodlihed
For whose longing I trow I shal be deed

Of painful labour and tourment corporall
I make therof none exception
Paines of hel I wol passe ouer all
My loue to find in mine affection
So great to him is my delectacion
A thousand times martred wol I be
His blessed body ones if I might se

About this world so large in all compace
I shal not spare to renne my life during
My feet also shal not rest in one place
Til of my loue I may here some tiding
For whose absence my hands now I wring
To thinke on him, cease shall neuer my mind
O gentil Jesu where shal I thee find

Jerusalem wol I search place fro place
Sion, the vale of Josaphath also
And if I find him not in all this space
By mount Olinet to Bethany wol I go
These waies wol I wander and many mo
Nazareth, Bethleem, Mountana, Jude
No trauaile shal me paine him for to se

His blissed face if I might se and find
Search I would euery cost and countrey
The fardest part of Egipt or hote Jude
Should be to me but a litel iourney
How is he thus gone or taken away
If I knew the ful trouth and certente
Yet from this care released might I be

Into wildernesse I thinke best to go
Sith I can no more tidings of him here
There may I my life lead to and fro
There may I dwel, and to no man apere
To town ne village wol I come nere
Alone in woods, in rockes, and in caues depe
I may at mine own wil both waile and wepe

Mine eyen twaine withouten variaunce
Shal neuer cease, I promise faithfully
There to wepe with great aboundaunce
Bitter teares renning incessauntly
The which teares medled ful petously
With the very blood euer shal renne also
Expressing in mine hert the greuous wo

Worldely food and sustenaunce I desire none
Such liuing as I find, such wol I take
Roots that growen on the craggy stone
Shal me suffice with water of the lake
Than thus may I say for my lords sake
Fuerunt mihi lachrime me
In deserto panes, die ac nocte

My body to cloth it maketh no force
A mourning mantel shalbe sufficient
The greuous wounds of his pitous corse
Shal be to me a ful roiall garment
He departed thus I am best content
His crosse with nailes and scourges withall
Shal be my thought and pain speciall

Thus wol I liue, as I haue here told
If I may any long time endure
But I fear death is ouer me so bold
That of my purpose I cannot be sure
My paines encrease without measure
For of long life who can lay any reason
All thing is mortall and hath but a season

I sigh ful sore, and it is ferre yfet
Mine hert I fele now bleedeth inwardly
The bloody teares I may in no wise let
Sith of my paine I find no remedye
I thanke God of all if I now dye
His wil performed I hold me content
My soule let him take that hath it me lent

For lenger to endure it is intollerable
My woful hert is inflamed so huge
That no sorow to mine is comparable
Sith of my mind I find no refuge
Yet I him require as rightful iuge
To deuoid fro me the inward sorow
Least I liue not to the next morow

Within

Within mine hert is impressed ful sore
His roiall forme, his shappe, his semelines
His port, his chere, his goodnes euermore
His noble person with all gentilnes
He is the well of all parfitenes
The very redemer of all mankind
Him loue I best with hert, soule and mind

His noble corse within mine herts rote
Depe is graued, which shal neuer slake
Now is he gone to what place I ne woote
I mourne, I wepe, and all is for his sake
Sith he is past, here a vow I make
With hertely promise, and thereto I me bind
Neuer to cease til I may him find

In his absence my paines ful bitter be
Right wel I may it fele now inwardly
No wonder is though they hurt or slee me
They cause me to cry so rufully
Mine hert oppressed is so wonderfully
Only for him, which so bright is blee
Alas I trow I shal him neuer see

Unto his mother I thinke for to go
Of her haply some comfort may I take
But one thing yet me feareth and no mo
If I any mencion of him make
Of my words she would trimble and quake
And who could her blame, she hauing but one
The sonne borne away, the mother wol mone

My ioy is translate ful farre in exile
My myrth is changed into paynes cold
My life I thinke endureth but a while
Anguish and paine is that I behold
Wherfore my hands thus I wring and fold
Into this graue I looke, I cal, I pray
Death remaineth, and life is born away

Sorows many hath she suffred trewly
Sith that she first conceiued him and bare
And seuen things there be most specially
That drowneth her hert in sorow and care
Yet lo, in no wise may they compare
With this one now, the which if she knew
She would her paines euerichone renew

Now must I walk and wander here & there
God wot to what parts I shal me dresse
With quaking hert weping many a tere
To seke out my loue and all my swetenes
I would he wist what mortal heuines
About mine hert reneweth more and more
Than wold he not kepe pitie long in store

Great was her sorow by mens saying
When in the temple Symeon Iustus
Shewing to her, these words prophesying
Tuam animam pertransibit gladius
Also whan Herode that tyraunt furious
Her child pursued in euery place
For his life went neither mercy ne grace

Without him I may not long endure
His loue so sore worketh within my brest
And euer I wepe before this sepulture
Sighing ful sore, as mine heart should brest
During my life I shal obtain no rest
But mourne and weep, where that euer I go
Making complaint of all my mortall wo

She mourned what she knew him gone
Ful long she sought or she him found ayen
When he went to death his crosse him vpon
It was to her sight a rewful paine
Whã he hong theron, betwene theues twain
And the speare vnto his hert thrust right
She swouned, and to the ground there pight

Fast I crie, but there is no audience
My comming hider was him for to please
My soule oppressed is here with his absence
Alas he list not to set mine hert in ease
Wherfore to pain my self with all disease
I shal not spare til he take me to grace
Or els I shal sterue herein this place

When deed and bloody in her lap lay
His blissed body, both hands and fete all tore
She cried out and said, now welaway
Thus araied was neuer man before
When haste was made his body to be bore
Unto sepulture here to remaine
Unnethes for wo she coud her sustaine

Ones if I might with him speake
It were all my ioy, with parfite pleasaunce
So that I might to him mine hert breke
I should anon deuoid all my greuaunce
For he is the blisse of very recreaunce
But now alas, I can nothing do so
For in stede of ioy nought haue I but wo

The sorows seuen, like swerds euery one
His mothers hert wounded fro side to side
But if she knew her sonne thus gone
Out of this world she should with death ride
For care she coud no lenger here abide
Hauing no more ioy nor consolacioun
Than I here standing in this stacioun

Wherfore her to see I dare nat presume
Fro her presence I wol my selfe refraine
Yet had I leuer to die and consume
Than his mother should haue any more pain
Neuertheselle her son I would see ful fain
His presence was very ioy and swetenesse
His absence is but sorow and heauinesse

There is no more, sith I may him nat mete
Whom I desire aboue all other thing
Nede I must take the sour with the swete
For of his noble corse I here no tiding
Ful oft I cry, and my hands wring
Mine hert alas relenteth all in paine
Which wol brast both sinew and vaine

Alas how vnhappy was this woful hour
Wherin is thus mispended my seruice
For mine entent and eke my true labour
To none effect may come in any wise
Alas I thinke if he do me dispise
And list not to take my simple obseruaunce
There is no more, but death is my finaunce

I haue him called, Sed non respondet mihi
Wherfore my mirth is tourned to mourning
O dere lord Quid mali feci tibi
That me to comfort I find no earthly thing
Alas, haue compassion of my crying
Yf fro me, Faciem tuam abscondis
There is no more, but Consumere me vis.

Naught els haue I thee to please or pay
For if mine hart were gold or precious stone
It should be thine without any delay
With hertely chere thou shuld haue it anone
Why suffrest thou me than to stand alone
Thou hast I trow my weping in disdaine
Or els thou knowest nat what is my paine

If thou withdraw thy noble daliaunce
For ought that euer I displeased the
Thou knowest right wel it is but ignoraũce
And of no knowledge for certainte
If I haue offended lord forgiue it me
Glad I am for to make ful repentaunce
Of all thing that hath ben to thy greuaunce

Mine hert alas swelleth wythin my brest
So sore oppressed with anguish and with pain
That all to peeces forsoth it wol brest
But if I see thy blissed corse again
For life ne death I can nat me refrain
If thou make delay thou maist be sure
Mine hert wol lepe into this sepulture

Alas my lord, why farest thou thus with me
My tribulation yet haue in mind
Where is thy mercy, where is thy pitee
Which euer I trusted in thee to find
Somtime thou were to me both good & kind
Let it please thee my prayer to accept
Which with tears I haue here bewept

Within mine hert is grounded thy figure
That all this worlds horrible tourment
May it not allwage, it is so without measure
It is so brenning, it is so feruent
Remember lord I haue ben diligent
Euer thee to please only and no mo
Mine hert is with the where so euer I go

On me thou oughtest to haue very routh
Sith for thee is all this mourning
For sith I to thee yplighted first my trouth
I neuer varied with discording
That knowest thou best my own darling
Why constrainest thou me thus to waile
My wo forsooth can thee nothing auaile

Therfore my dere darling, Trahe me post te
And let me not stand thus desolate
Quia non est, qui consoletur me
Mine hert for thee is disconsolate
My paines also nothing me moderate
Now if it list thee to speak with me a liue
Come in hast, for my hert asunder wil riue

I haue endured without variaunce
Right as thou knowest, thy louer iust & trew
With hart & thought ate, at thine ordinaunce
Like to the saphire alway in one hew
I neuer chaunged thee for no new
Why withdrawest thou my presence
Sith all my thought is for thine absence

To thee I profer lo my poore seruice
Thee for to please after mine own entent
I offer here, as in deuout sacrifice
My bore replete with precious ointment
Mine eyen twain, weping sufficient
Mine hert with anguish fulfilled is alas
My soule eke redy for loue about to pas

With hert entire, swete Lord I crie to thee
Encline thine eares to my petition
And come, Velociter exaudi me
Remember mine herts disposicioun
It may not endure in this condicioun
Therfore out of these paines, Libera me
And where thou art, Pone me iuxta te

Let

Let me behold, O Jesu thy blissed face
Thy faire glorious angelike vilage
Bow thine eares to my complaint, alas
For to conuey me out of this rage
Alas my lord, take fro me this dommage
And to my desire for mercy condiscend
For none but thou, may my greuance amend

Now yet good lord, I the beseech and pray
As thou raised my brother Lazarous
From death to life the fourth day
Came ayen in body and soule precious
As great a thing maist thou shew vnto vs
Of thy selfe, by power of thy godhed
As thou did of him, lying in graue deed

Mine hert is wounded with thy charite
It brenneth, it flameth incessauntly
Come my dere lord, Ad adiuuandum me
Now be not long my paine to multiplie
Lest in the meane time I depart and die
In thy grace I put both hope and confidence
To do as it pleaseth thy hie magnificence

Flouds of death, and tribulacioun
Into my soule I fele entred ful depe
Alas that here is no consolacioun
Euer I waile, euer I mourne and wepe
And sorow hath wounded mine hert ful depe
O dere loue, no maruaile though I die
Sagite tue infixe sunt mihi

Wandring in this place, as in wildernesse
No comfort haue I ne yet assuraunce
Desolate of ioy, replete with faintnesse
No answere receiuing of mine enquiraunce
Mine hert also greued with displeasaunce
Wherefore I may say, O deus deus
Non est dolor sicut dolor meus

Mine hert expresseth Quod dilexi multum
I may not endure though I would faine
For now Solum superest sepulchrum
I know it right wel by my hyge paine
Thus for loue I may not loue sustaine
But o God, I muse what aileth the
Quod sic repente precipitas me

Alas, I see it wil none otherwise be
Now must I take my leaue for euermore
This bitter paine hath almost discomfit me
My liues corse I can in no wise restore
Alas to this wo that euer I was bore
Here at this stombe now must I die & starue
Death is about my hert for to carue

My testament I wol begin to make
To God my father, my soule I commend
To Jesu my loue, that died for my sake
My hert and all both I giue and send
In whose loue my life maketh end
My body also to this monument
I here bequeth, both bore and ointment

Of all my wils, lo now I make the last
Right in this place within this sepulture
I wol be buried whan I am deed and past
And vpō my graue I woll haue this scripture
Here within resteth a ghostly creature
Christis true louer Mary Magdalaine
Whose hert for loue, brake in peeces twaine

Vertuous women, tender of nature
Ful of pite and of compassion
Resort I pray you vnto my sepulture
To sing my dirige with great deuocion
Shew your charite in this condicion
Sing with pite and let your herts wepe
Remembring I am deed and laied to slepe

Whan whan ye begin to part me fro
And ended haue your mourning obseruaunce
Remember where so euer that ye go
Alway to search and make due enqueraunce
After my loue, mine herts sustenaunce
In euery towne and in euery village
If ye may here of this noble ymage

And if it hap by any grace at last
That ye my trew loue find in any cost
Say that Magdaleine is deed and past
For his pure loue hath yelded vp the goost
Say that of all thing I loued him most
And that I might not this death eschew
My paines so sore did euer renew

And in token of loue perpetuall
Whan I am buried in this place present
Take out mine hert, the very rote and all
And close it within this bore of ointment
To my dere loue make therof a present
Kneling downe with words lamentable
Do your message, spake faire and treatable

Say that to him my selfe I commend
A thousand times with hert so fre
This poore token say to him I send
Pleaseth his goodnesse to take it in gree
It is his owne of right, it is his fee
Which he asked, whan he said long before
Giue me thy hert, and I desire no more

Adue my lord, my loue for faire of face
Adue my turtle doue so fresh of hue
Adue my mirth, adue all my solace
Adue alas, my saiuour lord Jesu
Adue the gentelest that euer I knew
Adue my most excellent paramour
Fairer than rose, swoter than lilly flour

Adue my hope of all pleasure eternall
My life, my welth, and my prosperite
Mine hert of gold, my peerle orientall
Mine adamant of parfite charite
My chefe refuge and my felicite
My comfort, and all my recreacioun
Farewel my perpetuall saluacioun

Farewel mine Emperour Celestiall
Most beautiful prince of all mankind
Adue my lord, of hert most liberall
Farwel my swetest, both soule and mind
So louing a spouse shal I neuer find
Adue my soueraine, and very gentilman
Farwel dere hert, as hertely as I can

Thy wordes eloquent flowing in swetenesse
Shal no more alas, my mind recomfort
Wherfore my life must end in bitternesse
For in this world shal I neuer resort
To thee, which was mine heuenly disport
I see alas it wol none other be
Now farwel the ground of all dignite

Adue the fairest that euer was bore
Alas I may nat see your blessed face
Now welaway that I shal see no more
Thy blessed visage, so replete with grace
Wherin is printed my parfit solace
Adue mine herts root and all for euer
Now farewel, I must from the discouer

My soule for anguish is now ful thrusty
I faint right sore for heuinesse
My lord, my spouse: Cur me dereliquisti?
Sith I for the suffer all this distresse
What causeth the to seme thus mercilesse
Sith it the pleaseth of me to make an end
(In manus tuas) my spirit I commend.

FINIS.

The Remedie of Loue.

Seyng the manifold inconuenience
Falling by vnbridled prosperite
Which is not tempred with moral prudence
Nothing more wealthy than youths frelte
Moued I am, both of right and equite
To youths wele somwhat to write
Wherby he may him selfe safe condite

First I note, as thing most noious
Unto youth a greuous malady
Among vs called loue encombrous
Vexing yong people straungely
Oft by force causeth hem to dye
Age is eke turmented by loue
Bineth the girdle, and not aboue

Wherfore this werke, which is right labourous
For age me nede nat in honde to take
To youth me oweth to be obsequious
Now I begin thus to worke for his sake
Which may the feruence of loue aslake
To the louer, as a mitigatiue
To him that is none a preseruatiue

That mighty lord which me gouerneth
Youth I mean, measure if I pace
In euery mater which him concerneth
First as is behoueful, I wol aske grace
And forthwithall in this same place
Er I begin, I wol knele and say
These few wordes, and him of help pray

Flouring youth, which hast auauntage
In strength of body in lust and beaute
Also a precelling hast aboue age
In many a singuler commodite
How be it one thing he hath beyond the
To thy most profit and greatest auaile
Which shuld the conduit, I mean sad counsaile

And yet good lord, of a presumpcion
I nil depraue thy might and deite
I liue but vnder thy protection
I am thy subiect, I weare thy liuery
For thou art ground of my prosperite
And freshest floure of all my garland

My

My singuler aide, as I well vnderstande.

But as he that oweth his lord best seruice
And entire faith, his honour to support
Right so I speake, and in none other wise
I knowledge my self one of the lest sorte
Of thy seruaunts, to our elders comfort
Yawe sadde counsaile to thee if thou list
Thee and thy power, who may then resist.

Fie on age, vnder wordes fewe
And his erronius opinion
What spekest of him, which saith most vntrue
All youth to be of yll disposicion
Dampneth vs all without exception
And for a colerable auauntage
He saieth in him resteth counsaile sage.

Well may sadde counsaile in him rest
But yet his deedes ben ferre therefro
He may say with our parish priest
Doe as I saie, and not as I do
For I my self know one or two
Well stricken in age, for neighbourhedde
Woll to their neighbours wiues bedde.

He will in presence of the yong man
Her clippe and kisse, yea and doune laie
To bleare his eye. thus he saieth than
O suffre yet olde Wozell to plaie
Now haue I done that I can or maie
Thus he saieth her husband to queme
That he nor no man should not misdeme.

In worde nor deede, nedeth him not to coie
It is impossible that he doe amisse
If the yong man speake, anon he saieth beie
To rebuke age, besemeth thee not ywis
Thus his olde face aye his warrant is
All is in him, sleight and subtiltie
And ferre from reason I tell thee.

And shortly age is not aboue me
Age is impotent, and of no resistence
Age vnweldie may not fight nor flee
What were age without my defence
Sad counsaile saiest giueth him assistence
Reason is freshest where that I ame
Wherefore in thy saying thou art to blame.

Sith reason to me is rather accompanied
Then vnto age, which is the opinion
Of euery wise man not to be denied
And sith sad counsaile procedeth of reason
Sad counsaile in me hath his chief mansion
This is no nay, but what is the ende
Of this thy suasion what doest entende.

Age to compare vnto thine excellence
I will presume him so to dignifie
Ne be not egall, how be it experience
Him auaunctageth, for she most certainly
Him teacheth what thing to him is contrary
And oft to forese it, and warely eschewe
Which thou neuer assaidest yet nor knewe.

Experience maketh a man most certain
Of any thing earthly, and of necessitie
Sad counsaile requireth certaintie plain
So ferre to moue thus whereto nede we
But to my purpose, as thou commaundest me
Shortly mine entent is thus, and none other
Under thy licence to counsaile my brother.

How shouldest giue any counsaile so yong
Lacking experience vnto thine own speache
I report me, I wote well as for thy tong
Wil serue thee right wel, but than for to teach
I doubt me lest that thy wit woll not reach
Youth & experience thou saist be not conuert
How shouldes then teach well vnexpert.

Scripture witnesseth ỳ God wil oft shitte
Fro the hie witted man, & shew it to the child
To him I meane that of his own witte
Presumeth not, but is debonaire and milde
By counsaile I entend vertue for to bilde
Which of mine elders part haue I borowed
And part of experiẽce, which I haue sorowed.

Well than, if it be as thou letest fare
Shewe forth thy doctrine be not agast
I woll thee support, looke thou not spare
Maugre age, though he frete or gnast
To aske age counsaile herein were but wast
Boldly begin, go forth to the processe
Feare not sith thou art of such sureneste.

Graunt mercie lorde sith it thee doth like
To licence me, now I wol and dare boldly
Assaile my purpose, with scriptures autentike
My worke woll I ground, underset, & fortefie
Aspire my beginning. O thou wood furie
Alecto with thy susters, and in especiall
To the mother of ielousie Juno I call.

Explicit Prologus.

THis werke who so shal see
or rede
Of any incongruitie doe
me not impeche
Ordinately behoueth mee
first to proceede
In deduction thereof, in
maner as the leche
His pacients sickenes oweth first for to seche
The which knowen, medicin he should aplie
And shortly as he can, then shape a remedie.

Right so by counsail, willing thee to exhort
O yong man prosperous, which doth abound
In thy floures of lust belongeth on thee sore
Me first to consider what is root and ground
Of thy mischief, which is plainly found
Woman farred with fraud and disceipt
To thy confusion most allective baite.

Flie the miswoman, lest she thee disceiue
Thus saith Salomõ, which cauyt was fully
The falshed of women in his daies to cõceiue
The lips of a strumpet ben swetter than honie
her throte he saith soupled with oyl of flaterie
How be it the end and effect of al
Bitterer is then any wormwode or gal.

Flie the miswoman, louing thy life
Ware the strangers blande eloquence
Strange I call her that is not thy wife
Of her beautie haue no concupiscence
Her countenance, pretending benevolence
Beware her signes and eye so amiable
Holde it for firme, they been disceiuable.

Lo an ensample what women be
In their signes and countenance shortly
I woll shewe thee how louers three
Loued one woman right entirely
Eche of them knew others maladie
Wherefore was all their daily labour
Who coud approch next in her fauour.

At sondrie seasons, as fortune requireth
Severally they came to see her welfare
But ones it happened, loue them so fireth
To see their Lady they all would not spare
Of others comming none of them were ware
Till all they mette, where as they in place
Of her Ladie saw the desired face.

To supper set, full smally they eate
Ful sober and demure in countenaunce
For there taried none of hem for any meate
But on his Ladie to giue attendance
And in secrete wise some significance
Of loue to haue, which perceiuing she
Fetely executed thus her propertie.

In due season, as she alway aspied
Euery thing to execute conuenientlie
The one louer first frendly she cled
The second she offred the cuppe curteslie
The third she gaue token secretly
Underneth the borde she trade on his foote
Through his entrailes tikled the hart roote.

By your leaue, might I here aske a question
Of you my maisters that sewe loues trace
To you likely belongeth the solucion
Which of these three stood now in grace
Clerely to answere ye would aske long space
The matter is doubtfull and opinable
To assertain you I woll my selfe enable.

Of the foresaid three my selfe was one
No man can answere it better then I
Hartely of vs beloued was there none
But wattes pack we bare all by and by
Which at last I my selfe gan aspie
And time as me thought, then I left ꝑ daunce
O thoughtful hart, great is thy greuaunce

Hence fro me hence, that me for to endite
Halp aye here afore, O ye Muses nine
Whilom ye were wont to be mine aid & light
My penne to direct, my braine to illumine
No lenger alas may I sewe your doctrine
The fresh lustie meters, that I wont to make
Haue ben here afore, I vtterly forsake

Come hither thou Hermes, & ye furies all
Which fer ben vnder vs, nigh the nether pole
Where Pluto reigneth, O king infernall
Send out thine Arpies, send anguish & dole
Misery and wo, leaue ye me not sole
Of right be present must pain & eke turment
The pale death beseemeth not to be absent.

To me now I call all this lothlom sort
My paines encrease, my sorowes to augmẽt
For worthy I am to be bare of all comfort
Thus sith I haue consumed and mispent
Not only my daies, but my siuckfolde talent
That my lord cõmitted me, I cã not recõpẽce
I may now too derely aby my negligence

By the path of penaunce yet woll I reuert
To the well of grace, mercie there to fetche

Dispisell

Despisest not God the mēke contrite harte
Of the cocke crow, alas ꝑ I would not retch
And yet it is not late in the second wetch
Mercie shal I purchace by incessant crying
The mercies of our lord euer shal I sing

But wel maiest thou waile wicked womā
That thou shuldest disceiue thus any innocēt
And in recompence of my sinne, so as I can
To al men wol I make ꝛ leue this monumēt
In shewing part of thy falshed is mine entēt
For all were to much, I cannot well I wote
The cause sheweth plainly he ꝑ thus wrote.

If al the earth were parchment scribable
Spedie for the hand, and all maner wood
Were hewed ꝛ proporcioned to pennes able
All water Ynke, in damme or in flood
Euery man being a perfite Scribe and good
The cursednesse yet and descipt of women
Coud not be shewed by the meane of penne.

I flie all odious resemblances
The diuels bronde call women I might
Wherby man is incensed to mischaunces
Or a stinking rose that faire is in sighe
Or dedly empoyson, like the suger white
Which by his swetenesse causeth man to tast
And sodainly sleeth ꝛ bringeth him to his last.

It is not my maner to vse such language
But this my doctrine, as I may lawfully
I woll holy ground with authoritie sage
Willing both wisedome, and vertue edefie
Wine and women into apostasie
Cause wisemen to fall, what is that to saie
Of wisedome cause them to forget the waie.

Wherfore the wiseman doeth thee aduise
In whose wordes can be found no leasing
With the stranger to sit in no wise
Which is not thy wife, fall not in clipping
With her, but beware eke of her kissing
Kepe with her in wine no alteracion
Lest that thine harte fall by inclination.

May a man thinkest hide and safe lay
Fire in his bosome, without empairement
And brēning of his clothes, or whider he may
Walke on hott coles, his feete not brente
As who saieth nay, and whereby is ment
This foresaide proverbe and similitude
But thou thou ridde thee plainly to denude.

From the flatterers forgetting her gide
The gide of her youth, I meane shamefastnes
Which should cause her maidenhed to abide
Her Goddes beheest eke she ful reckelesse
Not reching, committeth it to forgetfulnesse
Neither God ne shame in her hauing place
Nedes must such a woman lack grace

And all that nigh in her way of sin
To turne of grace shal lack the influence
The pathes of life no more to come in
Wherfore first frend thee with Sapience
Remembring God, ꝛ after with Prudence
To thine own weale that they thee kepe
Unto thine hart, least her words crepe.

In his booke where I take my most ground
And in his prouerbes sage Salamon
Telleth a tale, which is plainly found
In the sixeth chapiter, whether in deed don
Or meekely feined to our instruccion
Let clerkes determine, but thus am I sure
Much like thing I haue had in vre.

At my window saith he I looked out
Faire yong people, where I saw many
Emong hem all, as I looked about
To a yong man fortuned I lent mine eye
Estraunged from his mind it was likely
By the streat at a corner, nigh his own hous
He went about with eye right curious.

When that the day his light gan withdraw
And the night approched in the twunlight
How a woman came and met him I saw
Talking with him vnder shade of the night
Now blessed be God (qd. she) of his might
Which hath fulfilled mine harts desire
Aslaked my paines, which were hote as fire.

And yet mine auct hour, as it is skill
To folow, I must tel her araiment
She was full nice, soules like to spill
As nice in countenaunce yet as in garment
For iangling she was of rest impacient
Wandring still in no place she stode
But restlesse now, and now out she yode

Now in the hous, now in the strete
Now a corner she standeth in await
Incessauntly busie her pray for to gete
To bring to the lure whom she doth lait
Now where I left, vnto my matter straut
I wol tourn again, how she him met
Swetely kissed, and frendly him gret.

With wordes of curtesie many and diuerse
Right as in part I haue before tolde
Now as I can I purpose to reherse
How she flattering saied with visage bolde
I haue made vowes and offrings manifolde
For thy sake, O mine harte, O my loue dere
This daie I thanke God al performed were.

Therefore I came out, & made thus a start
Verie desirous your welfare to see
Now I haue seen you, pleased is mine harte
In faith shall none haue my loue but ye
As true as I am to you be to me
I pray you hartely dere hart come home
No man should be to me so welcome

And in good faith, the sothe for to saie
Your coming to me ran in my thought
Harke in your eare, my bedde fresh and gaie
I haue behanged with tapettes new bought
From Egypt, & from far countreis brought
Stained with many a lustie fresh hue
Exceding gold or Jasper in value.

My chãber is strowed with Mirre & incence
With sote sauoring Alos, & with sinamome
Breathing an Aromatike redolence
Surmounting Olibane, in any mans dome
Ye shall betwene my brestes rest if ye come
Let vs haue our desired halling
For we may sake be till in the morning.

Mine husband is not at home, he is went
Forth in his iourney, a farre way hence
A bagge with money he hath with him hent
As him thought nedefull for his expence
Unto my worde giue faith and credence
Now is the Moone yong, and of light dull
Ere he come home it woll be at the full.

Thus craftely hath she him beset
With her lime roddes, parter, and snare
The sely soule caught in her nette
Of her sugred mouth, alas nothing ware
Thus is he left graceles and bare
Of helpe, comfort, and ghostly succour
And furthermore, as saieth mine authour

As a beast ledde to his death doeth pante
This yong man followeth her in that stound
And as a wanton Lambe full ignorant
How he is pulled and drawen to be bound
Unto the time he hath his deathes wound
And like a birde that hasteth to his grin
Not knowing the peril of his life therein.

Now gentle sonne saith Salomon take hede
My wordes in thy brest kepe and make saste
Let her not thy minde in her waies mislede
Be not deceiued, lese not thy taste
Many hath she wounded, many doune caste
Many strong by her hath lost their breath
Her waies, waies of hell leading to death.

And in this litle narracion precident
The womans manifolde gilt I attende
The yong man alas how she hath shent
Disceiued her husband, her own next frend
In these both her God she doeth offende
To breake her spousail, to her is of no weight
Furthermore to shew womans craft & sleight

A woman at her doore sate on a stall
To see folke passe by streates of the citie
With eye and countenance ebe she gan call
If there be any pretie one, come nere to me
Come hither ye pigges nye, ye little babe
At last she saied to a yong man hartelesse
Of her disceit vnware and defenceles

Much sweter she saith, & more acceptable
Is drinke when it is stollen priuely
Then when it is taken in forme auowable
Bread hid and gotten ioperdously
Must nedes be swete, and semblable
Uenison stolne is aie the sweter
The ferther the narower set the better.

And who this woman saith Salomon seles
The yong man woteth not who she doth sede
Of the darke depenesse of hell been her gestes
Beware yong man therfore I thee rede
And how be it chickely for thy good spede
This werke to cõpile, I haue take in charge
I must of pitie my charitie enlarge.

With the selie man which is thus begiled
Her husband I meane, I wol wepe and waile
His painfull infortune, whereby reuiled
Causeles he is, neuer to counaile
Euery man yong and old woll him assaile
With wordes of occasion, with the loth name
And alas good soule, he nothing to blame

But she that coud so yll do and wolde
Hers be the blame for her demerite
And leaue that opprobrous name cokold
To aproper to him as in dispite
Ransake yet we would if we might
Of this worde the true ortographie
The verie discent and ethimologie

The well and ground of the first inuenciō
To know the ortographie we must deriue
Which is cole and cold, in composicion
By reason, as nigh as I can contriue
Then how it is written we know beliue
But yet lo, by what reason and grounde
Was it of these two words compounde.

As of one cause to giue verie iudgement
Themilogie let vs first beholde
Eche letter an whole word doth represent
As C. put for colde, and O, for olde
K. is for knaue, thus diuers men hold
The first part of this name we haue found
Let vs ethimologise the secound.

As the first finder mente I am sure
C, for calot, for of, we haue O
L, for leude. D, for demeanure
The craft of the enuentour ye may see lo
How one name signifieth persons two
A colde old knaue, cokolde himselfe wening
And eke a calot of leude demeaning.

The second cause of thimposicion
Of this foresaid name was ielousie
To be ielouse is greatest occasion
To be cokolde, that men can aspie
And though the passion be very sirie
And of continuell feruence and heete
The pacient aye suffreth cold on his feete.

And who that is ielous, & aye in a drede
Is full of Melancolie and gallie ire
His wiues nose if she misse trede
He will cutte of, yea and conspire
His death who that will her desire
Which she perceiuing brasteth his gall
And anone his great woodnesse doth fall.

As sone as she hath knit him that knot
Now is he tame that was so ramagious
Meekely sitteth he doune and taketh his lot
Laied ben now his lookes so furious
And he but late as a cocke batailous
Hote in his quarell, to auenge him bolde
Now is he called both cole and colde.

This saying, to all curteis dissonant
Which semeth that it of malice grewe
In this rude treatise I will not plant
As parcel thereof, but onely to shewe
The opinion of the talcatife shrewe
Which in yll saying is euer merie
No man as I thereof so weric.

But I as parcel of this my booke
Will graffe in some sad counsaile whereby
The wedded man, if he daigne to looke
In it, the better shal mow him gie
And prouide for his saied infortunie
Which as I haue said, with him complaine
I will, as partner of his great paine.

Is most expedient to his weale
I would all ielousie were abiect
If he be ielous, that he it conceale
And in his labour be circumspect
To know her waies, if they seme suspect
And not for to breake, for one word broken
She will not misse but she will be wroken.

Forbid her not, that thou noldest haue don
For looke what thing she is forbod
To that of all things she is most prone
Namely if it be yll and no good
Till it be executed she is nigh wood
Such is woman, and such is her feat
Her craft by craft, labour to defeat.

If thou hereafter, now a single man
Shouldest be ielous if thou haddest a wife
Wedde not but if thou can trust woman
For els shouldest lede a carefull life
That thou most lothest should be full rife
Yet I nill gainsaie Matrimonie
But Melius est nubere quam vri.

That is to saie, better is in Wedlocke
A wife to take, as the church doth kenne
Then to deen vnder the fleshes yoke
In fleshly lust alway for to brenne
But as I saied, for all ielous menne
So they liue chaste, I holde it lasse yll
That they wedde not, than them selfe spill.

The single man which is yet to wedde
And not the wedded man, thus I rede
To warne him now he is to farre spedde
It is to late him for to forbedde
But let him take as for his owne nede
Such counsaile as is him before tolde
These wordes following eke she beholde

Thy water to kepe the wiseman doth teache
That thou in no wise let it haue issue
At a narow rift, wate it will seche
And semblablie the woman vntrue
To giue her free walke in all wise eschue
If she at large, not at thine hande walke
She will thee shame, thou shalt it not balke.

Wedded

Wedded or single, thus saith the wise man
Her that both day and night euermore
Lithe in thy bosome, wife or yet lemman
Loue not to hote, least thou repent sore
Lest she thee bring into some ill lore
Thy wife not to loue yet I will support
But that thou dote not, thus I thee exhort.

Lo if thou loue her, loue eke thine honestie
Be she not ydell, for what woll betide
If she sit ydell, of very nereslitie
Her minde woll search ferre and eke wide
Namely if she be not accompanide
How accompanied, not with yong men
But with maidens I meane or women.

Maiden seruants be right conuenient
In house to helpe to doe her seruice
In whom she may vse her commaundement
In the season at her owen deuice
To teach hem good, yeue her thine aduice
To make them huswiues, thus businesse
May yet refraine her from ydlenesse.

But bid not her that thou wolt haue do
Of thine entent that might be letting
But craftely encourage her thereto
By other meanes, as by commending
And not to much, but duely menging
Both praise and blame, and in thy reason
First praise wisely the place and season

Of faithfull will, and hart full tender
One thing I call into remembrance
Again, which though my witt be slender
After my power and sufficance
I purpose to make a purueiance
Sith women by nature been changeable
Freale not ware also discernable.

Be it that thy wife be excellently good
That none be better of disposicion
In processe of time she might turne her mode
By some mille liuers mitigation
Diuers men to thilke occupacion
Aplien daily, minde and eke harte
From her goodnesse women to peruarte.

If thou aspie any suspect person
Drawe to thy wife, beware in all wise
To him nor her of thy suspection
Breake not one worde, though thine harte a-
Kindle no fire, no smoke woll arise (grise
Though he be of a corrupt entent
She peraunenture is not of assent.

Explicit.

The complaint of Mars and Venus.

GLadeth ye louers in the morow graie
Lo Venus risen emōg yon Rowes rede
And floures freshe honour ye this day
For whē ỹ son vprist, then would they spreede
But ye louers that ue in any drede
Flieth leste wicked tongues you aspie
Lo yond the Sunne, the candel of iclouste.

With teares blew, & with a wounded hart
taketh your leue, & with saint John to borow
Apeleth somwhat of your paines smart
Time cometh eft, that ceasen shal your sorow
The glad night is worth an heauie morowe
Saint Valentine a foule thus heard I sing
Upon thy day er Sunne gan vp spring.

Yet sang this foule I rede you all awake
And ye that haue not chosen in humble wise
Without repenting chese ye your make
Yet at the least, renouelen your seruice
And ye that haue full chosen as I deuise
Confirmeth it perpetually to dure
And paciently taketh your aucture.

And for the worship of this high feast
Yet woll I in my birdes wise sing
The sentence of the complaint at the least
That wofull Mars made at the departing
Fro fresh Venus in a morowning
When Phebus with his fierie torches rede
Ransaked hath euery louer in his drede.

Whilome the three heauens lord aboue
As well by heauenliche reuolucion
As by desert hath wonne Venus in loue
And she hath take him in subiection
And as a maistresse taught him his lesson
Commaunding him neuer in her seruice
He were so bolde no louer to dispise.

For she forbade him iclouste at all
And crueltie and boste, and tirannie
She made him at her lust so humble and tall
That when she dained to cast on him her eye
He tooke in pacience to liue or die
And thus she bridleth him in her maner

with

with nothing, but with scorning of her chere

Who reigneth now in blisse but Venus
That hath this worthy knizt in gouernaūce
Who singeth now but Mars ẏ serueth thus
The faire Venus, causet of pleasaunce
He bint him to perpetuell obeisaunce
And she bint her to loue him for euer
But so be that his trespace it diseuer

Thus be they knitte, and reignen as in heuen
By lokking most, as it fel on a tide
That by her both assent was set a steuen
ẏ Mars shal enter as fast as he may glide
into her next palais to abide
walking his course til she had him atake
And he praied her to hast her for his sake

Than said he thus, mine herts lady swete
Ye know wel my mischiefe in that place
For sikerly til that I with you mete
My life stant there in auenture and grace
But whan I see the beaute of your face
There is no drede of death may do me smert
For all your lust is ease to mine hert

She hath so great compassion of her knight
That dwelleth in solitude til she come
For it stood so, that like time no wight
Counsailed him, ne said to him welcome
That nigh her wit for sorrow was ouercome
Wherfore she sped as fast in her way
Almost in one day as he did in tway

The great ioy that was betwix hem two
Whan they be mette, there may no tong tell
There is no more but vnto bed they go
And thus in ioy and blisse I let hem dwel
This worthy Mars ẏ is of knighthode well
The floure of fairenesse happeth in his armes
And Venus killeth Mars the god of armes

Soiorned hath this Mars, of which I rede
In chamber amidde the palais priuely
A certain time, til him fel adrede
Through Phebus that was comen hastely
Within the palais yates sturdely
With torch in hond, of which ẏ stremes brizt
On Venus chamber, knocketh ful light

The chamber there as lay this fresh quene
Depainted was with white boles grete
And by the light she knew that shone so shene
That Phebus came to bren hē with his hete
This silly Venus nigh dreinte in teares wete
Embraseth Mars, and said alas I die
The torch is come, ẏ al this world wol wete

Up stert Mars, him list not to slepe
Whan he his lady herd so complaine
But for his nature was not for to wepe
In stede of teares from his eyen twaine
The firy sparcles sprongen out for paine
And hent his hauberke that lay him beside
Fly would he nought, ne might himselfe hide

He throweth on his helme of huge weight
And girt him with his swerd, and in his hond
His mighty speare, as he was wont to feight
He shaketh so, that it almost to wond
Ful heuy was he to walken ouer lond
He may not hold with Venus company
But bad her flien least Phebus her espy

O woful Mars alas, what maist thou sain
That in the palais of thy disturbaunce
Art left behind in peril to be slaine
And yet there to is double thy penaunce
For she that hath thine hert in gouernaunce
Is passed halfe the stremes of thine eyen
ẏ thou nere swift, wel maist thou wepe & crien

Now flieth Venus into Cilinius tour
With void corse, for feare of Phebus light
Alas and there hath she no socour
For she ne found ne sey no maner wight
And eke as there she had but litel might
Wherfore her seluen for to hide and saue
Within the gate she fled into a caue

Darke was this caue, & smoking as ẏ hel
Not but two paas within the yate it stood
A naturel day in darke I let her dwell
Now will I speak of Mars furious & wood
For sorow he would haue seen his hert blood
Sith ẏ he might haue done her no companie
He ne rought not a mite for to die

So feeble he wext for heat and for his wo
That nigh he swelt, he might vneth endure
He passeth but a sterre in daies two
But neuertheles, for all his heuy armure
He foloweth her that is his liues cure
For whose departing he toke greater ire
Than for all his brenning in the fire

After he walketh softly apaas
Complaining that it pite was to here
He said, O lady bright Venus alas
That euer so wide a compas is my sphere

Alas, whan shal I mete you hert dere.
This twelue daies of April I endure
Through iclous Phebus this misauenture

Now God helpe sely Venus alone
But as God would it happed for to be
that while ỳ weping Venus made hir mone
Ciclinius riding in his chiuauche
Fro Venus Valanus might this palais se
And Venus he salueth and maketh chere
And her receiueth as his frend ful dere

Mars dwelleth forth in his aduersite
Complaining euer in her departing
And what his complaint was remẽbreth me
And therefore in this lusty morowning
As I best can, I wol it saine and sing
And after that I wol my leaue take
And God yeue euery wight ioy of his make.

The complaint of Mars.

THe order of complaint
requireth skilfully
That if a wight shall
plaine pitously
There mote bee cause
wherfore ỳ mẽ plain
Or men may deme he
plaineth folily
And causeles alas that am not I
Wherfore the ground & cause of all my pain
So as my troubled wit may it attaine
I wol reherse, not for to haue redresse
But to declare my ground of heuinesse

The first time alas, that I was wrought
And for certaine effects hider brought
By him that lorderh ech intelligence
I yaue my true seruice and my thought
For euermo, how dere I haue it bought
To her that is of so great excellence
That what wight ỳ sheweth first her offence
Whan she is worth & taketh of him no cure
He may not long in ioy of loue endure

This is no fained matter that I tell
My lady is the very sours and well
Of beaute, lust, fredome, and gentilnesse
Of rich array how dere men it sell
Of all disport in which men frendly dwell
Of loue and play, and of benigne humblesse
Of sowne of instruments of all swetenesse
And thereto so wel fortuned and thewed
that through ỳ world her goodnes is shewed

What wonder is than though that I de set
My seruice on soch one that may me knet
To wele or woo, sith it lieth in her might
Therfore mine hert for euer I to her hette
Ne trewly for my death shal I not lette
To ben her trewest seruant and her knight
I flatter not, that may wete euery wight
For this day in her seruice shal I die
But grace be, I see her neuer with eie

To whom shal I plain of my distresse
who may me help, who may my hert redresse
Shal I complain vnto my lady free
Nay certes, for she hath such heuinesse
For feare and ese for woo, that as I gesse
In litel time it would her bane be
But were she sake, it were no force of me
Alas that euer louers mote endure
For loue so many perilous auenture

For though so be that louers be as trew
As any mettall that is forged new
In many a case hem tideth oft sorow
Sometime her ladies wol nat on hem rew
Sometime if that icloulie it knew
They might lightly lay her heed to borow
Somtime enuious folk with tonges horow
Deprauen hem alas, whom may they please
But he be false, no louer hath his ease

But what auaileth soch a long sermoun
Of auentures of loue vp and doun
I wol return and speaken of my paine
The point is this of my distruction
My right lady, my saluacion
Is in affray, and not to whom to plaine
O hert swete, O lady soueraine
For your disease I ought wel swoune & swelt
Though I none other harme ne drede felt

To what fine made the God that sit so hie
Beneth him loue other compaine
And straineth folke to loue maugre her heed
And than her ioy for aught I can espie
Ne lasteth not the twinckling of an eie
And some haue neuer ioy til they be deed
What meaneth this, what is this mistheed
Wherto constraineth he his folke so fast
Thing to desire but it should last

And

And though he made a louer lose a thing
And maketh it seme stedfast and during
Yet purreth he in it soch misauenture
That rest nis there in his pening
And that is wonder that so iust a king
Doth such hardnesse to his creature
Thus whether loue breake or eis dure
Algates he that hath with loue to done
Hath after wo, than changed is the Moone

It seemeth he hath to louers enmite
And like a fisher, as men may all day se
Baiteth his angle hoke with some plesaunce
Til many a fish is wood to that he be
Ceased therewith, and than at erst hath he
All his desire, and therewith all mischaunce
And though the line breke hee hath penaunce
For with that hoke he wounded is so sore
That he his wages hath for euermore

The broch of Thebes was of soch kind
So ful of rubies and of stones of Inde
That euery wight that set on it an eye
He wend anone to worthy out of his mind
So sore the beaute would his hert bind
Til it he had, him thought he must die
And when that it was his than should he drie
Soch wo for drede aye while that he it had
That welnigh for the fear he should mad

And whan it was fro his possession
Than had he double wo and passion
That he so faire a iewel hath forgo
But yet this broch, as in conclusion
Was not the cause of his confusion
But he that wrought enfortuned it so
That euery wight that had it should haue wo
And therefore in the worcher was the vice
And in the coueitour that was so nice

So fareth it by louers, and by me
For though my lady haue so great beaute
That I was made to, I had get her grace
She was not cause of mine auerlite
But he that wrought her, as mote I thee
That put soch a beaute in her face
That made me coueiten and purchace
Mine owen death him wite I that I die
And mine vnwit that euer I clambe so hie

But to you hardy knights of renowne
Sith that ye be of my deuisiowne
All be I not worthy of so great a name
Yet saine these clerkes I am your patrone
Therefore ye ought haue some compassione
Of my disease, and take it nat a game
The proudest of you may be made ful tame
Wherefore I pray you of your gentillesse
That ye compassi for mine heauinesse

And ye my ladies that ben trew and stable
By way of kind ye ought to ben able
To haue pity of folke that ben in paine
Now haue ye cause to cloth you in sable
Sith that your empresse the honorable
Is desolate, well ought ye to plaine
Now should your holy teares fall and raine
Alas your honour and your empire
Nigh dead for drede, ne can her not chcuire

Complaineth eke ye louers all in fere
For her that with vnfained humble chere
Was euer redy to do you socour
Complaineth her that euer hath be your dere
Complaineth beaute, fredome, and maners
Complaineth her that endeth your labour
Complaineth thilke ensample of all honour
That neuer did but gentilnesse
Kitheth therfore in her some kindnesse.

The Complaint of Venus.

THere nis so high comfort to my plesaunce
whan that I am in any heuinesse
As for to haue laiser of remembraunce
Upon the manhood and the worthinesse
Upon the trouth, and on the stedfastnesse
Of him whose I am all whyle I may dure
There ought to blame ne no creature
For euery wight praiseth his gentillesse

In him is bounty, wisdome, & gouernaunce
Wel more than any mans wit can gesse
For grace hath wold so forthy him auaunce
That of knighthood he his parfite richesse
Honour honoureth him for his noblesse
Thereto so wel hath formed him nature
That I am his for euer I him ensure
For euery wight praiseth his gentillesse

And notwithstanding all his sufficiaunce
His gentil hert is of so great humblesse
To me in word, in werke, & in countenaunce

And me to serue is all his besinesse
That I am set in very sikernesse
Thus ought I blisse wel mine auentour
Sith that him list me seruen and honour
For euery wight prayseth his gentillesse

Now certes loue it is right conenable
That men ful dere abie thy noble things
As wake a bedde, and fasten at the table
Weping to laugh and sing in complainings
And down to cast visage and lookings
Often to chaunge visage and countenaunce
Play in sleeping and dremen at the daunce
All the reuers of any gladde feling

Jelousy he hanged by a cable
She would all know through her espying
There doth no wight nothing so reasonable
That all his harme in her imagining
Thus dere abought is loue in yeuing
Which oft he yeueth without ordinaunce
As sorow inough, and ful little of pleasaunce
All the reuers of any gladde feling

A little time his yeft is agreeable
But ful accombrous is the bling
For subtel iclousy the discreinable
Ful often time causeth dishourbing
Thus ben we euer in drede and suffring
In no certain, we languishen in penaunce
And haue wel oft many an hard mischaunce
All the reuers of any gladde feling

But certes loue, I say not in such wise
That for to scape out of your lace I ment
For I so long haue ben in your seruice
That for to lete of wil I neuer assent
No force though iclousie me tourment
Suffiseth me to see him whan I may
And therfore certes to mine ending day
To loue him best, shal me neuer repent

And certes loue, whan I me wel adusse
Of any estate that man may represent
Thã haue ye made me through your trãchise
Chese the best that euer in earth went
Now loue wel hert, & looke thou neuer stent
And let the ielous put it in assay
That for no pain wol I not say nay
To loue him best, shal I neuer repent

Hert to thee it ought inough suffice
That loue so high a grace to you sent
To chose the worthiest in all wise
And most agreable vnto mine entent
Seke no ferther, neither way ne went
Sith ye haue suffisaunce vnto my pay
Thus wol I end this cõplaining or this lay
To loue him best, shal I neuer repent.

¶ Lenuoy.

Princes receiueth this cõplaining in gree
Vnto your excellent benignite
Direct after my litel suffisaunce
For eld, that in my spirit dulleth me
Hath of enditing al the subtelte
Welnigh beraft out of my remembraunce
And eke to me it is a great penaunce
Sith rime in English hath such scarcite
To folow word by word the curiosite
Of Graunsonflour, of hem ỹ make in Fraunce.

Explicit.

¶ Hereafter foloweth the letter of Cupide.

CUpide, vnto who commaundement
The gentil kinrede of goddes on hie
And people infernall beene obedient
And all mortall folke serue busely
Of the goddesse sonne Cythera onely
To all tho that to our deite
Ben subiects, hertely greting send we

In general we wol that ye know
That ladies of honour and of reuerence
And other gentilwomen hauen sow
Such seed of complaint in our audience
Of men that do hem outrage and offence
That it our eares greueth for to here
So pitous is the effect of this matere

Passing all londs, on the little Ile
That cleaped is Albion, they most complaine
They say that there is crop and roote of gile
So con tho men dissimule and faine
With standing droppes in her eien twaine
Whan that her herts feleth no disrese
To blinden women with her doublenesse

Her words spoken be so sighingly
With so pitous chere and countenaunce
That euery wight that meaneth trewly
Demeth they in heart haue such greuaunce
They say so importable is her penaunce

That

That but her lady lust to shew him grace
They right anon must sterue in the place

Ah lady mine they say, I you ensure
As doth me grace, and I shal euer be
While that my life may last and endure
To you as humble and low in ech degre
As possible is, and keepe all things as secre
Right as your selfe list that I do
And els mine hert mote brast in two

Ful hard it is to know a mans hert
For outward may no man the trouth deme
What word out of mouth may none stert
But it by reson semed euery wight to queme
So it is said of hert as it would seme
O faithful woman ful of innocence
Thou art disceued by false apparence

By processe moueth oft womans pite
Wening all thing were as these men sey
They graunt hem grace of her benignite
For that men should not for her sake dey
And with good hert set hem in the wey
Of blisful loue kepe it if they conne
And thus other while women beth y'worne

And whan this man the pan hath by ẏ stele
And fully is in his possession
With that women kepeth he no more to dele
After if he may find in the toun
Any women his blind affection
Unto bestow, yuel mote he preue
A man for all his othes is hard to beleue

And for that euery false man hath a make
As vnto euery wight is light to know
What this traitour this womā hath forsake
He fast speedeth him vnto his felow
Til he be there his hart is on a low
His false disceit may him not suffise
But of his traison telleth all the wise

Is this a faire auaunt, is this honour
A man himselfe accuse thus and diffame
Is it good to confesse himselfe a traitour
And bring a woman to sclaunderous name
And tel how he her body hath do shame
No worship may he thus to him conquer
But great disclaunder vnto him and her

To her nay, yet was it no repreke
For all for vertue was that she wrought
But he that brewed hath all this mischefe
That spake so fair, and falsly inward thought
His be the sclaunder, as it by reason ought
And vnto her thanke perpetuel
That in soch a need help can so well

Although through mens sleight & subtilte
A sely simple and innocent woman
Betraied is, no wonder sith the cite
Of Troy, as the storey tel can
Betraied was through the disceit of man
And set on fire, and all down ouer throwne
And finally destroied as men knowne

Betray nat men cities great and kings
What wight is it that can shape remedy
Ayenst these falsly purposed things
Who can the craft soch crafts espy
But man, whose wit is euer ready taply
To thing that sowning into falshede
Women beth ware of false men I rede

And furthermore haue these men in vsage
That where they nat likely ben to spede
Soch as they ben, with a double visage
They procuren for to pursue her nede
He praieth him in his cause to procede
And largely guerdoneth he his trauaile
Little wote women how men hem assaile

Another wretch vnto his felow saith
Thou sihest fair, she that thee hath fired
Is false, inconstaunt, and hath no faith
She for the rode of folke is so desired
And as an horse fro day to day she is hired
That when thou twinnest fro her companye
Commeth another, and blered is thine eye.

Now prick on fast, and ride thy iourney
While thou art there, for she behind thy back
So liberall is, she will nothing withsey
But smartly of another take a smacke
Thus fare these women all the packe
Who so hem trusteth hanged mote he be
Euer they desire chaunge and nouelte

Wherof proceedeth this but of enuye
For he himselfe her ne winne may
He speaketh her repreke and villany
As mans blabbing tongue is wont alway
Thus diuers men ful oft make assay
For to distourbe folk in sondry wise
For they may not eschue her empryse.

Many one eke would for no good
That hath in loue his time spent and sped
Yē wist that his lady his asking withstood

Er that he were of her plainly refused
Or wast and vain all that he had mused
Wherfore he can none other remedy
But on his lady shapeth him to lie

Euery woman he saith is light to gete
Can none say nay, if she be wel ysought
Who so may leiser haue with her to trete
Of his purpose shall he faile nought
But he on madnesse be so depe brought
That he shend all with open homelinesse
That louen women, they doten as I gesse

To sclaunder women thus what may profite
To gentillesse namely that hem arme should
In defence of women, and hem delite
As that the order of gentillesse would
If that a man list gentil to be hold
He must all eschew that therto is contrary
A sclaundrous tong is his great aduersary

A foule voice is of tong to be light
For who so much clappeth gabbeth oft
The tong of man so swift is and so wight
That whan it is reised vp on loft
Reason is shewed so slowly and soft
That it him neuer ouertake may
Lord so these men ben trusty in assay

Albeit that men find one woman nice
Inconstaunt, rechlesse, and variable
Deignous, proud, fulfilled of malice,
Without faith or loue and disceiuable
Sly, queint, false, in all vntrust coulpable
Wicked, fierce, or ful of crucite
Yet followeth it not that soch all women be

Whan the high God Angels formed had
Among hem all, where there were none
That founden was malicious and bade
Yes all men wote there were many one
That for her pride fill fro heauen anone
Should me for thy reue all Angels proud
Nay, he ỹ that sustaineth is to blame (name

Of twelue Apostles, one a traitour was
The remnaunt yet good were and trew
So if it hap men find percaas
O woman false, soch good is to eschew
And deme not that they al therfore be vntrew
I see wel mens own falsenesse
Hem causeth women to trust the lesse]

O euery man ought haue an hert tender
Unto a woman, and deme her honorable
Where his shape be thick or slender
Or he be good or bad, it is no fable
Euery wight wot that wit hath reasonable
That of a woman he discended is
Than is it shame of her to speak amis

A wicked tree good fruit may non forthy bring
For such the fruit is as is the tre
Take heed of whom thou take thy beginning
Let thy mother be mirrour vnto the
Honour her, if thou wolt honoured be
Dispise her than not in no manere
Lest that therby thy wickednes apere

An old prouerbe said is in English
That bird or foule is ful dishonest
What that he be, and hold ful churlish
That vseth to defoule his own nest
Men to say wel of women it is the best
And naught to dispise hem ne depraue
If they wol her honour kepe or saue

The ladies euer complain hem on clerks
That they haue made books of her diffame
In which thy dispise women & her werks
And speak of hem great reproue and shame
And causelesse yeue hem a wicked name
Thus they dispised be on euery side
Disclandred and belowen on ful wide

Tho sory books maken mencion
How women betraied in especiall
Adam, Dauid, Sampson, and Salomon
And many one mo, who may rehearse hem all
The traison that they haue do and shall
The woo lo her malice may not comprehend
As clerks sain, for it hath none end

Ouid in his book called Remedy
Of loue, great reproue of women writeth
Wherin I trow he did great foly
And euery wight ỹ in soch case him deliteth
A clerks custome is whan he enditeth
Of women, be it prose, rime, or vers
Say they be wicked, all know he the rehers

And ỹ book scholers learned in her childhead
For they of women beware should in age
And to loue hem euer be in dred
Sith to disceiue is set all her corage
They say of perell men should cast thauantage
Namely of such as men haue in bewrapped
For many a man by women hath mishapped

No charge is what so these clerks saine

Of

Of all her wryting I doe no cure
All her labour and trauaile is in vaine
For betwene me and my lady nature
Shal not be suffred, while ỳ world may dure
Thus these clerkes by her cruell tirannie
On selie women kithen her maistrie.

Whilom for many of hem were in my cheine
Tied, and now for vnweldie age
And vnlust, may not to loue atteine
And saine now that loue is but verie dotage
Thus for they hemselfe lacken courage
They folke excite by her wicked sawes
For to rebell ayenst me and my lawes.

But mauger hem that blame women most
Such is the force of mine impression
That sodainly I can fell her beste
And all her wrong imagination
It shall not be in her election
The fondest slutte in all the toune to refuse
If that me lust, for all that they con muse.

But her in harte as brennyngly desire
As though she were a duchesse or a quene
So can I folkes hartes set on fire
And as me list send hem ioy or tene
They that to women be whet so kene
My sharpe perling strokes how they smite
Shul fele and know, how thei kerue and bite

Yarde this clerke, this subtill Ouide
And many another disceiued haue be
Of women, as it is know full wide
What no men more, and that is great deintie
So excellent a clarke as was he
And other mo that couden ful well preache
Betraped wer, for aught that they coud teache

And trusteth well that it is no marualle
For women knowen plainly her entent
They wist how softly they coud assaile
Hem, and what falshed they in hart mente
And thus they clerkes in her dannger hent
With o venime an other is destroyed
And thus these clerkes oft were anoyed.

These ladies, ne these gentiles neuertheleſſe
Were none of tho that wrought in this wise
But such as were vertuelesse.
They quitten thus these old clerkes wise
To clerkes lesse ought suffice
Then to dispraue women generally
For worshipe shul they none get therby.

If that these men, that louers hem pretend
To women were faithfull, good and true
And dredde hem to disceiue, or to offende
Women to loue hem would not eschue
But euery day hath man an hart newe
If on one abide can no while
What force is it such a wight to begile.

Men beare the women vpon hond
That lightly and without any paine
Thei wome be, they can no wight withstond
That his disease list to hem complain
They be so freele, they may hem not refrain
But who so liketh hem may lightly haue
So be her hartes calie into graue.

To maister Johan de Moone, as I suppose
Then it was a lewd occupacioun
In making of the Romante of the rose
So many a slight imaginacioun
And perilles for to rollen vp and doun
The long processe, so many a sligh cautell
For to disceiue a selie damosell.

Nought can I say, ne my wit comprehend
That art, pain, and subtilitie should faile
For to conquere, and some make an end
When men a feble place shall assaile
And some also to vanquish a battaile
Of which no wight may make resistence
Ne hart hath none to make any defence.

Then mote folow of necessitie
Sith art asketh so great engine and pain
A woman to disceiue, what so she be
Of constance be they not so barain
As that some of these clerkes saun
But they be as women ought to be
Sadde, constante, and fulfilled of pitie.

How frendly was Medea to Jason
In conquering of the Fleece of gold
How falsly quit he her true affection
By whom victory he gate as he would
How may this man for shame be so bold
To falsen her, that fro his death and shame
Him kept, & gate him so great prise & name

Of Troy also the traitour Eneas
The faithlesse wretch, how he him forswore
To Dido, that quene of Carthage was
That him releued of his smertes sore
What gentillesse might she haue doe more
Then she with hart vnfained to him kidde
And what mischief to her therof after betide.

In my legend of natures may men find
Who so liketh therein for to rede
That of the ne beheft may man bind
Of reprouceable shame haue they no drede
In mans heart trouth hath no stede
The soile is naught, there may no troth grow
To women namely it is not vnknow.

Clerkes saine also there is no malice
Unto womans wicked crabbidnesse
O woman how shalt thou thy selfe chenice
Sith men of thee such harme witnesse
Beth ware women of her slikenesse
Kepe thine owne what men clappe or crake
And some of hem shall smart I vndertake

Malice of women what is it to drede
They slea no man, destroy no cities
Ne oppresse folke, ne overlede
Betray Empires, Realmes, or Duchees
Ne bireuen men her lands ne her mees
Empoison folke, ne houses set on fire
Ne false contracts make for no hire.

Trust, parfite loue, entire charite
Feruent will, and entalented corage
All thewes good, as sitteth well to be
Haue women euer of custome and vlage
And well they conne mans ire aswage
With soft wordes discrete and benigne
What they be inward they shew outward by
(signe.

Womans hart vnto no cruelte
Enclined is, but thei be charitable
Pitous, deuote, full of humilitie
Shamefast, debonaire, and amiable
Dredfull, and of wordes measurable
What women these haue not peraventure
Folo weth not the way of her nature.

When saine our first mother natheleste
Made all mankind lese his libertie
And naked it of ioy doubtleste
For Goddes heste disobeyed she
When she presumed to taste of the tre
That God forbade, that she eat therof should
And ne had the deuill be, no more she would

The enuious swelling, that the fend our foe
Had vnto man in heart for his wealth
Sent a serpent, and made her for to goe
To disceiue Eue, & thus was mans wealth
Bicaft him by the fend in a stealth
The woman not knowing of that disceipt
God wote full ferre was it from her conceipt

Wherefore I say, this good woman Eue
Our father Adam disceiued nought
There may no man for decent it preue
Properly, but that she in hart and thought
Had it compassed first or she it wrought
And for soch was not her vnpression
Men may it call no deceipt of her by reason

Ne no wight disceiueth, but he purpose
The fend this disceipt caste, and nothing she
Then is it wrong to deme or suppose
That of his harme she should the cause be
Wyte the fend, and his be the maugre
And excused haue her innocence
Saue onely that she brake obedience.

And touching this, full few men there be
Unneths any dare I safely say
Fro day to day as men may all day se
But that the hest of God they disobay
Haue this in mind sirs I you pray
If that ye be discrete and reasonable
Ye woll her hold the more excusable.

And where men say in man is stedfastnesse
And woman is of her courage vnstable
Who may of Adam beare such a witnesse
Telleth me this, was he not changeable
They both weren in o case semblable
Saue willing the fend disceiued Eue
And so did she not Adam by your leue.

Yet was this sinne happie to mankind
The fend disceiued was for all his sleight
For aught he coud him in his sleights wind
For his trespace came fro heauen on height
God, to discharge man of his weight
Flesh and blood tooke of a virgine
And suffered death, him to deliuer of pine.

And God, to who there may nothing hid be
If he in women knowen had such malice
As men recorde of hem in generaltee
Of our Lady of life reperatrice
Nold haue be borne, but that she of vice
Was void, and full of vertue well he wiste
Endowed, of her to be borne him liste.

Her heaped vertue hath such excellence
That all to leane is mans faculte
To declare it, and therefore in suspence
Her due prailing put needs must be
But thus I say, verely that she
Next God, best friend is that to man longeth
The keye of mercy by her girdle hongeth.

And

And of mercy hath euery man such nede
That reding that, farwell the ioye of man
And of her power now taketh rizt good hede
She mercie may well and purchase can
Displeaseth her not honoureth that woman
And other women all for her sake
And but ye doe, your sorow shall awake.

In any booke also where can ye find
That of the workes of death or of life
Of Jesu, spelleth or maketh any mind
That women him forsoke for woo or strife
Where was there any wight so ententife
About him as woman, proued none
The Apostles him forsoken euerichone.

Women forsoke him not for all the faith
Of holy Church in women left onely
This is no lees, for thus holy write saith
Looke and ye shall so find it hardely
And therefore I may well preue thereby
That in woman reigneth stable constaunce
And in men is the change of variaunce.

Thou precious gem of martirs Margarite
That of thy blood dredest none effusion
Thou louer true, thou maiden manlucte
Thou constant woman in thy passion
Ouercame the fendes temptation
And many a wight conuerted thy doctrine
Unto the faith of holy God thou virgine.

But vnderstandeth this, I onely cõmend her
By enchelon of her virginitie (nought
Trusteth it came neuer in my thought
For euer werre I yenst chastitie
And euer shall, but lo this meueth me
Her louing hert, and constant to her lay
Drine out of remembrance I ne may.

Now holdeth this for ferme, and for no lie
That this true and iust commendation
Of women tell I for no flatterie
Ne because of pride or elation
But only lo, for this entencion
To yeue hem courage of perseuerance
In vertue and her honour to auaunce.

The more vertue, the lasse is the pride
Vertue so digne is and so noble in kinde
That vice and he will nat in fere abide
He putteth vices cleane out of his mind
He flieth fro hem, he leaueth hem behinde
O woman that of vertue art hostres
Greate is thy honoure and thy worthinesse.

Then will I thus conclude and define
We you commaund our ministers echone
That ready ye be our hestes to encline
That of these false men our rebell sone
Ye do punishment and that anone
Void hem our court, and banish him for euer
So that therein more come they neuer.

Fulfilled be it, ceasing all delay
Looke there be none excusacion
Written in the lusty month of May
In our paleis where many a million
Of louers true haue habitacion
The yere of grace toifull and tocond
A thousand foure hundred and second.

Explicit.

¶ Thus endeth the letter of Cupide.

A Balade in commendation *of our Ladie.*

A Thousande stories cond I more rehearse
Of old poets, touching this matter
How that Cupid the hartes gan so pearce
Of his seruantes setting hem in fere
Lo here the fine of therrour and the fere
Lo here of loue the guerdon and grieuaunce
That euer with wo her seruants do auaunce

Wherefore now plainly I will my stile dresse
Of one to speake, of need that will not faile
Alas for dole I ne can ne may expresse
Her passing praise, and that is no marualle
O winde of grace, now blow vnto my saile
O auriate licour of Cleo, for to write
My penne enspire of that I will endite.

Alas, vnworthy I am and vnable
To loue soch one, all women surmounting
But she be benigne to me and merciable
That is of pite the well and eke the spring
Wherefore of her in laud and in praising
So as I can, supported by her grace
Right thus I say, kneling before her face.

O sterre of sterres with thy stremes clere
Sterre of the sea, to shipmen light and guide
O lustie liuing most pleasant to appere
Whose bryzt beames ỳ cloudes may not hide
O waie of life to hem that go or ride
Hauen after tempest surest vp to riue
On me haue mercie for thy ioyes fiue.

O rightfull rule, O bote of holinesse
And lightsome line of pitie for to plain
Originall beginning of grace & all goodnesse
And cleanest conduct of vertue most souerain
Mother of mercie, our trouble to restrain
Chamber and closet clennest of chastitie
And named herbrough of the deitie.

O closet garden all void of weedes wicke
Cristallin well, of clerenesse clere consigned
Fructified olive of foiles faire and thicke
And redolent Cedre most dere worthy digned
Remember on sinners that to the be affigned
Or wicked fendes her wrath on hem wreche
Lanterne of light thou her liues leche.

Paradise of pleasance, gladsom to all good
Benigne branchelet of the Pine tree
Vnarie enuermailed, refresher of our bood
Licour ayen al langour ỳ pained may not be
Blisful blomie blosome, byding in bountie
Thy mantel of mercie on our miserie sprede
Ander wo away wrappe vs vnder thy wede.

O rodie roser, flouring without spine
Fountain al filthylesse, as birell currant clere
Sum drop of thy graceful hewe to vs propine
O light without nebule, shining in thy sphere
Medicine to mischiues, pucell without pere
Flãbe doun the doleful light of thyn influence
Remẽbring thy seruants for thy magnificẽce

Of all christen protectrice and tutele
Retourne of exiled put in the prescription
To hem that erren in the path of her sequele
To werie forwandred tent and paulion
To faint and to fresh the pausation
Vnto vnrestie, both rest and remedie
Fructfull to all tho that in her affie.

To hem that rennen thou art itinerarie
O blisful brauie to knightes of thy warre
To werie werkmen she is diourne denarie
Mede vnto mariners that haue sailed farre
Laureat croune streming as a starre
To hem that put hem in palastre for thy sake
Lours of her cõquest, thou white as any lake

O mirthe of martyrs, sweeter then Sitole
Of Confessours also richest Donatike
Unto virgines eternal Laurtole
Afore all woman hauing prerogatike
Mother and maide, both widowe and wife
Of all the world is none but thou alone
Now sith thou may be succour to my mone.

O truktie turtle true fastest of all true
O curteise columbe, replete of all meknesse
O nightingale with thy notes newe
O Popinay pured with all clennesse
O Laucroke of loue, singing with sweetnesse
Phebus awaiting till on thy brest he light
Under thy wing at domesday vs dight.

O rubie rubified in the passion
Of thy sonne, vs haue emong in minde
O stedfast diametre of duration
That fewe feres any time might thou finde
For none to him was founden halfe so kinde
O hardie harte, O young creature
What was it but loue ỳ made thee so endure.

Semely saphyr, deepe loupe and blew ewage
Stable as the loupe ewage of pitie
This is to say the freshest of vsage
Thou louest vnchanged hem that seruen thee
And if offence or varying in hem be
Thou art aie ready vpon her wo to rue
And hem receiuest with heart ful true.

O goodly gladded when that Gabriel
With ioy thee grette, that may not be nõbred
Or halfe the blisse who coud write or tell
When the holy ghost to thee was obumbred
Wherthrough fendes were bitterly encõbred
O wemlesse maid embelished in his birth
That man and Angell thereof hadden mirth

Lo here the blosome and the budde of glory
Of which the Prophet so long spake before
Lo here the fame that was in memory
Of Elay, so long or she was borne
Lo here of Dauid the delicious torne
Lo here the ground of life into bude
Becomming man our raunsome for to yelde.

O glorious viole and vite inuiolate
O firy Titan, perling with thy bemes
whose vertuous brightnes was in best vbrat
That al the world embelished with the lemes
Conseruattice of kings, dukes, and realmes
Of Jsaies seed swete simamite
Welcure my mourning mine own Margarite

O soueraigneſt sought out of Syon
Cockle with gold dewe from aboue berained
Dew bush vnbzent sirclesse fire set on
Flaming with feruẽce not with heat pained
During dailie that no weather stained
Fleece vndefouled of gentileſt Gedion
And fructifying faireſt the yard of Jaron.

The mighty arche, pzobatike pisine
Laughing auroze, and of peace olive
Columpne and base, vp bearing from abime
Why nere I conning here to discriue
Chosen of Joleph, whome he tooke to wiue
Unknowing him, childing by miracle
And of our manly figure the tabernacle.

I haue none English conuenient and digne
Mine hearts heale lady thee with to honour
Iuzie cleane, therefoze I will resigne
Into thine hand, till thou list socour
To helpe my making both flozish and flour
Then should I shew in loue how I bzend
In songs making, thy name to commend.

Foz if I coud befoze thine excellence
Singen in loue I would what I sele
And euer standen Lady in thy pzesente
To shew in open how I loue you wele
And sith although your heart be made of stele
To you withouten any disseueraunce
I'ay en vous toute ma fiance.

Where might I loue euer better beset
Then in this Lilie liking to behold
That lace of loue, the bond so well thou knit
That I may se thee oz mine heart cold
And oz I passe out of my daies old
Tofoze singing euermoze vtterly
Your iyen two wol slea me sodainly.

Foz loue I langour, blissed be soch sickness
Sith it is foz you my hartily suffisaunce
I can not els say in my destresse
So faire one hath mine heart in gouernance
And after that I begin on esperaunce
With feble entume, though it thine hert perce
Yet foz thy sake this letter I doe reherse.

God wote on muslke I can not, but I gesse
Alas why so, that I might say oz sing
So loue I you mine owne souerain maistresse
And euer shall without departing
Mirrour of beautie, foz you out should I ring
In remembzance eke of your iyen clere
Thus ferre from you my souereine Lady dere

So would God your loue would me slo
Sith foz your sake I sing day by day
Heart why nilt thou breake atwo
Sith with my lady dwel I ne may
Thus many a roundell and many a virelay
In fresh English, when I me laser find
I do recozd, on you to haue mind.

Now lady mine, sith I you loue and dzede
And you vnchaunged euer find in o degre
Whose grace ne may slie fro your womãhede
Disdaineth not foz to remembze on me
Mine heart bledeth foz I may not you se
And sith ye wote my meaning desirous
Plores pour moy's il vous plaist amoureus

What marueile though I in pain be
I am departed from you my souerain
Foztune alas, don vient la destenie
That in no wise I can ne may attain
To see the beauty of your eien twain
Wherfoze I say, foz tristesse doth me grame
Tant me fait mal departir de ma dame.

Why nere my willing brought to such eploit
That I might say foz ioy of your pzesence
Or amon cœur ce qui vouloit
Or amon cœur, the highest excellence
That euer had wight, & sith mine aduertence
Is in you, reweth on my paines smart
I am so soze wounded to the hart

To liue wel mery two louers were yfere
So may I say withouten any blame
If any man to wilde were
I coud him teach foz to be tame
Let him go loue and see where it be game
Foz I am bzidled vnto sobernesse
Foz her that is of women chiefe pzincesse

But euer whẽ thoght my hart should enbzace
Then vnto me is best remedy
When I look on your goodly fresh face
So mery a merrour coud I neuer espy
And if I coud I would it magnify
Foz neuer none was so fair yfound
To reken hem all, and also Rosamound.

And finally with mouth and will pzesent
Of double eye without repentaunce
Mine hart I yeue you Lady in this entent
That ye shal holly therof haue gouernaunce
Taking my leaue with harts obeisaunce
(Salue regina) singing last of all
To be our helpe when we to thee call

All

All our loue is but ydlenesse
saue your loue alone, who might therto atain
Who so will haue a name of gentillesse
I counsaile him in loue that he not fain
Thou swete Ladie, refute in euery pain
Whose mercie most to me auaileth
To gie by grace, when that fortune faileth

Nought may be told without en any fable
Your high renome your womanly beautie
Your gouernaunce to all worship able
Putteth euery harte in ease in his degree
O violet, O floure delisee
Sith I am for you so amerous
Estreignes moy de cœur ioyeus.

With feruent hart my brest hath brost on fire
L'ardant espoer que mon cœur point est mort
D'auoir l'amour de celle que ie desire
I meane you swete most pleasant of porte
Et ie say bien que ce n'est pas mon tort
That for you sing, so as I may for mone
For your departing, alone I liue alone.

Though I might I would non other chese
In your seruice I would be founden sadde
Therefore I loue no labour that ye lese
When in longing forest ye be stadde
Looke vp you louers and be right gladde
Ayenst saint Valentines day
For I haue chese that neuer forsake I may.

Explicit.

¶ John Gower, vnto the worthy and noble King Henry the iiii.

O Noble worthie kyng
Henry the fearth
In whome the gladde
fortune is befall
The people to gouern
here vpon earth
God hath the chosē in
comfort of vs all
The worship of this lād which was dom fal
now stāt vpright through grace of thy good-
Which euery man is hold for to blesse (nesse

The high God of his iustice alone
The right which longeth to thy regalie
Declared hath to stand in thy persone
And more then God may no man iustifie
Thy title is know vpon thine auncestrie
The lands folk hath eke thy right affirmed
So stant thy reigne, of God & man confirmed

There is no man may say in otherwise
That God himself ne hath ỹ right declared
Wherof the land is bound to thy seruice
Which for defaut of help hath long cared
But now there is no mannes hart spared
To loue & serue, and worch thy pleasance
And all this is through Gods purueiance.

In all thing which is of God begonne
There foloweth grace if it be wel gouerned
Thus tellen they which olde bookes conne
Wherof my lord I wote wel thou art lerned
Aske of thy God, so shalt thou not be warned
Of no request which is reasonable
For God vnto the good is fauourable.

King Salomon which had at his asking
Of God, what thing him was leuest craue,
He chase wisedome vnto gouerning
Of Gods folke, the which he would saue
And as he chase it fill him for to haue
For through his wit while that his reign last
He gate him peace and rest into his last.

But Alexander, as telleth his storie
Unto the God beseught in other waie
Of all the worlde to win the victorie
So that vnder his sword it might obaye
In warre he had all that he would praie
The mightie God behight him that beheft
The world wanne, and had it of conquest.

But though it fill at thilke time so
That Alexander his asking hath atchined
This sinfull world was all Panem tho
Was none which hath the high God beleued
No wōder was thouz thilk worlde was gre-
Though a tyrant his purpose mizt won (ued
All was vengeaunce & infortune of sin.

But now the faith of Christ is come a place
Emong the princes in this earth here
It sit hem wel to do pity and grace
But yet it must be tempored in manere
For they finden cause in the mattere
Upon the point, what afterwarde betide
The lawe of right shall not be laied aside

So may a kyng of warre the voyage
Ordain and take, as he therto is hold
To claime and aske his rightful heritage

In

In all places where it is withhold
But otherwise if God himselfe would
Affirme loue and peace betweene the kings
Peace is the best aboue all earthly things

Good is to eschew war, and nathelees
A king may make war vpon his right
For of batalle the finall end is pees
Thus stant the law that a worthy knight
Upon his trouth may go to the fight
But if so were that he might chese
Better is the peace of which may no mã lese

To stere peace ought euerich on liue
First for to set his liege lord in rest
And eke these other men that they ne striue
For so this land may stand at best
What king that would be the worthiest
The more he might our deedly warre cease
The more he should his worthynesse encrease

Peace is the cheefe of all the worlds welth
And to the heauen it leadeth eke the way
Peace is of soule and life the mans healthy
Of pestilence, and doth the warre away
My liege lord take heed of that I say
If war may be left, take peace on hand
Which may not be without Gods sand

With peace stant euery creature in rest
Without peace there may no life be glad
Aboue all other good peace is the best
Peace hath himselfe whan war is all bestad
The peace is safe, the war is euer adrad
Peace is of all charity, the kay
Which hath the life and soule for to way

My liege lord if that thee list to seech
The soth ensãples what ỹ war hath wrought
Thou shalt wel hear of wise mennes spech
That deedly war turneth into nought
For if these old bookes be wel ysought
there mist thou se what thing ỹ war hath do
Both of conquest and conquerour also

For vaine honour, or for the worlds good
They that whilom the strong warres made
Where be they now, bethink wel in thy mood
The day is gone, the night is darke and fade
Her cruelte which made hem than glade
They sorowen now, & yet haue nauzt ỹ more
The blood is shad, which no man may restore

The war is mother of the wrongs all
It sleeth the priest in holy chyrch at masse
Forlith the maid, and doth her floure to fall
The warre maketh the great city lasse
And doth the law his rules ouerpasse
There is nothing wherof mischief may grow
Which is not caused of the war I trow

The war bringeth in pouerty at his heles
Whereof the common people is sore greued
The war hath set his cart on thilke wheles
Where that fortune may not be beleued
For whan men wene best to haue acheued
Ful oft it is all new to begin
The war hath nothing siker tho he win

For thy my worthy prince in Christs halue
As for a part whose faith thou hast be gide
Ley to this old sore a new salue
And do the war away what so betide
Purchase peace and set it by thy side
And suffer nat thy people be deuoured
So shal thy name euer after stand honoured

If any man be now or euer was
Ayen the peace thy priuy counsailour
Let God be of thy counsaile in this caas
And put away the cruel warriour
For God which is of man the creatour
He would not men slough his creature
Without cause of deadly forfaiture

Where nedeth most, behoueth most to loke
My lord, how so thy wars be without
Of time passed, who that hede toke
Good were at home to see right well about
For euermore the worst is for to dout
But if thou mightest parfite peace attaine
There should be no cause for to plaine

About a king good counsaile is to preise
Aboue all other things most vatiable
But yet a king within himselfe shal peise
And seen the things that be reasonable
And therupon he shal his wits stable
Among the men to set peace in euin
For loue of him which is the king of heauin

A, wel is him that shedde neuer blood
But if it were in cause of rightwisenesse
For if a king the peril vnderstood
What is to slee the people, than I gesse
The deadly wars and the heinousse
Whereof peace distourbed is ful oft
Should at sometime cease and were soft

O king fulfilled of grace and knighthood

A balade to King Henry the fourth.

Remembre vpon this point for Christis sake
If peace be prefered vnto thy manhode
Thine honour saue, let it not be forsake
Though thou the wars darst wel vndertake
After reason yet temper thy courage
For like to peace there is none auauntage

My worthy lord, thinke well how so befall
Of thilke lore, as holy bookes saine
Christ is the heed, and we be members all
As wel the subiect as the soueraine
So sit it wel that charity be plaine
Which vnto God himselfe most accordeth
So as the lore of Christis word recordeth

In the old law of Christ himselfe was bore
Among the ten commaundements I rede
How that manslaughter should be forbore
Such was the wil that time of the godhede
But afterward whā Christ took his māhede
Peace was the first thing he let do cry
Ayenst the worlds rancour and enuy

And of Christ went out of this earth here
And stighed to heauin, he made his testament
Where he bequath to his disciples there
And paue his peace, which is the foundement
Of charity, without whose assent
The worlds peace may neuer wel be tried
Ne loue kept, ne law iustified

The Jews with ỹ paynims hadden werre
But they among themselfe stood euer in peace
Why should than our peace stande out of erre
which Christ hath chosen vnto his owen encrese
For Christ is more than was Moises
And Christ hath set the parfite of the law
The which should in no wise be withdraw

To yeue vs peace was cause why Christ dide
Without peace may nothing stond auailed
But now a man may see on euery side
How Christis faith is euery day assailed
With paynims distroied and so batailed
That for defaut of help and of defence
Vnneth hath Christ his due reuerence

The right faith to kepe of holy church
The first point is named of knighthood
And euery man is hold for to worch
Upon the point that stant to his manhood
But now alas, the fame is spred so brode
That euery man this thing complaineth
And yet is there no man that helpe ordaineth

The worlds cause is waited ouer all
There be the warres redy to the full
But Christis owne cause in speciall
There ben the swerds and the speares dull
And with the sentence of the Popes bull
As for to done the folke paune obey
The church is turned all another wey

It is wonder aboue any mans wit
Without war how Christis faith was won
And we that be vpon this earth yet
Ne kepe it not as it was first begonne
To euery creature vnder the sonne
Christ bad himselfe that we should preach
And to the folk his Euangely teach

More light it is to kepe than to make
But that we founden made tofore hond
We kepe not, but let it lightly slake
The peace of Christ hath all to broke his bōd
We rest our selfe, and suffren euery lond
To slee ech other, as thing vndefended
So stant the war, and peace is not amended

But though the heed of holy church aboue
Ne do not all his hole businesse
Among the people to set peace and loue
These kings oughten of her right wisenesse
Her owne cause among themselfe redresse
Tho Peters ship as now hath lost his stere
It lieth in hem the barge for to stere

If holy church after the dute
Of Christis word ne be not all auised
To make peace, accord, and vnite
Among the kings that be now deuised
Yet nathelesse the law stand affised
Of mans wit to be so reasonable
Without that to stand himselfe stable

Of holy church we ben childzen all
And euery child is hold for to bow
Unto the mother, how that euer it fall
Or els he must reason disalow
And for that cause a knight shall first auow
The right of holy church to defend
That no man shal the priuilege offend

Thus were it good to set all in euin
The worlds princes and the prelates both
For loue of him which is the king of heuin
And if men should algate werren wroth
The sarazins, which vnto Christ been loth
Let men be armed ayenst hem so fight
So may the knight his dede of armes right

Upon

Upon iii. points stant Christs peace oppressed
First holy church in her selfe deuided
Which ought of reason first to be redressed
But yet so high a cause is not deuided
And thus when humble pacience is prided
The remnaunt which that they should rule
No wonder is, though it stand out of rule.

Ok that the heed is licke the limmes aken
These reigns that to Christs peace belongen
For worldes good these deadly warres maken
Which helpelesse, as in balaunce hongen
The heed aboue hem hath not vnderfongen
To set peace, but euery man sloeth other
And in this wise hath charity no brother

The two defautes bringen in the third
Ok miscreants that seen how we debate
Between the two, they fallen in a midde
Where now all day they find an open gate
Lo, thus the deedly warre stant algate
But euer I hope of king Henries grace
That he it is which shal the peace embrace

My worthy noble prince and king anoint
Whom God hath of his grace so preserued
Behold and see the world vpon this point
As for thy part, that Christs peace be serued
So shal thy high mede be deserued
To him which all shall quite at last
For this life here may no while last

See Alexander, Hector, and Julius
See Machabeus, Dauid, and Josue
See Charlemaine, Godfray, and Arthus
Fulfilled of warre, and of mortalite
Her fame abitte, but all is vanite
For death, which hath the warres vnder fote
Hath made an end, of which there is no bote

So many a man the soth wete and knowe
That peace is good for euery king to haue
The fortune of the warre is euer vnknowe
But where peace is, there is ỹ marches saue
That now is vp, to morow is vnder graue
The mighty God hath all grace in hand
Without him men may not long stand

Ok the temnes to wunne or lese a chace
May no life wete or that the ball be ronne
Al stant in God what thing mẽ shal purchace
The end is in him or that it be begonne
Men sain the wol when it is wel sponne
Doth that the cloth is strong and profitable
And els it may neuer be durable

The worlds chaunces vpon auenture
Ben euer set, but thilke chaunce of pees
Is so behouely to the creature
That is aboue all other peeries
But it may not beget natheles
Among the men to last any while
But where the hert is plain without gile

The peace is as it were a sacrament
To forge the God, and shal with words plaine
Without any double entendement
Be treated, for the trouth can not faine
But if the men within hemselfe ben vaine
The substaunce of the peace may not be trewe
But euery day it chaungeth vpon newe

But who that is of charite parfite
He voideth all sleights fer away
And set his word vpon the same plite
Where that his hert hath found a liker way
And thus when conscience is trewly way
And that these ben handled with the wise
It shall abide, and stand in all wise

The Apostle saith, there may no life be good
Which is not grounded vpon charity
For charity ne shed neuer blood
So hath the war as there no property
For thilke vertue which is saied pity
With charity so ferforth is acquainted
That in her may no falle semblant be painted

Cassodore, whose writing is authorised
Saith: where that pity reigneth is grace
Through which ỹ peace hath all his wealth
So that of war he dreadeth no manace (aflised
Where pity dwelleth in the same place
There may no deedly cruelty sojourne
Whereof that mercy should his way tourne

To see what pity forth with mercy doth
The cronique is at Rome in thilke empire
Of Constantine, which is a tale soth
When him was leuer his own death desire
Then do the yong children to martire
Of cruelty he left the quarele
Pity he wrought, and pity was his hele

For thilke mans pite which he dede
God was pitous, and made him hole at all
Siluester came, and in the same stede
Gaue him baptisme first in speciall

Which did away the sinne original
And all his leper it hath so purified
That his pity for euer is magnified

Pity was cause why this Emperour
Was hole in body and in soule both
And Rome also was set in thilke honour
Of Christs faith, so that the leue of loth
Which hadden be with Christ tofore wroth
Received were vnto Christs lore
Thus shal pite be praised euermore

My worthy liege lord Henry by name
Which England hast to gouerne and right
Men ought wel thy pity to proclaime
Which openlich in all the worlds sight
It sheweth, with the helpe of God almight
to yeue vs peace which long hath be debated
Wherefor thy price shal neuer be abated

My lord, in whom hath euer yet bee found
Pity, without spot of violence
Kepe thilke peace alway within bound
Which God hath planted in thy conscience
So shal the cronique of thy patience
Among the saints be taken into memory
To the legend of perdurable glory

And to thine earthly prise, so as I can
Which euery man is hold to commend
I Gower, which am all thy liege man
This letter vnto thine excellence I send
As I which euer vnto my liues end
Wol pray for the state of thy persone
In worship of thy sceptre and thy throne

Not only to my king of peace I write
But to these other princes Christen all
That ech of hem his owne heart endite
And cease the warre or more mischefe fall
Set eke the rightful pope vpon his stall
Kepe charity, and draw pity to hand
Maintaine lawe, and so the peace shal stand.

Explicit carmen, de pacis commendacione quod ad laudem & memoriam serenissimi principis domini regis Henrici Quarti, suus humilis orator Iohannes Gower composuit.

Electus Christi, pie rex Henrice fuisti
Qui bene venisti, cum propria regna petisti
Tu mala vecistique bonis bona restituisti
Et populo tristi, noua gaudia contribuisti
Est mihi spes lata, quod adhuc per te renouata
Succedent fata veteri probitate beata
Est tibi nam grata, gratia sponte data
Henrici quarti, primus regni fuit annus
Quo mihi defecit visus ad acta mea
Omnia tempus habent finem natura ministrat
Quem virtute sua frangere nemo potest
Vltra posse nihil quamuis mihi velle remansit
Amplius vt scribam non mihi posse manet
Dum potui scripsi, sed nunc quia curua senectus
Turbauit sensus scripta relinquo scolis
Scribat qui veniet post me discretior alter
Ammodo namque manus & mea penna silent
Hoc tamen in fine verborum quelo meorum
Prospera quod statuat regna futura Deus.

Explicit.

A saying of Dan Thon.

THere beth foure thinges that maketh man a foole
Honour first putteth him in outrage
And elder next solitary and foole
The second is vnwieldy crooked age
Women also lying men in dotage
And mighty wine in many diuers wise
Distempren folk which been holden wise.

Yet of the same.

THere beene foure things causing great folly
Honour first and vnwildy age
Women and wine I dare eke specify
Make wise men fallen in dotage
Wherefor by counsell of philosophers sage
In great honour learne this of me
With thine estate haue humilite.

Balade de bon consail.

IF it befall that God thee list visite
With any tourment or aduersite
Thanke first the lord, and thy selfe to quite
Vpon sufferaunce and humilite
Found thou thy quarel what euer that it be
Make thy defence & thou shalt haue no losse
The remembrance of Christ and of his crosse.

Explicit.

Of the Cuckow and the Nightingale.

THe God of loue, and benedicite
How mighty and how great a lord is he
For he can make of low herts hie
And of hie low, and like for to die
And hard harts he can maken free

He can make within a litle stound
Of sick folke hole, fresh and sound
And of hole he can make seke
He can bind, and vnbinden eke
That he wol haue bounden or vnbound

To tel his might my wit may not suffise
For he can make of wise folke ful nice
For he may do all that he wol deuice
And lithy folke to distroien vice
And proud herts he can make agrise

Shortly all that euer he wol he may
Against him dare no wight say nay
For he can glad and grene whom him liketh
And who that he wol he loweth or liketh
And most his might he shedeth euer in May

For euery true gentle hert free
That with him is or thinketh for to be
Again May now shal haue some stering
Or to ioy or els to some mourning
In no season, so much as thinketh me

For whan they may heare the birds sing
And see the floures and the leues spring
That bringeth into her remembraunce
A maner ease medled with greuaunce
And lusty thoughts ful of great longing

And of that longing commeth heauinesse
And therof groweth oft great sicknesse
And for lack of that they desire
And thus in May ben herts set on fire
So that they brennen forth in great distresse

I speak this of feling trewly
If I be old and vnlusty
Yet I haue felt of the sicknesse through May
Both hote and cold, and axes euery day
How sore ywis there wote no wight but I

I am so shaken with the feuers white
Of all this May slepe I but a lite
And also it is not like to me
That any hart should slepy be
In whom that loue his firy dart woll smite

But as I lay this other night waking
I thought how louers had a tokening
And among hem it was a commune tale
That it were good to hear the Nightingale
Rather than the lewd Cuckow sing

And than I thought anon as it was day
I would go somewhere to assay
If that I might a Nightingale heare
For yet had I none heard of all the yere
And it was tho the third night of May

And anon as I the day aspide
No lenger would I in my bed abide
But vnto a wood that was fast by
I went forth alone boldely
And held the way down by a brooke side

Til I came to a laund of white and grene
So faire one had I neuer in bene
The ground was grene, ypoudred with daisie
The floures and the greues like hie
All grene and white, was nothing els sene

There sat I down among the faire floures
And saw the birds trip out of her bowres
There as they rested hem all the night
They were so ioiful of the daies light
They began of May for to done houres

They coud that seruice all by rote
There was many a louely note
Some song loud as they had plained
And some in other maner voice yfained
And some all out with the ful throte

They proined hem, & made hem right gay
And daunseden and lepten on the spray
And euermore two and two in feare
Right so as they had chosen hem in yeare
In Feuerere vpon saint Valentines day

And the riuer that I sat vpon
It made such a noise as it ron
Accordaunt with the birds armony
Me thought it was the best melody
That might ben yheard of any mon

And for delite, I wot neuer how

I fel in ſuch a ſlumber and a ſwow
Nat all aſleepe ne fully waking
And in that ſwow me thought I herd ſing
The ſory bird the leud cuckow

And that was on a tree right faſt by
But who was thán euill apaid but I
Now God (qd. I) that died on the croys
Yeue ſorow on thee, and on thy leud voys
Ful little ioy haue I now of thy cry

And as I with the cuckow thus gan chide
I heard in the next buſh beſide
A Nightingale ſo luſtely ſing
That with her cleare voice ſhe made ring
Through all the greene wood wide

Ah, good nightingale (qd. I) then
A little haſt thou ben to long hen
For here hath ben the leud cuckow
And ſongen ſongs rather than haſt thou
I pray to God euil fire her bren

But now I wol you tel a wonder thing
As long as I lay in that ſwowning
Me thought I wiſt what the birds ment
And what they ſaid, & what was her entent
And of her ſpeech I had good knowing

There heard I the nightingale ſay
Now good cuckow go ſomwhere away
And let vs that can ſingen dwellen here
For euery wight eſcheweth thee to here
Thy ſongs be ſo elenge in good fay

What (qd. ſhe) what may thee ailen now
Me thinketh me, I ſing as wel as thou
For my ſong is both true and plaine
And though I cannot crakel ſo in vaine
As thou doeſt in thy throte, I wot neuer how

And euery wight may vnderſtand me
But nightingale ſo may they not done the
For thou haſt many a nice queint cry
I haue thee heard ſain, ocy ocy
How might I know what that ſhould be

Ah foole (qd. ſhe) woſt thou not what it is
When that I ſay ocy ocy ywis
Than meane I that I would wonder faine
That all they were ſhamefully yſlaine
That meanen ought againe loue amis

And alſo I would that all tho had the dede
That thinke not in loue her life to lede
For who ſo ỳ wol not the God of loue ſerue
I dare wel ſay he is worthy to ſterue
And for that ſkil, ocy ocy I grede

Eye (qd. the cuckow, this is a queint lawe
That euery wight ſhal loue or be to drawe
But I forſake all ſuch company
For mine entent is not for to die
Ne neuer while I liue on loues yoke to draw

For louers ben the folke that ben on liue
That moſt diſeaſe haue, and moſt vnthriue
And moſt endure ſorow, woe and care
And leaſt felen of welfare
What nedeth it ayenſt trouth to ſtriue

What (qd. ſhe) thou art out of thy mind
How might thou in thy churleneſſe find
To ſpeake of loues ſeruaunts in this wiſe
For in this world is none ſo good ſeruice
To euery wight that gentle is of kind

For thereof truly commeth all goodneſſe
All honour and all gentleneſſe
Worſhip, eaſe, and all harts luſt
Parfite ioy, and ful aſſured truſt
Iolity, pleaſaunce and freſhneſſe

Lowlihed, largeſſe, and curteſy
Semelihed, and trew company
Drede of ſhame for to done amis
For he that truly loues ſeruaunt is
Were lother be ſhamed than to die

And that this is ſoth that I ſey
In that beleue I wil liue and dey
And cuckow ſo I redy that thou do ywis
Than (qd. he) let me neuer haue bliſſe
If euer I vnto that counſaile obey

Nightingale thou ſpeakeſt wonder faire
But for all that is the ſoth contraire
For loue is in yong folke but rage
And in old folke a great dotage
Who moſt it vſeth moſt ſhall empaire

For therof commeth diſeaſe and heauineſſe
So ſorow & care and many a great ſickneſſe
Deſpite, debate, anger and enuy
Deſrauing, ſhame, vntruſt and ielouſy
Pride, michiefe, pouerty and woodneſſe

Louing is an office of diſpaire
And one thing is therein that is not faire
For who that getteth of loue a little bliſſe

But

But if he be alway therewith ywis
He may full sone of age haue his haire.

And Nightingale therefore hold thee nie
For leue me well, for all thy queint crie
If thou be ferre or long fro thy make
Thou shalt be as other that been forsake
And then thou shalt hoten as doe I.

Fie (qd she) on thy name and on thee
The God of Loue me let thee neuer thrie
For thou art worse a thousandfold than wood
For many one is full worthie and full good
That had be naught me had loue ybee.

For euermore loue his seruants amendeth
And from all euill taches hem defendeth
And maketh hem to brenne right in a fire
In trouth and in worshipfull desire
And whē him liketh, ioy ynough hem sendeth

Thou Nightingale he saied, be still
For loue haue no reason, but it is will
For oft time vntrue folke he easeth
And true folke so bitterly he displeaseth
That for defaut of courage he let hem spill.

Then tooke I of the Nightingale kepe
How she cast a sigh out of her depe
And saied, alas that euer I was borne
I can for tene not saie one worde more
And right with ỹ word she brast out to wepe.

Alas (qd she) my hart woll to breake
To hearen thus this leude birde speake
Of loue, and of his worshipfull seruice
Now God of loue thou help me in some wise
That I may on this Cuckowe been awreke.

Me thought then he sterte vp anon
And glad was I that he was agon
And euermore the Cuckowe as he flay
Saied farewell, farewell Popingaie
As though he had scorned me alone.

And then came the Nightingale to me
And saied, frende forsoth I thanke thee
That thou hast liked me to rescowe
And one auowe to loue make I now
That all this Maie I woll thy singer be

I thanked her, and was right well apaied
Yea (qd she) and be thou not dismaied
Tho thou haue heard ỹ Cuckow erst than me
For if I line it shal amended be
The next Maie, if I be not affraied.

And one thing I woll rede thee also
Ne leue thou not the Cuckowe ne his loues so
For al that he hath saied is strong leasing
Naie (qd I) thereto shal nothing me bring
For loue and it hath doe me much wo.

Ye, vse (qd she) this medicine
Euery day this Maie or thou dine.
Go looke vpon the fresh Daisie
And though thou be for wo in point to die
That shal ful greatly lessen thee of thy pine.

And loke alway that thou be good and true
And I woll sing one of the sougs newe
For loue of thee, as loude as I may crie
And then she began this song full hie
I shrewe all hem that been of loue vntrue.

And when she had song it to the ende
Now farewell (qd she) for I mote wende
And God of loue, that can right well and may
As much ioy send thee this daie
As any louer yet he euer sende.

Thus taketh ỹ Nightingale her leaue of me
I pray to God alway with her to be
And ioy of loue he send her euermore
And shilde vs fro the Cuckowe and his lore
For there is not so false a birde as he.

For the she shewe the gentill Nightingale
To all the birdes that were in that dale
And gate hem all into a place in fere
And besoughten hem that they would here
Her disease, and thus began her tale.

The Cuckowe, well it is not for to hide
How the Cuckowe and I fast haue chide
Euer sithen it was day light
I pray you all that ye doe me right
Of that foule false vnkinde birde.

Then speake o birde for all by one assent
This matter asketh good auisement
For we been birdes here in fere
And sothe it is, the Cuckowe is not here
And therefore we woll haue a parliment.

And thereat shall the Egle be our Lord
And other peres that been of recorde
And the Cuckow shall be after sent
There shall be yeue the iudgement
Or els we shall finally make accorde.

And this shall be without naie
The morowe after saint Valentines daie
Under a Maple that is faire and grene
Before the chamber windowe of the quene
At Woodstocke vpon the grene laie.

She thanked hem, and then her leaue toke
And into an Hauthorne by that broke
And there she sate and song vpon that tree
Terme of life loue hath with hold me
So loude that I with that song awoke.

Explicit.

Leude booke with thy foule rudenesse
Sith thou hast neither beautie ne eloquence
Who hath thee caused or yeue thee hardinesse
For to appere in my Ladies presence
I am full siker thou knowest her benevolence
Full agreable to all her abiyng
For of all good she is the best liuing.

Alas that thou ne haddest worthinesse
To shewe to her some pleasant sentence
Sith that she hath brought her gentilesse
Accepted the seruaunt to her digne reuerence
O, me repenteth that I ne had science
And leiser als to make the more flourishing
For of all good she is the best liuing.

Beseche her meekely with all lowlinesse
Though I be ferre from her in absence
To thinke on my trouth to her & stedfastnesse
And to abridge of my sorowes the violence
Which caused is, wherof knoweth your sapience
She like emong to notifie me her liking
For of all good she is the best liuing.

Lenuoy.

Vroye of gladnesse, & daye of Lustinesse.
Lucerne a night with heuenly influence
Illumined, rote of beautie and goodnesse
Sulpires which I estund in scilence
Of grace I beseche aledge let your writing
Now of all good, sith ye be best liuing.

Explicit.

Scogan, vnto the Lordes and Gentilmen of the Kinges house.

My noble sonnes & eke my lordes dere
I your father called vnworthely
Sende vnto you this little treatise here
Written with mine owne hand full rudely
Although it be that I not reuerently
Haue written to your estates, I you praie
Mine vnconning taketh beningly
For Goddes sake, and herken what I saie.

I complain me sore when I remember me
The sodain age that is vpon me fall
But more I complain my mispent iuuentute
The which is impossible ayen for to call
But certainly the moste complaint of all
Is to thinke that I haue be so nice
That I ne would vertues to me call
In all my youth, but vices aie cherice.

Of which I aske mercy of the Lord
That art almightie God in maiestie
Beseking to make so euen accord
Betwixt the and my soule, that vauntie,
Worldly lust, ne blinde prosperitie
Haue no lordship ouer my flesh to frele
Thou Lord of rest and parfite vnitie
Put fro me vice, and kepe my soule hele.

And yeue me might while I haue life & space
Me to confirme fully to thy pleasaunce
Shewe to me thabundaunce of thy grace
And in good werks graunt me perseueraunce
Of all my youth forget the ignorance
Yeue me good will to serue thee aie to queme
Set all my life after thine ordinaunce
And able me to mercie or thou deme

My lords deare, why I this complaint write
To you whom I loue most entirely
Is for to warne you as I can endite
That time lost in youth folily
Greueth a wight bodily and ghostly
I meane him that to lust and vice entend
Wherefore lords I pray you specially
Your youth in vertue shapeth to dispend

Plant the roote of youth in such a wise
That in vertue your growing be alway
Looke alway goodnesse be in your exercise
That shall you mightie make at eche assaie
The fend to withstand at eche affraie
Passeth wilely this perilous pilgrimage
Think on this worde, & werke it euery daie
That shall you yeue a perfite flourd age.

Taketh also hede how ꝑ these noble clerkes
Writen in her bookes of great sapience
Saying that fauth is ded withouten werkes
And right so is estate with negligence
Of vertue, and therefore with diligence
Shapeth of vertue so to plant the roote
That ye thereof haue full experience
To worshipp of your life and soules boote.

Taketh also hede that lordshipp ne estate
Without vertue may not long endure
Thinketh eke how vices & vertue at debate
Haue ben & shal while the world may dure
And euer the vicious by auenture
Is ouerthrow, and thinketh euermore
That God is Lord of all vertue, and figure
Of all goodnesse, and therfore followe his lore

My maister Chaucer, God his soule saue
That in his langage was so curious
He said that the father which is ded & graue
biqueth nothing but his vertu with his hous
Unto his children, and therfore labourous
Ought ye be, beseking God of grace
To yeue you might for to be vertuous
Through whiche ye might haue parte of his (place

Here may ye see that vertuous noblesse
Cometh not to you by way of auncestrie
But it cometh by lefull businesse
Of honest life, and not by slogardrie
Wherefore in youth I rede you edifie
The house of vertue in such a manere
That in your age may you kepe and gie
Fro the tempest of worldes wawes here

Thinketh how betwixt vertue and estate
There is a parfite blessed Mariage
Vertue is cause of peace, vice of debate
In mannes soule, the which be ful of corage,
Therfore beth then vertue, vices to outrage
Driueth hem away, let hem haue no wōning
In your soules, leseth not the heritage
Which God hath yeue to vertuous liuing.

Take hede also how men of poore degree
Through vertue haue be set in great honour
And euer haue liued in great prosperitie
Through cherishing of vertuous labour
Thinketh also how many a gouernour
Called to estate hath be set full lowe
Through misusing of right and of errour
And therfore I counsaile you vertue to knowe

Thus by your ancestors ye may nothig claim
As ꝑ my maister Chaucer saieth expresse
But tēporal thing, ꝑ men may hurt or maime
Then is God stock of vertuous noblesse
And sith that he is lord of bisshednesse
And made vs all, and for vs all deide
Foloweth him in vertue with full busines
And of this thing herke how my maister seide

The first stocke father of gentilnesse
What man that claimeth gentill for to be
Must folow his trace, & all his wittes dresse
Vertue to looke, and vices for to flie
For vnto vertue longeth dignitie
And not the reuers sikely dare I deme
All weare he mitre, corowne, or Diademe.

The first stocke was full of rightwisenesse
True of his worde, sobre, pitous, and free
Clene of his ghost, and loued busines
Ayenst the vice of slothe in honestie
And but his heire loue vertue as did he
He is not gentill though he riche seme
All weare he mitre, croune, or Diademe.

Vice may be an heire to olde richesse
But there may no man, all men may see
Bequeth his heire his vertuous noblesse
That is appropried vnto no degree
But to the first father of Maiestie
ꝑ maketh his heires hem ꝑ can him queme
All weare he mitre, croune, or Diademe.

Lo heare this noble Poete of Bretaine
How lightly in vertuous sentence
The losse on youth of vertue can complain
Therefore I pray you with your diligence
For your profite and Goddes reuerence
Tempereth fully vertue in your mynde
That when ye come to your Judges presence
Ye be not vertuelesse then behinde,

Many lordes haue a maner now a daies
Though one shewe him a vertuous mattere
Her feruent youth is of so false alaies
That of that arte they haue no ioy to here
But as a ship that is without a stere

Driueth

Dzineth vp and doun without gouernance
Wening that calme would last yere by yere
Right so fare they foz very ignozance.

Foz very shame know they not by reason
that after an eb there cometh a flood full rage
In ỹ same wise when youth passeth his season
Cometh croked and vnweldie palled age
And sone after comen the Kalendes of dotage
And if ỹ her youth haue no vertue pzouided
All men woll saie, fie on her vassalage
Thus hath her sloth fro wozship hem deuided

Boecius the clerk, as men may rede & see
Saith in his boode of Consolacion
What man desireth of Vine oz tree
Plenteous fruit in reaping season
Must euer eschue to doe oppzession
Unto the roote while it is yong and grene
Thus may ye see well by that inclusion
That youth vertulesse doeth much tene.

Now seeth there ayenst how vertuous nobilnesse
Rooted in youth with good perseueraunce
Dziueth away all vices and wzetchednesse
As slogardzie, riote, and distance
Seeth eke how vertue causeth sufficance
Seeth eke how vertue voideth all vice
And who so hath vertue, hath all abundance
Of wele, as ferre as reason can deuise.

Taketh hede of Tullius Hostilius
That fro pouertie came to high degree
Through vertue, redeth eke of Julius
The conquerour, how poore a man was he
Yet through his vertue and his humilitie
Of many countrey had he gouernaunce
Thus vertue bringeth a man to great degree
Eche wight that list to doe him entendaunce.

Rede here ayenst now of Nero Uertules
Taketh hede also of proude Balthasare
They hated vertue, equitie and pees
And looke how Antiochus fill fro his chare
That he his skin and bones all to tare
Loke what mischaunce they had foz her vices
Who so woll not by these signes beware
I dare well saie unfoztunate and nice is.

I can no moze now saie, but hereby may ye se
How vertue causeth perfite sikernesse
And vices exilen all prosperitie
The best is eche man to chose as I gesse
Doeth as you list, I me excuse expresse
I would be right sozie if that ye mischese
God confirme you in vertuous noblesse
So that through negligence ye not it lese.

Explicit.

Sometime the wozld so stedfast was and stable
That mannes wozde was an Obligacioun
And now it is so falle and discreuable
That wozde and deede as in conclusioun
Is nothing like, foz tourned is vp so doun
All the wozld, through mede and sikernesse
That all is loste foz lacke of stedfastnesse.

What maketh the wozld to be so variable
But lust that men haue in discension
Foz emong vs a man is holde wiable
But if he can by some collusion
Doe his neighbour wzong and oppzession
What causeth this but wilfull wzetchednes
That all is lost foz lacke of stedfastnes.

Trouth is put doun, reason is holde fable
Uertue hath now no dominacion
Pitie is exiled, no man is merciable
Through couetise is blente discrecion
The wozld hath made a permutacion
Fro right to wzong, fro trouth to sikernesse
That is all lost foz lacke of stedfastnesse.

Lenuoy.

Pzince desire to be honourable
Cherish thy folke, and hate extozcion
Suffer nothing that may be repzouable
To thine estate doen in thy region
Shewe fozth the yerde of castigation
Dzede God, do law, loue trouth & worthines
And wedde thy folke ayen to stedfastnesse.

Explicit.

Good counsaile of Chaucer.

Flie ye fro the pzease and dwel with sothfastnesse
Suffise vnto thy good though it be small
Foz hozde hath hate, and climbing tikelnesse
Pzeace hath enuie, & wele is blent ouer all
Sauour no moze then thee behouc shal
Rede well thy self that other folke shall rede

And

And trouth thee shall deliuer it is no drede.

Paine thee not eche croked to redresse
In trust of her that turneth as a ball
Great rest standeth in little busines
Beware also to spurne again a nall
Strive not as doth a crock with a wall
Deme thy self that demest others dede
And trouth thee shall deliuer it is no drede.

That thee is sent receive in buxomnesse
The wrastling of this world asketh a fall
Here is no home, here is but wildernesse
Forthe pilgrim, forth beast out of thy stall
Looke vp on high and thanke God of all
Weine thy luste and let thy ghost thee lede
And trouth thee shall deliuer it is no drede.

Explicit.

Balade of the Village without paynting.

Plaintife to Fortune.

THis wretched worldes transmutacion
As wele & wo, now poore and now honour
Without order or due discrecion
Goverened is by Fortunes errour
But natheles the lacke of her favour
Ne may not doe me sing though that I die
Ie ay tout pardue mon temps et labour
For finally fortune I defie.

Yet is me left the sight of my reason
To knowe frende fro foe in thy mirrour
So much hath yet thy tourning vp & doun
Ytaught me to knowen in an hour
But truely no force of thy reddour
To him that ouer himself hath maistrie
My sufficiaunce shall be my succour
For finally fortune I defie.

O Socrates thou stedfast champion
She might neuer be thy turmentour
Thou neuer dreddest her oppression
Ne in her chere found thou no favour
Thou knewe the disceipt of her colour
And that her moste worship is for to lie
I know her eke a false dissimulour
For finally fortune I defie

The answere of Fortune.

No man is wretched but himself it wene
He that hath himselfe hath sufficiaunce
Why saiest thou then I am to thee so kene
That hast thy self out of my gouernaunce
Say thus, grant mercy of thine habundance
that thou hast lēt or this, thou shalt not strive
What wost thou yet how I thee wol auance
And eke thou hast thy best friend alive.

I haue thee taught deuision betwene
Frend of effect, and friend of countenaunce
Thee needeth not the gall of an Hine
That cureth eyen darke for her penaunce
Now seest thou cleare ꝑ were in ignoraunce
Yet holt thine anker, & yet thou maiest arrive
There bounty beareth ꝑ key of my substaunce
And eke thou hast thy best friend alive.

How many haue I refused to sustene
Sith I haue thee fostred in thy pleasaunce
Wolt thou then make a statute on thy queene
That I shal be aie at thine ordinaunce
Thou borne art in my reigne of variaunce
About the whele with other must thou drive
My lore is bet, then wicke is thy greevaunce
And eke thou hast thy best friend alive.

The answere to Fortune.

Thy lore I dampne, it is aduersitie
My frend maist thou not reue blind goddesse
That I thy frendes knowe I thank it thee
Take hem again, let hem go lie a presse
The nigardes in keeping her richesse
Pronostike is thou wolt her toure assaile
Wicke appetite cometh aye before sickenesse
In generall this rule may not faile.

Fortune.

Thou pinchest at my mutabilitie
For I thee lent a droppe of my richesse
And now my liketh to withdrawe me
Why shouldest thou my royaltie oppresse
The sea may ebbe and flowe more and lesse
The welkē hath mist to shene, rain, and haile
Right so must I kithe my brotilnesse
In generall this rule may not faile.

The plaintife

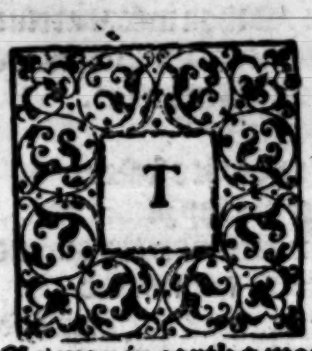
Le,

Lo, the execucion of the maieſtie
That all purueigheth of his rightwiſeneſſe
That ſame thing fortune clepen ye
Ye blinde beaſtes full of leudneſſe
The heauen hath propertie of ſikerneſſe
This world hath euer reſtleſſe trauaile
The laſt day is ende of myne entreſſe
In generall this rule may not faile

Thenuoie of Fortune.

Princes I pray you of your gentilneſſe
Let not this man and me thus crie and plain
And I ſhall quite you this buſineſſe
And if ye liſt releue him of his paine
Praie ye his beſt frend of his nobleſſe
That to ſome better ſtate he may attain.

Lenuoy.



O broken been the ſtatutes hie in heauen
That creat were eternally endure
Sith that I ſee the bright God ſeuen
Now wepe & waile, & paſſion endure
As may in earth a mortall creature
Alas fro whens may this thing procede
Of which errour I die almoſt for drede.

By worde eterne whilom was it ſhape
That fro the fifth circle in no mancre
Ne might of teares doune eſcape
But now ſo wepeth Venus in her ſphere
That with her teares ſhe woll drench vs here
Alas Scogan this is for thine offence
Thou cauſeſt this deluge of peſtilence.

Haſt thou not laid in blaſpheme of the goddis
Through pride, or through thy gret rebelnes
Such things as in ỹ law of loue forbode is
That for thy lady ſaw not thy diſtreſſe
Therfore thou paue her vp at Weſtmeſſe
Alas Scogan of olde folke ne yong
Was neuer erſt Scogan blamed for his tong

Thou drew in ſtorne Cupide eke to recorde
Of thilk rebell worde that thou haſt ſpoken
For which he wol no lenger be thy Lorde
and Scogan, though his bowe be not brokē
He woll not with his arowes be ywroken
On thee ne me, ne none of our figure
We ſhal of him haue neither hurte ne cure.

Now certes frende I drede of thine vnhappe
Leaſt for thy gilte the wreke of loue procede
On all hem that ben hore and round of ſhap
That ben ſo likely folk to ſpede
Then we ſhal for our labour haue our mede
But well I wot thou wolt anſwere and ſaie
Lo olde Griſell liſt to renne and plaie.

Nay Scogan ſay not ſo, for I me excuſe
God helpe me ſo, in no rime doubles
Ne thinke I neuer of ſlepe wake my muſe
That ruſteth in my ſheath ſtill in pees
While I was yong I put her forth in preſs
But al ſhal paſſe that men proſe or rime
Take euery man his tourne as for his time.

Scogan thou kneleſt at the ſtremes hedde
Of grace, of all honour, and of worthineſſe
In thende of which I am dull as dedde
Forgotten in ſolitarie wilderneſſe
Yet Scogan thinke on Tullius kindneſſe
Myne thy frinde there it may fructifie
Farewel, and loke thou neuer eft loue deſie.

Explicit.

O fourth Kinge, rule thee by Sapience
Biſhop be able to miniſter doctrine.
Lord to true counſail geue audience
Womanhode to chaſtitie euer encline
Knight let thy deeds worſhip determine
Be righteous Judge in ſauing thy name
Rich do almes, leſt thou leſe bliſſe with ſhame

People obey your king and the lawe
Age be ruled by good religion
True ſeruant be dredful & kepe the vnder awe
And thou poore fie on preſumption
Inobedience to youth is vtter deſtruccion
Remember you how God hath ſet you lo
And doe your parte as ye be ordained to.

Chaucer to his emptie purſe.

O you my purſe and to none other wight
Complaine I, for ye be my ladie dere
I am ſorie nowe that ye bee light
For certes ye now make me heauie chere

Me

We were as lefe be laid vpon a bere
For which vnto your mercy thus I crie
Be heauy againe or els mote I die

Now vouchsafe this day or it be night
That I of you the blisful sowne may here
Or see your colour like the sonne bright
That of yelonesse had neuer pere
Ye be my life, ye be my hartes stere
Quene of comfort and of good compagnie
Be heauy againe, or els mote I die

Now purse that art to me my liues light
And saviour, as downe in this worlde here
Out of this towne helpe me by your might
Sith that you wol not be my treasoure
For I am shaue as nigh as any frere
But I pray vnto your curtesie
Be heauy again, or els mote I die.

Explicit.

Chaucer vnto the king.

O conquerour of Brutes Albion
Which that by line and free election
Ben very king, this to you I send
And ye that may all harmes amend
Haue mind vpon my supplication.

Explicit.

A Balade of good counsaile

translated out of Latine verses into Englishe, by Dan Iohn Lidgate cleped the monke of Burie.

Consider well euery circumstaunce
Of what estate euer thou bee
Rich, strong, or mighty of puissaunce
Prudent or wise, discreet or bely
The dome of folkes in soth thou may not flie
What euer thou doest trust wel this
A wicked tongue wol alway deme amis

For in thy port or in thine apparaile
If thou be cladde and honestly be saine
Anon the people of malice wol not faile
Without aduise or reason for to saine
that thine array is made or wrought in vain
Suffer him speake, and trust right well this
A wicked tongue wol alway deme amis

Thou wil to kings be equipolent
With great lords euen and peregall
And if thou be to torne and all to rent
Than wol they say and iangle ouer all
Thou art a slougard that neuer thyne shall
Suffer hem speake, and trust right well this
A wicked tongue wol alway deme amis

If it befall that thou take a wife
They wol falsly say in their entent
Thou art likely euer to liue in strife
Void of all rest, without aledgement
Wiues ben maistres, this is their iudgement
Suffren all their speech, & trust right wel this
A wicked tongue wol alway deme amis

If thou be faire and excellent of beaute
Yet wol they say that thou art amourous
If thou be foule and vgly on to see
They wol affirme that thou art vicious
The people of language is so despitous
Suffre all their speech, & trust right wel this
A wicked tongue wol alway deme amis

If so be that of parfitenesse
Thou hast vowed to liue in chastite
Than wol folke, of thy person expresse
Thou art impotent tengender in thy degre
And thus where thou be chast or dessaute
Suffre them speake, and trust right wel this
A wicked tongue wol alway deme amis

If thou be fat other corpulent
Than wol them say thou art a great glotten
A deuourer, or els vinolent
If thou be leane or megre of fashion
Call thee a niggard in their opinion
Suffer them speake, and trust right wel this
A wicked tongue wol alway deme amis

If thou be rich, some wol yeue thee laud
And say it commeth of prudent gouernaunce
And wol saine it commeth of fraud
Other by sleight, or false chevisaunce
To sain the worst, folk haue so gret plesaunce
What suffer hem say, and trust right wel this
A wicked tongue wol alway deme amis

If thou be sadde or sobre of countenaunce

Men woll saine thou thinkest some treason
And if thou be glad of daliaunce
Men wol deme it desolucion
And call faire speech adulacion
Yet let him speake, and trust right well this
A wicked tongue wol alway deme amis

Who that is holy by perfection
Men of malice wol clip him ypocrite
And who is mery of cleane entencion
Men sain in riot he doth him delite (white
Some mourne in black, some loue in clothes
Suffer men speake, and trust right well this
A wicked tongue wol alway deme amis

Honest aray men deme it pompe and pride
And who goeth poore, men call him a wastet
And who goeth still men marke him on ẏ side
Saine that he is a spie or aguler
Who wasteth not men saine he hath treasour
Whereof conclude and trust right well this
A wicked tongue wol alway deme amis

Who speketh much men clepeth him prudent
Who that debateth, mē sain that he is hardy
And who saith little with great sentement
Some folke yet wol wite him of foly
Trouth is put downe, and vp goeth flattery
And who ẏ list plainly know the cause of this
A wicked tongue wol alway deme amis

For though a man were as pacient
As was Dauid through his humilite
Or with Salomon in wisdome as prudent
Or in knighthood egale with Josue
Or manly proued, as Judas Machabe
Yet for all that, trust right well this
A wicked tongue wol alway deme amis

And though a man had the prowesse
Of worthy Hector, Troies champion
The loue of Troilus, or the kindnesse,
Or of Cesar the famous high renoun
With all Alixanders dominacioun
Yet for all that trust right wel this
A wicked tongue wol alway deme amis

Or though a man of high or low degre
Of Tullius had the lugred eloquence
Or of Seneca the moralite
Or of Caton forsight and prouidence
The cõquest of Charles, Artures magnificence
Yet for all that trust right well this
A wicked tongue wol alway deme amis

Touching of women, the parfite Innocence
Though that they had, of Hester the noblesse
Or of Grisilde, the humble pacience
Or of Judith, the preuid stablenesse
Or Polixenes virginall cleanesse
Yet dare I saine, and trust right wel this
Some wiked tong, wold deme of them amis

The wifely trouth of Penelope
Though they it had in her possession
Helenes beauty, the kindnesse of Pede
The loue vnfained of Martia Caton
Or Alcestis trew affection
Yet dare I sain and trust right wel this
A wicked tongue wol alway deme amis

Than sooth it is that no man may eschew
The swerd of tongues, but it wil kerue & bite
Ful hard it is a man for to remew
Out of their daunger him for to aquite
Wo to the tongues that hemselfe delite
To hinder or sclander, & set their study in this
And their pleasaunces to deme alway amis

Most noble princes, cherishers of vertue
Remembreth you of high discrecion
The first vertue most pleasing to Jesu
(By the writing and sentence of Caton)
Is a good tongue in his opinion
Chastice the reuerse, of wisdome do this,
Voideth your hearing from all ẏ deme amis.

A Balade in the praise and commendacion of Maister Geffray Chaucer, for his golden eloquence.

Maister Geffray Chaucer,
that now lith in graue
The noble Rhetoricien, &
Poet of great Bretain
That worthy was, ẏ lanrer of Poetry to haue
For this his labour, & his
palme to attaine
Which first made to distill, and raine
The gold dewie drops of speech and eloquence
Into English tongue, through his excellence

Explicit.

Here followeth certaine workes of Geffray Chaucer, annexed to the impression printed in the yeare, 1561. With an adition of some things of Chaucers writing, neuer before this time printed, 1597. All collected and adioined to his former workes by Iohn Stowe.

A Balade made by Chaucer, teaching what is gentilnesse, or whom is worthy to bee called gentill.

THe first stoke father of gentilnes
What man desireth gentil for to be
Must followe his trace, & all his wits dreis
Vertue to loue, and vices for to fle
For vnto vertue longeth dignite
And not the reuers safely dare I deme
All were he miter crowne or diademe

This first stoke was full of rightwisenesse
True of his word, sober pitous and free
Cleane of his ghost and loued besinesse
Against the vice of slouth in honeste
And but his eyre loue vertue as did he
He is not gentill though he rich seme
All weare he miter, crowne or diademe

Vices may wel be eyre to old richesse
But there may no man, as men may well see
Bequeath his eire his vertues noblesse
That is appropried vnto no degree
But to the first father in maiestee
That maketh his eyres them that is queme
All weare he miter, crowne, or diademe.

Explicit.

A Prouerbe against couetise and negligence.

WHat shal these clothes thus manifold
Lo this yote summers day
After great heate commeth cold
No man cast his pilche away
Of all this world the large compasse
It wil not in mine arms twain
Who so mokel wol embrace
Little therof he shal distrain.

Explicit.

A Balade which Chaucer made against women vnconstant.

MAdame for your new fangelnesse
Many a seruant haue ye put out of your grace
I take my leaue of your vnstedfastnesse
For well I wot, while ye to liue haue space
Ye cannot loue ful halfe a yeare in place
To new things, your lust is euer kene
In stead of blew, thus may ye weare all grene

Right as a mirrour ꝑ nothing may enpresse
But lightly as it cometh, so mote it passe(nes
So fareth your loue, your wordes bereth wit-
There is no faith, may your heart embrace
But as a wedercock, that turneth his face
With euery wind, ye fare and that is sene
In stead of blew, thus may ye wear all grene

Ye might be shrined for your brotilnesse
Better than Dalida, Cresseide, or Candace
For euer in changing stondeth your stedfastnesse
ꝑ catch may no wight, from your hert a race
If ye lose one, can wel twain purchace
All light for somer, ye wot well what I mene
In stead of blew, thus may ye weare all grene

Explicit.

Here followeth a Balade which Chaucer made in the praise or rather dispraise, of women for their doublenesse.

THis world is ful of variaunce
In euery thing who taketh hede
That faith and trust, and all constaunce
Exiled ben this is no drede
And saue only, in womanhede
I can see, no stedfastnesse
But for all that, yet as I rede
Beware alway of doublenesse

Also that fresh, lommer floures
White and red, blew and grene
Ben sodainly, with winters shoures

Wade faint and fade, without wene
That trust is none as ye may sene
In no thing, nor no stedfastnesse
Except in women, thus I mene
Yet aie beware, of doublenesse

The crooked Moone, this is no tale
Some while ysene, and bright of hew
And after that, full darke and pale
And euery month, changeth new
That who the very soth knew
All thing is built, on brotelnesse
Saue that women, aie be trew
Yet aie beware of doublenesse

The lusty fresh, sommers day
And Phebus, with his beames cleare
Towards night, they draw away
And none lenger, list appeare
That in this present, life now here
Nothing abieth, in his fairenesse
Saue women aie, be found intere
And deuoid of doublenesse

The sea eke, with his sterne wawes
Ech day floweth new again:
And by concours, of his lawes
The ebbe floweth in certaine
After great drought, there commeth a raine
That farwell here all stablenesse
Saue that women, be hole and plaine
Yet aie beware of doublenesse

Fortunes wheele, goeth round about
A thousand times, day and night
Whose cours standeth, euer in dout
For to transmew, she is so light
For which aduerteth in your sight
The untrust, of worldly sikelnesse
Saue women, which of kindly right
Ne hath now teach of doublenesse

What man may, the wind restraine
Or hold a snake, by the taile
Or a slipper eele constraine
That it will void, without faile
Or who can driue so auaile
To make sure new fonglenesse
Saue women that can gie their saile
To row their, boot of doublenesse

At euery hauen, they can ariue
Where as they wot, is good passage
Of innocence they cannot striue
With wawes, nor no rockes rage
So happy is their lodemanage
With nedle and stone, their cours to dresse
That Salomon, was not so sage
To find in them, no doublenesse

Therfore who so them accuse
Of any double entencion
To speak rowme, other to muse
To pinch at their condicion
All is but false collusion
I dare right well, the soth expresse
They haue no better protection
But shroud them, under doublenesse

So wel fortuned is their chaunce
The dice to turn, vp so doun
With lise and sincke, they can auaunce
And than, by reuolucion
They set a fell conclusion
Of lombes, as in sothfastnesse
Tho clerkes make mencion
Their kind is fret with doublenesse

Sampson had experience
That women were ful trew ysound
Whan Dalida, of innocence
With sheeres, gan his heere to round
To speak also of Rosamound
And Cleopatris, faithfulnesse
The stories plainly, wil confound
Men that apech their doublenesse

Sengle thing, ne is not praised
Nor of old is of no renoun
In balaunce whan they bee peised
For lack of waight they be borne doun
And for this cause of iust reason
These women all of right wisenesse
Of choise and free election
Most loue eschaunge and doublenesse.

Lenuoy.

O Ye women which ben enclined
By influence of your nature
To beene as pure, as gold ymined
In your trouth for to endure
Arme your self, in strong armure
Least men assaile, your sikernesse
Set on your brest, your selfe to assure
A mighty shield of doublenesse.

Explicit.

This

This werke following was compiled by Chaucer, and is called the craft of louers.

MOralis a similitude who list their balades sew
The craft of louers curious arguments
For some ben false & some ben founden trew
And some ben double of entendements
Thus louers with their mortal documents
And eloquent language they can examplifie
The craft of loue what it doth signifie

Who list vnto these Balades haue inspection
Thinke that loues lordships excellent
Is remedy for disease and correction
To woful hart and body impotent
Suppose the maker that he be negligent
In his compiling hold him excusable
Because his spirits be sory and lamentable

Most souerain lady surmounting your noble-
O intenuate Jempre & dailie delicious (nesse
My trust mine health my cordiall foundresse
O Medicine sanatife to sores langorous
O comfortable creature of louers amorous
O excellent herber of louely countenaunce
Ye regester my loue in your remembraunce

Certes sir your peinted eloquence
So gay so fresh and eke so talcatife
It doth transcend the wit of dame Prudence
For to declare your thought or to discriue
So gloriously glad language ye contriue
Of your conceit your thought and your entēt
I wil be ware for drede or I be shent

O rubicund Rose, and white as the lily
O clarified Chrystall, of worldly portraiture
O Courtin figure, resplendent with glory
O Gemme of beauty, o Carbuncle shining pure
Your fairnes exceedeth ỹ craft of dame nature
Most womāly behauing your louely counte-
Ye regestar my loue in your remēbrāce (nance

What auaileth sir, your proclamacion
Of curious talking, not touching to sadnesse
It is but wind, flattering and adulacion
Immeasurable thought, of worldly wildnesse
Which is chiefe cause, of ghostly feblenesse
Your will your thought, your double entēde-
I wil beware of dread, or I be shent (ment

My wit my thought and mine entencion
Is for to please you my lady soueraine
And for your loue throw many a region
I would be exiled so that ye wold not disdain
To haue pity on me when I complain
In wele and wo to suffer perturbaunce
So that ye wol haue me in remembraunce

What is your wil plainly ye do expresse
That maketh this curious suplicacion
Say on sir on hertely tenderesse
Beth wel aduised of vaine delectacion
At your beginning think on the termination
Passe not your bounds be not to negligent
And euer beware for dread sir or ye be shent

Your goodly behauing your beaute & counte-
Maketh me incline to do you reuerēce (nance
Your louely loking your glorious gouernāce
Ouercometh my spirits my wit and my pur-
Som drop of grace, of your magnificēce (pōce
Unto your seruaunt yee shew attendaunce
And regester my loue in your remembraunce

O combrous thought of mans fragilite
O feruent wil of lusts furious
O cruel corage causing aduersite
Of womens corruption and eke contrarious
Remember man what chaunge is perilous
To breake the virginity of virgines innocent
Wherefore beware mankind or thou be shent

My paine is preuy impossible to declerne
My lamentable thoughts by casting mour-
O generall Judge Jesu shrining superne (ning
Graciously conuert ỹ loue of my foule thing
O amiable lady gracious and benigne
I put me wholy in your gouernaunce
Exile me not out of your remembraunce

Me seemeth by langage ye be some potestate
Or els some curious gloser discernable
What is your name mekely I make regrate
Or of what science or craft commendable
I am a lady excellent, and honorable
He must be gay that should be to mine entent
Wherefore I wil beware or I be shent

Lord God this is a sharp examinacion
Of her that is most in my memory
Unto you lady I make certificacion
My name is True loue of cardinal deliuery
Of mans copulacion the very exemplary
Which am one of your seruants of pleasaunce
I must be chiefe called to remembraunce

I haue sought true loue of yeres great proces
Yet found I neuer loue but for a season
Some men be diuerse & know no gentilnes
And some lacke both wisdome and reason
In some men is trust & some men is treason
Wherefore I wil conclude by auisement
And euer beware for drede that I be shent

There was neuer tresour of terrestial richesse
Nor precious stones reckened innumerable
To be of comparison vnto your high goodnes
I boue all creatures to me most amiable
Trust not ỳ contrary I was neuer discenable
Kep. wel true loue forge no dissemblance
And graciously take me to your remembrance

The rectour Tullius so gay of eloquence
And Ouid ỳ sheweth the craft of loue expresse
With habundaunce of Salomons prudence
And pulcritude of Absolons fairenesse
And I were possessed with Iobs great richesse
Manly as Sampson my persone to auaunce
yet should I submit me in your remẽbraunce

Me semeth by feiture of womanly property
Ye should be trusty and trew of compryinis
I find in you no faise duplicity
Wherfore true loue ye haue my hert I wis
And euermore shal endure so haue I blis
The federasy made with good auisement
God graunt grace that nother of vs be shent

Now sir if that it please your nobleneſſe
To giue aduertence to my question
What thing is pleasure of swetenesse
And is most bitter in finall succession
Or what thing giueth man occasion
In tender age for to be concupiscent
Resolue this question or drede sir ye be shent

Whan Phebus fresh was in chare splendent
In the month of May early in a morning
I heard two louers proker this argument
In the yeare of our Lord a M. by reckening
CCCCL. & VIII. yeare following
O portent princesse conserue true louers all
And graunt them thy region & blisse celestiall

My soueraigne lady, Ouid in his writing
Saith that desire of worldly concupiscence
As for a time is swete in his worching
And in his end he causeth great offence
Notwithstanding my Lady dame Prudence
Green flouring age and manly countenaunce
Causeth ladies to haue it in remembraunce

Explicit the craft of louers.

A Balade.

Of their nature they greatly then delite
With holy face fained for the nones
In sanctuary their frends to visite
More for relikes than for saints bones
Though they be cloked vnder precious stones
To get them pardon like their old vsages
To kisse no shrines but lusty quike Images

your goodly answer so notable in substaunce
Would cause the hart of womanhede conuert
Unto delite of naturall pleasaunce
But of one thing I would faine be expert
Why mens langage wol procure & transuert
The will of women and virgines innocent
Wherefore I am aferd or I be shent

When maidens are wedded & housholde haue
All their humility is exiled away (take
And the cruell harts begynneth to awake
They do all ỳ besy cure that they can or may
To vexe their houshold maisters ỳ soth for to say
Wherfore ye yung men I rede you for thy
Beware alway the blind cateth many a flie

Let neuer the loue of true loue be losed
My soueraine lady in no manner wise
In your confidence my wordes I haue closed
My amiable loue to you I do promise
So that ye knit the knot of exercise
Both locke and key ye haue in gouernaunce
Emprint my loue in your remembraunce

Of this mater I dare make no lenger relatiõ
For in defaut of sleepe my spirits wexen faint
In my study I haue had so long an habitaciõ
That my body & my gost are greuously attaint
And therfore of this proces I make no lenger
but whether ỳ ỳ blind eat flesh or fish (cõplaint
I pray God kepe the flie out of my dish.

O very trust and I were certefied
The plaine entencion of your harts cordiall
Me semeth in blisse than were I glorified
Unto your pleasure I would be at your call
But euer I feare of chaunces casuall
Of fraud, deceit, and langage insolent
Then were I sure maidenhed should be shent

Now I make an end, & lay me doun to reſt
For I know by experience verament
If maidens and wiues knew and wiſt
Who made the matter he ſhould be ſhent
Wherefore I pray God omnipotent
Him ſaue and kepe both night and day
Written in the luſtie ſeaſon of May.

Explicit.

The x. Commaundements of Loue.

CErtes ſerre extendeth yet my reaſon
This matter as yet ſhould be to diſcriue
But I truſt your grace wil in this ſeaſon
Conſider how with conning that I ſtriue
For in his fauour coud I neuer arriue
Eloquence this Balade hath in great deſpite
The maker lacketh maner to endite.

Of Loues commandements x. is the nomber
As afterward ſhall rudely be rehearſed
And louers in no wiſe depart a ſunder
Where as they be obſerued and redreſſed
Daunger and vnkindnes been oppreſſed
And that is commaunded this to make
Is your owne all other to forſake.

Faith.

Faith is the firſt and principally to tell
Verie loue requireth ſuch credence
That each beleue other as true as the Goſpel
Without adulacion or flattering audience
In true demeaning and truſtie confidence
Paint not your conning with colour ne fable
For then your loue muſt needs be vnſtable.

Entencion.

In the ſecond to treat of Entencion
Your louer to pleaſe do your buſie cure
For as mine autor Romance maketh mencio
Without entent your loue may not endure
As women will thereof I am right ſure
Endeuour with hart, will, and thought
To pleaſe him only ꝑ her loue hath ſought.

Diſcrecion.

In your dealing euer be diſcrete
Set not your loue there as it ſhall be loſed
Auertiſe in your mind whether he be mete
That vnto him your heart may be diſcloſed
And after as you find him then diſpoſed
Point by diſcrecion your houre, time, & place
Conueniently meting with armes to imbrace

Pacience.

Of theſe commandements, the iiii. is Paciẽce
Though by irous corage your louer be meued
With ſoft words and humble obedience
His wrath may ſone be ſwaged and releued
And thus his loue obtained and atcheued
Will in you root, with greater diligence
Bicauſe of your meke & womanly pacience.

Secretneſſe.

Secretly behaue you in your werke
In ſhewing countenãce or meuing of your eye
Though ſuch behauor to ſome folk be derke
He that hath loued will it ſone eſpie
Thus your ſelfe your counſail may deſcrie
Make priuy to your deling as few as ye may
For iii. may kepe counſel if twain be away.

Prudence.

Let prudence be gouernor of your bridle rein
Set not your loue in ſo feruent wiſe
But that in goodly haſt ye may refrein
If your louer liſt you to deſpiſe
Romance mine auctor would you this aduiſe
To ſlack your loue, for if ye do not ſo
That wanton liſt will turne you into wo.

Perſeuerance.

Stabliſh your loue in ſo ſtedfaſt wiſe
If that ye thinke your louer will be true
As entirely as you can deuiſe
Loue him onely and refuſe all new
Then ſhall not your worſhip change his hew
For certes maiſtres, then is he to blame
But if that he will quite you with the ſame.

Pitie.

Be pitous to him as womanhood requireth
That for your loue endureth paines ſmart
Whom ſo ſore your pleaſant looke enfireth
That printed is your beauty in his hart
And wounded lieth without knife or dart

There let your pitie spred without restreint
For lacke of pitie, let not your seruant feint.

Measure.

Take mesure in your talking be not outrage
For this rehearseth Romance de la Rose
A man endued with plenteous langage
Oft time is denyed his purpose
Take measure in langage wisedome in grose
For measure as rightwel proued is by reason
Things vnseasonable setteth in season.

Mercie.

Such daunger exile him vtterly
Ouer all mercie to occupie his place
To piteous complaints your eares applie
And receiue your seruaunt in grace
To him that bound is in loues lace
Shewe fauour ladie and be not merciles
Lest ye be called a common murderes.

Lenuoy.

When ye into this balade haue inspection
In my making holde me excusable
It is submitted vnto your correccion
Consider that my conning is disable
To write to you the figure vniable
All deuoide of conning and experience
Maner of inditing, reason and eloquence.

Trust it well the maker your owne
You to obey while his life may endure
To doe you seruice as a man vnknowne
No guerdone desiring of earthly treasure
But if it might accord with your pleasure
For true seruice him to auaunce
And call him into your remembraunce.

¶Explicit the x. commmaundements of Loue.

The ix. Ladies worthie.

Queene Sinope.

Rofulgent in precioulnes, O Sinope the queene
Of all feminine bearinge the scepter and regalie
Subduing the large countrey of Ermonie as it was sene
Maugre their mizts thou brouzt thē to aplie
Thin honor to encrese, thy power to magnifie
O renomed Hercules with al thy pōpous host
This princes took thee prisoner & put to flizt (thine host

Ladie Ipolite.

(spake of Ipolit
Yet Hercules wexed red for shame, when I
chief patrones & captain of ỳ peple of Sinope
Which with amorous chere & coragious mizt
She smote thee to ground for all thy crueltie
Wherfore ỳ dukeship of Diamedes & dignitie
Unto her great laud and glorie perpetuall
Attributed is with triumph Laureall.

Ladie Daiele.

The noble triumph of this Ladie Daiille
In releue & succor of the great duke of Athens
She chastised & brought into perpetuall exile
The aureat citezeins of mightie Thebes
The strong brasen pillers there had no reles
but she with her sister Argile thē did doun cast
And with furious fire the citie brent at last.

Ladie Tuca.

O pulchrior sole in beautie full lucident
Of all femine most formous flour (feruent
In Italy reigning with great chiualry right
Chastised ỳ Romans as maistres & cōquerour
O lady Tuca much was thy glorie & honour
Yet much more was to cōmēd thy benignitie
In thy perfite liuing & virginal chastitie.

Queene Pantasile.

O ye Logeans for this noble quene Pantasile
sorow her mortalitie with dolorous cōpassion
Her loue was to you so pregnant and fertile
That against ỳ proud Grekes made defensiō
With her victorious hand was al her affeccio
to lash ỳ Grekes to grouid with her harts toy
To reuēge ỳ coward death of Hector of Troy.

Queene Thamarus.

O thourigorous quene Thamarus inuincible
Upō ỳ strong & hideous people of cities reig- (ning
Which by thy power & wittes sensible
Thou tokest in battasle Siron the gret king
Of Perce & Mede his hed of in blood lying
Thou badest him drink ỳ blood had thursted
And xxii. M. of his host there were distressed

Ladie Lampado.

The

The famous trumpe of gold forged so bright
Hath blowen so vp the fame & glory enuiron
Of this lady Lampedo with her sister Marfil
That all ꝑ land of Feminy, Europe & Epheson
Be yelden and applied lowly to her subiecciō
Many an high Toure she raised, & bilt tours
perpetually to last with huge wals strōg (lōg

Quene Semeramus.

Lo here Semeramus quene of great Babilō
Most generous gem and flour of louely fauor
whose excellēt power krō mede vnto septētriō
Florished in her regallyas a mighty cōqueror
Subdued all Barbary & zorast ꝑ king of honor
She slue Ethiope & cōquered Ermony in Inde
In which none entred but Alexāder & she as I
(finde.

Lady Menalip.

Also the Lady Menalip thy sister dere
whose mercial power no mā coud withstand
Through the world was not found her pere
The famous duke Theseus she had in hand
She chastised him and all his land
The proud Greekes mightily she did assaile
Ouercame and vanquished them in battaile.

Explicit the balades of the ix. wor-
thies of Ladies.

A Lone walking
In thought plaining } All desolate.
And sore sighing

Remembring
Of my liuing } Both early and late.
My death wishing

Infortunate
Is so my fate } Out of measure.
That wote ye what

My life I hate
Thus desperate } Do I endure.
In such poore estate

Of other cure
Am I not sure } Is hard certain.
Thus to endure

Such is my hye
I you ensure } May haue more pain
What creature

My trouth so plain
Is take in vain } In remembraunce.
And great disdain

Yet I ful fain
Would me cōplain } From this penaunce.
Me to abstain

But in substaunce
None allegeaunce } Can I not find.
Of my greuaunce

Right so my chaūce
With displeasaunce } And thus an end.
Doeth me auaunce.

Explicit.

A Balade.

IN the season of Feuerere
when it was ful cold
Froste and Snowe, Haile
Rain, hath domination
With chāgeable elemēts,
and winds manifold
Which hath grouīd flour & herbe vnder iurisdictiō
For a time to dispose after their correction
And yet April with his pleasant shoures
dissoluet ꝑ snow, & bringeth forth his flours

Of whose inuencion ye louers may be glad
For they bring in the Kalendes of May
And ye with countenance demure meke & sad
Owe for to worship, the lusty floures alway
And in especiall one is called see of the day
The Daise a floure white and rede
And in French called La bele Margarete

O commendable floure and most in mind
O floure and gracious of excellence
O amiable Margarite, exalted of natife kind
Unto whō I must resort, with all my diligēce
With hert wil & thouzt, with most lowly obe-
I to be your seruant, and ye my regent (dience
For life ne death, neuer to repent.

Of this procesle, now forth will I proceed
Which happeth me with great disdain
As for the time thereof I take least heed
For vnto me was brought the sore pain
Therefore my cause was ꝑ more to complain
yet vnto me my greuaunce was the lesse
That I was so nigh my Lady and maistresse

There

There where she was present in this place
I hauing in hart great aduersitee
Except onely the fortune and good grace
Of her whose I am the which releued me
And my great dures vnlased hath she
And brought me out of the fearfull greuaunce
If it were her ease, it were to me pleasaunce.

As for the which wo I did endure
It was to me a very pleasaunt paun
Seing it was for that faire creature
Which is my Lady and souerain
In whose presence I would be passing fain
So that I wist it were her pleasure
For she is from all disaunce my protectour.

Though vnto me dredfull were the chance
No maner of gentilnes oweth me to blame
For I had leuer suffer of death the penance
Than she shold for me haue dishonor or shame
Or in any wise lose a drop of her good name
So wisely God for his endles mercie
Grant euery tru louer, to haue ioy of his lady.

Explicit.

A Balade.

O Mercifull and o merciable
King of kings, and father of pitee
Whose might & mercie is incompasable
O prince etern, o mighty Lord say we
To whom mercie is giuen of propertie
On thy seruaunt that lieth in prison bound
Haue thou mercy or that his heart wound.

And that thou wilt grant to him thy prisoner
Free liberty and lose him out of pain
All his desires and all his heauy chere
To all gladnes they were restored again
Thy hie vengeãce, why shuld thou not refrain
And shew mercy, sith he is penitent
Now help him lord, and let him not be shent.

But sich it is so there is a trespas done
Unto mercy let yeld the trespassour
It is her office to redresse it sone
For trespas to mercie is a merrour
And like as the swete hath the price by soure
So by trespasse mercie hath all her might
Without trespasse, mercie hath lack of light.

What should Phillke do but if sickness were
What nedeth salue, but if there were sore
what nedeth drink, wher thirst hath no power
What should mercie do, but trespas go afore
But trespas be, mercy woll be little fore
Without trespas neuer execution
May mercy haue, ne chiefe perfection.

The cause at this time of my writing
And touching Mercy to whom I make mone
Is for feare lest my souereigne and sweting
I meane her that louelier is none
With me is displeased for causes mo than one
What causes thei be that knoweth God & she
But so do not I alas it forthinketh me.

What see she in me what defaut or offence
What haue I doe that she on me disdaine
How might I doe come to her presence
To tell my complaint whereof I were faine
I drede to looke, to speake, or to complaine
To her that hath my hart euery dele
So help me God I would al thing wer wele.

For in this case came I neuer or now
In loues daunce so ferre in the trace
For with mine ease, scape I ne now
Out of this daunger except her good grace
For though my countenance be merry in her face
Semeth to her by word or by chere
Let her good grace setteth mine heart nere.

And if that my souerain haue any maruaile
Why I to her now and afore wrote
She may well thinke it is no great trauaile
To him that is in loue brought so hote
It is a simple tree that falleth with one stroke
That mean I, though ỹ my souerain tofore
Me hath denied, yet grace may come to more (ought

But maistres for ỹ good will ỹ I haue you
And euermore shall as long as my life dureth
Pity your seruãt & kepe him in your thought
And giue him some cõfort or medicin, & cureth
His feruent ague, that increseth that renueth
So grieuous ben his paines & his sighes sore
That without your mercy, his daies ben all (forlore.

Go little bill, go forth and hie thee fast
And recommend me & excuse me as thou can
For very feblenesse, thus am I at the last
My pen is worsen, my hew is pale and wan
My eyen ben sonken, disfigured like no man
Till death his dart, that causeth for to smart
my corps haue cõsumed, thẽ farwel swet hart

O

O doughter of Phebus in vertuous apparēce
My loue elect in my remembraunce
My carefull hart distrained cause of absence
Till ye meinprise me release my grieuance
Upon you is set my life and mine attendance
Without recure I wis vntill
Ye graunt true heart to haue his will.

Thus my dere sweting in a traunce I do lye
And shall til some drops of pitte frō you spring
I meane your mercy that lieth my hart nye
That me may reioyce, & cause me for to sing
These termes of loue, lo I haue won the ring
My goodly maistres thus of her good grace
God grant his blisse in heuen to haue a place.

Explicit.

Here followeth how Mercurie with Pallas, Venus, and Minerua, appeared to Paris of Troy, he sleping by a fountaine.

Pallas loquitur ad Parisum de Troiæ.

SOnne of Priamus gentil Paris of Troy
Wake of thy sleepe, behold vs goddesses three
We haue brought to thee encrease of ioy
To thy discretion reporting our beautie
Take here this apple and well aduise thee
Which of vs is fairest in thy sight
And giue thou it we pray thee gentil knight.

Pallas loquitur primo.

If so be thou giue it vnto me Paris
This shall I giue vnto thy worthines
Honour, conquest, nobley, iose and prise
Victory, courage, force, and hardines
Good auenture, and famous manlines
For that apple all this giue I to the
Consider this Paris, and giue it vnto me.

Venus loquitur ad Parisum.

Nay giue it me, and this shall I you giue
Glad aspect with fauour and fairenes.
And loue of ladies also while that ye liue
Famous stature, and Princely semelinesse
According to your native gentilnes
Understand this gift well I you aduise
And giue it me hardy Paris.

Minerua loquitur ad Parisum.

Ye ye Paris take hede vnto me
Thou art a Prince borne by discent
And for to rule thy roiall dignitie
I shall the giue first intendement
Discretion, prudence in right iudgement
Which in a Prince, is thing most conuenable
Giue it me I am to haue it able.

Explicit.

A Balad pleasaunt.

I Haue a Ladie where so she be
That seldome is she souereain of my thought
On whose beauty when I behold and see
Remembring me how wel she is wrought
I thank fortune that to her grace me brought
So faire is she but nothing angelike
Her beauty is to none other like.

For hardly and she were made of brasse
Face and all, she hath enough fairnes
Her eyen ben holow and grene as any grasse
And Kauinish yelow is her sourtres
Thereto she hath of euery comelines
Such quantity giuen her by nature
That with the least she is of her stature.

And as a bolt her browes ben bent
And betil browed she is also withall
And of her wit as simple and innocent
As is a child that can no good at all
She is not thicke, her stature is but small
Her fingers ben little, and nothing long
Her skin is smooth as any Ores tong.

Thereto she is so wise in daliaunce
And beset her words so womanly
That her to heare it doth me displeasance
For that she saieth, is said so cunningly
Than when there be no mo than she and I
I had leuer she were of talking still
Then that she should so goodly speach spill.

And sloth none shall haue in her entresse
So diligent is she and vertuesse
And so busie aie all good to vndresse
That as a she Ape she is harmeiesse
And as an Harnet meke and pitiesse

With

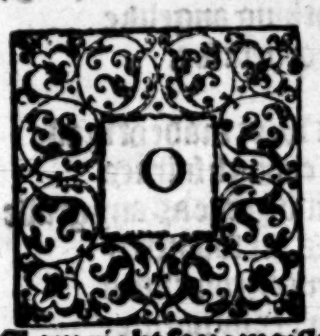
With that she is so wise and circumspect
That pzudence none her follie can infect.

Is it not ioy that such one of her age
Within the boundes of so great tenderneſſe
Should in her werke be so sadde and sage
That of the wedding sawe all the noblesse
Of queene Jane, and was tho as I gesse
But of the age of yeres ten and fiue
I trowe there are not many such aliue.

For as Jesu my sinful soule saue
There nis creature in all this wozld liuing
Like vnto her that I would gladly haue
So pleaseth mine hart ẏ goodly swete thing
Whose soule in hast vnto his blisse dzing
That first her fozmed, to be a creature
Foz were she well, of me I did no cure.

Explicit the discriuing of a
faire Ladie

An other Balade.



Wollie Quince hanging by your stalke
the which no mã dare
pluck away noz take
Of all the folke ẏ passe
foz by oz walke
Your floures fresh be
falen away & shake
I am right sozie maistresse foz your sake
Ye seme a thing that all men haue fozgoten
Ye be so ripe ye waxe almost roten.

Your vglie chere deinous and froward
Your grene eyen frowning and not glad
Your chekes enbolned like a melow Costard
Colour of Dzenge your bzestes Satournad
Gilt vpon warantise the colour wil not fade
Bawlin buttocked, belied like a tonne
Men crie I. Barbary at ẏ losing of your gonne

My louely leude maistres take consideracion
I am so sozowfull there as ye be absent
The floure of ẏ barkfate ẏ foulest of all ẏ nacio
To loue you but a little is mine entent (shẽt
the swert hath yswent you ẏ smoke hath you
I trow ye haue been laid vpon some kil to dzie
You do me so much wozship ther as ye be pze-
Of al womẽ I loue you best a m. times sie. (sẽt

Explicit.

A balade, warning men to beware of deceitfull women.

Oke well about ye that louers bee
Let not your lubs lead you to dotage
Be not enamoured on all thyngs that ye see
Sampson the fozt and Salomon the sage
Deceiued were foz all their great courage
Men deme it right that they see with eye
Beware therfoze the blind eateth many a flie

I mean of women foz all their cheres queint
Trust thẽ not to much their truth is but gealõ
The faireſt outward wel can they paint
Their stedfastnes endureth but a seaſon
Foz they faine frendlines & wozchen treaſon
And foz they are changeable naturally
Beware therfoze the blind eateth many a flye

What wight on liue trusteth on their cheres
Shal haue at last his guerdon & his mede
Foz women can shaue neerer then ralours oz
Al is not gold ẏ shineth men take hede (cheres
Their gall is hid vnder a sugred wede
It is but quent their fantasie to aspie
Beware therfoze the blind eateth many a flie

Though all the wozld doe his busie cure
To make women stand in stablenesse
It would not be it is against nature
The wozld is doe when they lack doublenes
Foz they can laugh & loue not this is expzesse
To trust ou them it is but fantasse
Beware therfoze the blind eateth many a flie.

Women of kind, hath condicions thzee
The first is, they be full of disceit
To spinne also, is their pzoperty
And women a wonderfull conseit
Foz they can wepe oft, and all is a sleit
And euer when they list, the tere is in the eye
Beware therfoze, the blind eateth many a flie

In soth to say, though all the earth so wanne
Were parchment smoth, white and scrubabell
And the great sea, that called is the Oceanne
Were tourned into inke blacker then Sabell
Euery sticke a pen, ech man, a scriuener abell
Not coulde they wzite, womans trecherie
Beware therfoze, the blind eateth many a flie

Explicit.

These

These verses next following *were compiled by Geffray Chaucer, and in the written copies followeth at the end of the complaint of pitee.*

THe long nights when euery creature
Should haue their rest in somewhat as by kind
Or els ne may their life not long endure
It falleth most into my wofull mind
How I so farre haue brought my self behind
That safe the death ther may nothing me lise
So dispaired I am from all blisse

This same thought me lasteth til the morow
And from the morow forth, til it be eue
There needeth me no care, for to borow
For both I haue good leiser and good leaue
There is no wight that wil my wo bireue
To wepe inough and wailen all my fill
The sore sparke of pain now doth me spill

This loue that hath me set in soch a place
That my desire will neuer fulfill
For neither Pity, Mercy, neither Grace
Can I not find, and yet my sorrowful hart
For to be dead I can it not arace
The more I loue the more she doth me smart
Thorow which I see without remedy
That from the death I may no wise astart

Now sothly what she hight I wol reherse
Her name is Bounty, set in womanhede
Sadnesse in youth, and Beauty pudelesse
And Pleasaunce, vnder Gouernaunce I drede
Her surname is the fair Ruthelesse
The Wise eknit vnto good Auenture
That for I loue her, she sleth me giltlesse
Her loue I best, and shal while I may dure

Bet than my selfe a hundred thousand dele
Than all this worlds riches or creature
Now hath not loue me bestowed wele
To loue there I neuer shal haue part
Alas right thus, is turned me the whele
Thus am I slain with loues fury dart
I can but loue her best my swete so
Loue hath me taught no more of his art
But serue alway and stint for no wo

In my trew careful hart there is
So much wo and so little blisse
That wo is me that euer I was bore
For all that thing which I desire I misse
And all that euer I would not I wisse
That find I ready to me euermore
And of all this I not to whom me plaine
For she that might me out of this bring
Ne recketh nought whether I wepe or sing
So little routh, hath she vpon my paine

Alas whan sleping time is to then I wake
When I should dance for fere to than I quake
This heauy life I lead to for your sake
Though ye therof in no wise heed take
Mine harts Lady, and hole my liues quene
For truly durst I say as that I fell
My semeth that your trewe hart of stele
Is whetted now against me to kene

My deare hart, and best beloued so
Why liketh you to do me all this wo
What haue I done, that greueth you or said
But for I serue and loue you and no mo
And whilest I liue I wil euer do so
And therfore sweet, ne beth not yuel apaid
For so good and so fair as ye be
It were right great wonder but ye had
Of all seruants both of good and bad
And best worthy of all them I am he

But neuertheless my right lady swete
Though that I be vnconning and vnmete
To serue as I coud best, aie your highnesse
Yet is there none fainer that would I hete
Than I to do your ease or els bete
What so I wist that were to your highnesse
And had I might as good as I haue will
Than should ye fele where it were so or none
For in this world liuing than is there none
That fainer would your harts will fulfill.

For both I loue and eke drede you so sore
And algates mote and haue don you full pore
That better loued is none ne neuer shall
And yet I would beseech you of no more
But loueth wel and be not wroth therfore
And let me serue you forth lo this is all
For I am nought so hardy ne so wood
For to desire that ye should loue me
For well I wot alas that may not be
I am so little worthy and ye so good
For ye be one the worthiest on liue

And I the most vnlikely for to thriue

Yet for all this weteth ye right wel
That ye ne shouldme from your seruice driue
That I ne wil aie, with all my wits liue
Serue you truly what wo so that I fele
For I am set so hie vpon your whele
That though ye neuer wil vpon me rew
I must you loue and ben euer as trew
As any man can or may on liue

But the more that I loue you goodly free
The lasse find I that ye loue me
Alas whan shal that hard wit amend
Where is now all your womanly pite
Your gentilnesse and your debonairte
Wil ye nothing therof vpon me spend
And so hole swete as I am yours all
And so great wil as I haue you to serue
Now certes, and ye let me thus sterue
Yet haue ye won thereon but small

For at my knowing I do nought why
And thus I wil beseech you hartely
That euer ye find whiles ye liue
A truer seruant to you than am I
Leaueth than and sleath me hardely
And I my death to you wil al forgiue
And if ye find no trewer verely
Wol ye suffer than that I thus spill
And for no maner gilt but my good will
As good were than vntrue as true to be.

Explicit.

A Balade declaring that womens chastity
Doth much excell all treasure worldly.

IN womanhede as auctours all write
Most thing commended is their chast honesty
Thing most slaunderous their nobles to atwite
As when women of hasty fraelty
Exceeden the bonds, of wikely chastity
For what auaileth linage or roial blood
When of their liuing the report is not good.

The holy bed, defoiled of marriage
For ones defoiled, may not recouered be
The vice goeth forth, & the froward language
By many a realm, and many a great cite
Sclaunder hath a custome, and that is great
True or fals, by a contrarious soune (pite

Ones areised it goeth not lightly downe

For when a lechour by force or by maistry
Defouled hath, of virgines the cleanesse
Widowes oppressed, and lie in aduoutry
Assailed wiues that stood in stablenesse
Who may the, their slaundrous harm redresse
When their good name, is hurt by such report
For same lost ones, can neuer haue his resort

A theefe may rob a man of his richesse
And by some mean, make restitution
And some man may disherit and oppresse
A poor man, from his possession
And after make again satisfaction
But no man may restore, in no degre
A maid robbed, of her virginite

A man may also, beat a castel doun
And build it after more fresh to the sight
Exile a man, out of his regioun
And him reuoke whether it be wrong or right
But no man hath the power, ne the might
For to restore, the palais virginall
Of chastity, when broken is the wall.

Men may also, put out of seruice
And officers remeue, out of their place
And at a day, when fortune list deuise
They may again, restored be to grace
But there nis time, nother set ne space
Nor neuer in story, neither rad ne sain
That maidenhood lost, recouered was again

For which men should, haue a conscience
Rew in their hart, and repent sore
And haue remorse of great offence
To rauish thing, which they may not restore
For it is said, and hath be said ful yore
The Emeraud grene, of parfite chastite
Stole ones away, may not recouered be.

And hard it is, to rauish a treasour
Which of nature, it is not recuparable
Lordship may not to King nor Emperour
Reforme a thing, which is not reformable
Rust of defame is inseperable
And maidenhood lost of new or yore
No man of liue may it again restore

Romans old thorough their patience
Suffered tirants in their tyrannies
And their cities, to do great violence
The people to oppresse, with their robberies
But to punish, they set great espies

On

On false auouterers as it is wel couth
Widowes to rauish, & maidens in their youth.

Explicit.

The Court of *Loue.*

With temerous heart, and trembling hand of dzede
Of cunning naked, bare of eloquence
Unto the floure of pozt in womanhede
I wzite as he that none intelligence
Of metres hath, ne floures of sentence
Sauf that me list my wziting to conuey
In that I can to please her high nobley

The blosomes fresh, of Tullius garden soot
Pzesent then not, my matter foz to bozne
Poemes of Uergile taken here no root
Ne craft of Galfride may not her soiourne
Why nam I cunning o well may I mourne
Foz lack of science, that I cannot wzite
Unto the pzinces of my life aright

No tearmes digne vnto her excellence
So is she spzong of noble stripe and high
A wozld of honour and of reuerence
There is in her, this will I testifie
Caliope thou sitter wise and slie
And thou Minerua guide me with thy grace
That language rude, my matteer not deface

Thy suger dzops sweet of elicon
Distill in me thou gentle muse I pzay
And the Melpomene I cal anon
Of ignozaunce the mist to chace away
And giue me grace so foz to wzite and say
That she my lady of her wozthinesse
Accept in gree this little shozt treatesse

That is entituled thus the Court of Loue
And ye that ben Metricians me excuse
I you beseech foz Uenus sake aboue
Foz what I mean in this ye need not muse
And if so be my lady it refuse
Foz lack of oznate speech I would be wo
That I pzesume to her to wziten so

But my entent and all my busy cure
Is foz to wzite this treatise as I can
Unto my lady stable true and sure
Faithfull and kind lith sith that she began
Me to accept in seruice as her man
To her be all the pleasure of this booke
That when her like she may it read and look

When I was yong at xviii. yeat of age
Lusty and light desirous of pleasaunce
Appzoching on full sad and ripe courage
Loue arted mee to doe my obseruaunce
To his estate and done him obeisaunce
Commanding me the Court of Loue to see
Alite beside the mount of Citharee

There Citherea goddesse was and quene
Honoured highly foz her maieste
And eke her son the mighty God I wene
Cupid the blind that foz his dignite
Al louers wozship on their kne
There was I bid in pain of death to pere
By Mercury the winged messengere

So than I went by strange & farre countries
Enquiring aie what coasts that it dzew
The Court of Loue and thiderward as bees
At last I see the people gan pursue (knew
Anon me thought some wight was there that
Where that the court was holden fer oz ne
And after than ful fast I gan me hie

Anon as I them ouertooke I said
Haile friends whether purpose ye to wend
Foz soth (qd. one) that answered lich amaid
To Loues Court, now go we gentil frend
Where is that place (qd. I) my fellow hend
At Citheron sir said he without doubt
The king of Loue and all his noble rout

Dwelling within a castell roially
So than apace I iourned forth among
And as he said, so fond I there truly
Foz I beheld the tours high and strong
And high pinacles large of hight and long
With plate of gold bespzead on euery side
And pzecious stones, ỳ stone werke foz to hide

No Saphire Inde no Ruby rich of pzice
There lacked than noz Emeraud so greene
Bales Turkes, ne thing to my deuise
That may the castel maken foz to sheene
All was as bzight as starres in Winter bene
And Phebus shone to make his peace ageine

For trelpalle done to high eſtates twaine

Uenus and Mars the God & goddeſſe clear
When he them found in arms chained falt
Uenus was than ful ſad of hart and chear
But Phebus beams ſtraight as is the maſt
Upon the caſtle gunneth he to caſt
To pleaſe the lady princes of that place
In ſign he looketh after loues grace

For there nis God in heauen or hel ywis
But he hath ben right ſoget vnto loue
Joue, Pluto, or whatſocuer he is
Ne creature in earth or yet aboue
Of theſe the reuers may no wight approue
But furthermore the caſtel to deſcrie
Yet ſaw I neuer none ſo large and hie

For vnto heauen it ſtretcheth I ſuppoſe
Within and out depainted wonderly
With many a thouſand daiſy red as roſe
And white alſo this ſaw I verily
But what tho dailies might do ſignify
Can I not tel ſauke that the queues flour
Alceſt it was that kept there her ſolour

Which vnder Uenus lady was and quene
And Admete king and ſouerain of that place
To whom obeied the ladies good nineteene
With many a thouſand other bright of face
And yong men fele came forthwith luſty pace
And aged eke their homage to diſpoſe
But what they were I coud not wel diſcloſe

Yet near and near forth in I gan me dreſſe
Into an hall of noble apparaile
With arras ſpread and cloth of gold I geſſe
And other like of eyer auaile
Under the cloth of their eſtate ſaunſ faile
The king and quene there ſat as I beheld
It paſſed ioy of Helike the feld

Their ſaints haue their coming and reſort
To ſeen the king ſo rotally be ſeen
In purple clad and eke the Quene in ſort
And on their heads ſaw I crowns twain
With ſtones fret ſo that it was no pain
Without en meat and drink to ſtand and ſe
The kings honor and the rotalte

And for to treat of ſtates with the king
That ben of counſell chiefe & with the Quene
The king had Daunger nere to him ſtanding
The Quene of loue Diſdain & that was ſene
For by the faith I ſhal to God I wene
Was neuer ſtranger in her degre
Than was the Quene in caſting of her ele

And as I ſtood perceiuing her apart
And eke the beams ſhining of her cien
Me thought they were ſhapen lich a dart
Sharp and perſing ſmall and ſtreight as line
And all her haire it ſhone as gold ſo fine
Diſhiuill criſpe doun hanging at her backe
A yard in length and ſouthly than I ſpake

O bright Regina who made thee ſo faire
Who made thy colour vermelet and white
Where wonneth ỳ God, how far aboue ỳ eyre
Great was his craft and great was his delite
Now maruaile I nothing that ye do bight
The Quene of loue, and occupy the place
Of Citharea now ſweet lady thy grace

In me wet ſpake I ſo that nought aſtart
By no condicion word that might be heard
But in my inward thought I gan aduert
And oft I ſaid my wit is dull and hard
For with her beauty thus God wot I ferd
As doth the man yraulhed with light
When I beheld her chriſtall cien ſo bright

No reſpect hauing what was beſt to done
Til right anon beholding here and there
I ſpied a friend of mine and that full ſoone
A gentilwoman was the chamberere
Unto the Quene that hote as ye ſhal heare
Philobone that loued all her life
Whan ſhe me ſey the led me forth as blike

And me demaunded how and in what wiſe
I thither come, and what my errand was
To ſene the Court (qd. I) and all the guiſe
And eke to ſue for pardon and for grace
And mercy aſk for all my great treſpaſſe
That I none erſt come to the court of loue
For yeue me this ye Gods all aboue

That is wel ſaid (qd. Philobone) in deed
But were ye not allommoned to appeare
By Mercurius for that is all my dread
Yes gentil feire (qd. I) now am I here
Ye yet what tho though that be true my dere
Of your fre will ye ſhould haue come vnſent
For ye did not I deme ye wil be ſhent

For ye that reign in youth and luſtineſſe
Pampired with eaſe and ialous in your age
Yout duty is as far as I can geſſe
To loues court to dreſſen your voiage

Alloone

Assoone as nature maketh you so sage
That ye may know a woman from a swan
Or whan your foot is growen halfe a span

But sith that ye by wilful negligence
This xviii. yeare hath kept your selfe at large
The greater is your trespas and offence
And in your neck you mote beare all ỳ charge
For better were ye ben withouten barge
Amid the sea in tempest and in rain
Then biden here receiuing wo and pain

That ordained is for such as them absent
Fro loues Court by yeares long and fele
I lay my life ye shal ful soon repent
For loue wil reiue your colour lust and hele
Eke ye must bait on many an heauy mele
No force ywis I stirred you long agon
To draw to court(qd.little Philobon)

Ye shal wel see how rough and angry face
The king of Loue wil shew when ye him see
By mine aduise kneele down & aske him grace
Eschewing peril and aduersite
For wel I wot it wol none other be
Comfort is none ne counsel to your ease
Why wil ye then the king of Loue displease

O mercy God(qd.iche) I me repent
Caitife and wretch in heart,in will & thought
And after this shal be mine hole entent
To serue & please how deare ỳ loue be bought
Yet sith I haue mine owne penance ysought
With humble spirit shal I it receiue
Though that the king of Loue my life bereiue

And though that feruent loues quality
In me did neuer worch truly yet I
With all obeisaunce and humility
And benigne hart shal serue him til I die
And he that lord of mights great and hie
Right as him list me chastice and correct
And punish me with trespace thus enfect

These words said,she caught me by the lap
And led me forth in til a temple round
Large and wide and as my blessed hap
And good auenture was right soon I found
A Tabernacle reised from the ground
Where Venus sat and Cupide by her side
Yet halfe for dread I can my visage hide

And eft again I looked and beheld
Seeing ful sundry people in the place
And muster folk & some that might not weld
There limes wele me thought a wounder case
The temple shone with windows all of glasse
Bright as the day with many a faire image
And there I see the fresh queene of Carthage

Dido that brent her beauty for the loue
Of false Eneas and the waimenting
Of her Annelida true as Turtle doue
To Ireite fals and there was in painting
Of many a prince and many a doughty king
Whose martirdom was shewed about ỳ walls
And how that fele for loue had suffred falls

But fore I was abashed and astonied
Of all tho folk that there were in that tide
And than I asked where they had woned
In diuers courts(qd.she) here beside
In sundry clothing mantlewise ful wide
They were arraied and did their sacrifice
Unto the God and goddesse in their guise

To yonder folk(qd.she)that kneele in blew
They weare the colour ate and euer shall
In sign they were and euer wil be true
Withouten chaunge and southly yonder all
That ben in blacke with mourning cry & call
Unto the goddes for their loues bene
Some far, some dead,some all to sherp & kene

Yea thā(qd.I)what done these priests here
Nonnes and Hermites Freres and all tho
That sit in white in russet and in grene
Forsooth(qd.she)they wailen of their wo
O mercy lord may they so come and go
Freely to court and haue such liberte
Yea men of eche condicion and degre

And women eke for truly there is none
Exception made ne neuer was ne may
This court is ope and free for euerichone
The king of loue he wil not say them nay
He taketh all,in poor or rich array
That meekely sew vnto his excellence
With all their hart and all their reuerence

And walking thus about with Philodone
I see where come a messenger in hie (anone
Straight from the king which let command
Throughout the court to make an ho and cry
Al new come folk abide, and wote ye why
The kings lust is for to seen you soon
Come ne are let see, his wil mote nede be done

Than gan I me present tofore the king
Trembling for feare with visage pale of hew
And many a louer with me was kneling
Abashed fore til vnto the time they knew

The sentence yeue of his entent ful trew
And at the last the king hath me behold
With stern visage and said what doth this old

Thus far I hope in yeares come so late
Unto the court, forsooth my liege (qd. I)
An hundred time I haue ben at the gate
Afore this time yet could I neuer espy
Of mine acquaintaunce eny in mine eie
And shamefastn esse away me gan to chace
But now I me submit vnto your grace

Wel, all is pardoned with condicion
That thou be true frō hensforth to thy might
And seruen loue in thine entencion
Swear this, & thā as far as it is right (sight
Thou shalt haue grace here in my Queenes
Yes by the faith I owe your crown I sweare
Though death therfore me thirlith with his
(speare

And whan the king had seen vs euerichone
He let command an Officer in hie
To take our faith, and shew vs one by one
The statutes of the Court ful busily
Anon the book was laid before their eie
To read and see what thing we must obserue
In Loues Court, til that we die and sterue.

Nd for that I was lettred
there I read
The statutes hole of loues
Court and hall
The first statute ỳ on the
book was spread
Was to be true in thought
and deeds all
Unto the king of loue the lord roiall
And to the Queen as faithful and as kind
As I could thinke with hart will and mind

The Second statute secretly to kepe
Councel of loue, not blowing euery where
All that I know and let it stinke and flete
It may not sowne in euery wights care
Exiling slaunder ate for dread and keare
And to my lady which I loue and serue
Be true and kind her grace for to deserue

The Third statute was clearely wrote also
Withouten chaunge to liue and die the same
None other loue to take for wele ne wo
For blind delite for earnest nor for game
Without repent for laughing or for grame
To biden stil in ful perseueraunce
All this was hole the kings ordinaunce

The Fourth statute to purchace euer to here
And stiren folk to loue and beaten fire
On Uenus alter here about and there
And preach to them of loue and hote desire
And tel how loue wil quiten wel thine hire
This must be kept and loth me to displease
If loue be wroth, passe for there by is an ease

The v. statute not to be dangerous
If that a thought would reue mé of my slepe
Nor of a sight to be ouer squemous
And so verily this statute was to kepe
To turn and wallow in my bed and wepe
When that my lady of her cruelty
Would from her hart exilen all pity

The vi. statute it was for me to vse
Alone to wander void of company
And on my ladies beauty for to muse
And to think no force to liue or die
And eft again to think the remedy
How to her grace I might anon attain
And tel my wo vnto my souerain

The vii. statute was to be pacient
Whether my lady ioiful were or wroth
For words glad or heauy diligent
Wheder that she me helden lefe or loth
And hereupon I put was to mine oth
Her for to serue and lowly to obay
And shewing my chere ye xx. sith a day

The viii. statute to my remembraunce
Was to speak and pray my lady dear
With hourly labour and great entendaunce
Me for to loue with all her hart entere
And me desire and make me ioiful chere
Right as she is surmounting euery faire
Of beauty wel and gentil debonaire

The ix. statute with letters writ of gold
This was the sentence how that I and all
Should euer dread to be to ouerbold
Her to displease and truly so I shal
But ben content for thing that may fal
And meekly take her chastisement, and yerd
And to offend her euer ben aferd

The x. statute was egally to discerne
Bet weene the lady, and thine ability
And think thy selfe art neuer like to yerne
By right her mercy nor of equity
But of her grace, and womanly pity
For though thy selfe be noble in thy strene
A thousand fold more noble is thy quene

Thy

Thy liues lady, and thy soueraine
That hath thine hart all hole in gouernance
Thou maiest no wise, it taken to disdaine
To put thee humbly at her ordinance
And giue her fre the reine of her pleasance
For libertie is thing that women looke
And truly els the matter is a crooke.

The xi. statute thy signes for to know
With eye and finger and with smiles soft
And lowe to couch and alway for to show
For drede of spies, for to winken oft
Bur secretly to bring vp a sigh aloft
And eke beware of ouer much resort
For that peraunture spilleth all thy sport.

The xii. statute remember to obserue
For all the paine thou hast for loue and wo
All is to lite her mercy to deserue (or go
Thou musten then think where euer thou ride
And mortall wounds suffre thou also
All for her sake, and thinke it well be sette
Upon thy loue, for it may not be bette.

The xiii. statute, whilome is to thinke
What thing may best thy lady like and please
And in thine hearts bosome let it sinke
Some thing deuise, and take for thine ease
And send it her, that may her heart pease,
Some hart, or ring, or letter, or deuice
Or precious stone, but spare not for no price.

The xiiii. statute eke thou shalt assay
Firmely to kepe the most part of thy life
Withy that thy lady, in thine armes lay
And nightly dreme, thou hast thy nights harts
Swetely in arms, straining her as blise (wife
And when thou seest it is but fantasie
Se that thou sing not ouer merily

For too much ioy hath oft a wofull end
It longeth eke, this statute for to hold
To deme thy lady euermore thy frend
And thinke thy selfe in no wise a cuckold
In euery thing she doeth, but as she should
Construe the best, beleue no tales new
For many a lie is told, that semeth full true

But thinke that she so bountcous and faire
Could not be false, imagine this algate
And think ỹ tongs wicked would her appaire
So clandering her name and worshipful estate
And louers true to setten at debate
And though thou seest a faut, rist at thine ye
Excuse it blue, and glose it pretily.

The xv. statute, vse to sweare and stare
And counterfeit a leasing hardely
To saue thy ladies honour euery whare
And put thy selfe to fight boldly
Say she is good, vertuous, and ghostly
Clere of intent, and hart, thought, and wil
And argue not for reason ne for skil

Againe thy ladies pleasure ne intent,
For loue will not be counterpleted in deed
Say as she saith, then shalt thou not be shent
The Crow is white, ye truly so I rede
And aie what thing that she thee will forbede
Eschue all that, and giue her soueraintee
Her appetite follow in all degree.

The xvi. statute, kepe it if thou may
Seuen sith at night, thy ladie for to please
And seuen at midnight, seuen at morow day
And drinke a caudell, early for thine ease
Do this, and kepe thine head from all disease
And winne the garland, here of louers all
That euer came in court, or euer shall.

Full few thinke I, this statute hold & kepe
But truly this my reason giueth me fele
That some louers should rather fall aslepe
Then take on hand, to please so oft and wele
There lay none othe, to this statute a dele
But kepe who mist, as gaue him his corage
Now get this garland, lustie folke of age

Now win who may, ye lusty folke of youth
This garland fresh, of flowres red and white
Purple and blewe, and colours fell vncouth
And ỹ shall crowne him, king of all delite
In all the court, there was not to my light
A louer true, that he ne was adrede
When he expresse, hath heard the statute rede

The xvii. statute, when age approcheth on
And lust is laied and all the fire is quent
As freshly then, thou shalt begin to fonne
And dote in loue, and all her image peint
In the remembraunce, till thou begin to feint
And in the first season thine heart began
And her desire though thou ne may ne can,

Performe thy liuing, actuell and lust
Register this in thy remembraunce (rust
Eke whē thou maist not kepe thy thing from
Ỹ speake and talke, of pleasant daliaunce
For ỹ shall make thine heart reioyce & daunce
And when thou maist no more the game assay
The statute bid thee, pray for them that may.

The xviii. statute, holy to commend
To please thy ladie, is that thou eschew
With sluttishnes, thy selfe to offend
Be toilfe, fresh, and fete with things new
Courtly with manner, this is all thy due
Gentil of port, and louing cleanlines
This is the thing that liketh thy maistres.

And not to wander, liche a dulled Asse
Ragged and torne, disguised in aray
Ribaud in speach, or out of measure passe
Thy bound exceding, thinke on this way
For women, but of tender hearts aie
And lightly set their pleasure in a place
When thei misthinke, they lightly let it passe

The xix. statute, meat and drinke forgete
Ech other day, see that thou fast for loue
For in the court they liue withouten mete
Saue such as cometh from Venus all aboue
Thei take none hede in paine of great reproue
Of meat and drinke, for that is all in vaine
Onely thei liue, by sight of their soueraine.

The xx. statute, last of euerichone
Enroll it in thy hearts priuitee
To wring & waile, to turne, & sigh and grone
When that thy ladie, absent is from thee
And eke renewe the words that she
Betweene you twaine, hath said & all ỹ there
That thee hath made, thy liues lady dere.

And see thine hart in quiet, ne in rest
Sojourne to time, thou seen thy lady efte
But wher she won, by South, or east, or west
With all thy force, now se it be not lefte
Be diligent, till time thy life be refte
In that thou maist, thy lady for to see
This statute was of old antiquitee.

An officer of high auctoritie
Cleped Rigour, made vs sweare anone
He was corrupt with partialitie
Fauor, praier, ne gold that clerely shone
Ye shall (qd. he) now sweren here echone
Young and old, to kepe in that they may
The statutes truely, all after this day.

O God thought I, hard is to make this othe
But to my power, shall I them obserue
In all this world, nas matter halfe so lothe
To forsweare for all, for though my body sterue
I haue no might, the hole to reserue
But herken now, the cace how it befell
After my othe was made, the troth to tell.

I tourned leaues, looking on this booke
Where other statutes were of women shene
And right forth with rigour on me gan looke
Full angerly, and saied vnto the queene
I traitour was, and charged me let been
There may no man (qd. he) the statute knowe
That long to woman, hie degree ne lowe.

In secrete wise, they kepten been full close
They soune echone, to libertie my frend
Pleasant they be, and to their owne purpose
There wote no wight of thē but God & fend
Ne naught shall out, vnto the worlds end
The queene hath yeue me charge, in paine to die
Ne neuer to rede ne sene them with mine ije.

For men shall not so nere of counsaile been
With womanhood ne knowen of her guise
Ne what they think, ne of their wit thengine
I me report to Salomon the wise
And mightie Sampson, which begiled thrise
With Dalida was, he wot that in a throw
There may no man statute of women know

For it peraventure may right so befall
That thei be found by nature to disceiue
And spinne and wepe, and sugar strew on gall
The hart of man, to rauish and to reiue
And whet their toung, as sharpe as sword or
It may betide, this is their ordinance (gieue
So must they lowly doen their obseruance.

And kepe the statute, yeuen them of kind
Of such as loue hath yeue hem in their life
Men may not wete, why turneth euery wind
Nor waxen wise, nor been inquisitife
To know secret of maid, widow, or wife
For thei their statutes, haue to them reserued
And neuer man, to know them hath deserued.

Now dresse you forth, ỹ God of loue you gide
(Qd. Rigor) then and seke the temple bright
Of Cithera, Goddes here beside
Beseech her by influence and might
Of all her vertue you to teach aright
How for to serue your ladies, and to please
Ye that been sped, and set your heart in ease.

And ye that been vnpurueied praier eke
Comfort you sone, with grace and destine
That ye may set your heart, there ye may like
In such a place, that it to loue may be
Honour and worship and felicite
To you for aie, now goeth by one assent
Grauntmercie sir (qd. we) and forth we went

Deuoutly

Deuoutly soft and easie pace to se
Uenus the Goddes, Image all of gold
And there we found a thousand on their kne
Some fresh and faire, some deadly to behold
In sondry mantels new, and some were old
Some painted were, with flames red as fire
Outward to shewe, their inward hote desire.

With doleful chere, full sele in their complaint
Cried Lady Uenus, rewe vpon our sore
Receiue our billes, with teares all be dreint
We may not wepe, there is no more in store
But wo and pain, vs fretteth more and more
Thou dissedful Planet, louers sterre so shene
Haue routh on vs, that sigh and carefull bene.

And pitith Lady, grieuously we pray
The false vntrue, with counterfait pleasance
That made their oth, be true to liue or dey
With chere assured, and with countenance
And saisly now they footen loues daunce
Barain of routh, vntrue of that they saied
Now that their lust, and pleasure is alaied.

Yet eke againe a thousand million
Reioycing loue, leading their life in blisse
They saied Uenus, redresse of all diuision
Goddes eternell thy name I hired is
By louers bond is knit, all thing twis
Beast vnto beast, the yearth to water wan
Bird vnto bird, and woman vnto man.

This is the life of ioy that we been in
Resembling life, of heauenly paradise
Loue is exiler aye, of vice and sinne
Loue maketh hearts, lustie to deuise
Honour and grace haue they in euery wise
That been to loues law obedient
Loue maketh folke, benigne and diligent

Aie stering them, to drede vice and shame
In their degre, it maketh them honourable
And swete it is, of loue beare the name
So that his loue be faithfull, true and stable
Loue pruneth him, to semen amiable
Loue hath no faut, there it is exercised
But sole with thē, that haue all loue disprised

Honour to the celestiall and clere
Goddes of Loue, and to thy celicitude
That reuest vs light, so fer doune frō thy spere
Perling our harts with thy pulcritude
Comparison none of similitude
Way to thy grace be made in no degre
That hast vs set with Loue in vnity.

Great cause haue we to praise thy name & thee
For through thee we liue in ioy and blisse
Blessed be thou, most soueraine to see
Thy holy court of gladnes, may not misse
A thousand sith, we may reioyce in this
That we been thine, with heart and all pfere
Enflamed with thy grace, and heauenly fere.

Musing of tho, that spaken in this wise
I me bethought, in my remembraunce
Mine orison right godly to deuise
And pleasantly with hearts obeisaunce
Beseche thee Goddes, voiden my greuaunce
For I loued eke, sauf that I wist not where
Yet doune I set, and saied as ye shall here.

Fairest of all, that euer were or bee
Licour and light, to penslike creature
Mine hole affiance, and my lady free
My Goddes bright, my fortune and my ure
I yeue and yeld my hart, to thee full sure
Humbly beseeching, lady of thy grace
Me to bestow in some blessed place.

And here I vow me, faithfull, true, and kind
Without offence of mutabilitie
Humbly to serue, while I haue wit and mind
Mine hole affiance, and my lady free
In thilke place, there ye me signe to be
And sith this thing, of new is yeue me aie
To loue and serue, needly must I obay.

Be merciable with thy fire of grace
And fire mine hart, there beauty is and routh
For hote I loue, determine in no place
Saufe onely this be God and by my trouth
Troubled I was with slomber, slepe, & slouth
This other night, and in a vision
I see a woman romen vp and doun.

Of meane stature, and semely to behold
Lustie and fresh, demure of countenance
Yong and wel shape, with heer shone as gold
With yen as cristall, ferced with pleasaunce
And she gan stirre mine heart alite to daunce
But sodainly she vanish gan right there
Thus I may say, I loue and wote not where

For what she is, ne her dwelling I not
And yet I fele that loue distreineth me
Might iche her know, ỹ would I faine God wot
Serue and obey, with all benignitie
And if that other be my destinie
So that no wise, I shall her neuer se
Then graunt me her, that best may liken me
with

With glad reioyce to liue in parfite hele
Deuoid of wrath, repent or variance
And able me to doe, that may be wele
Unto my ladie, with harts high pleasance
And mighty goddes, through thy puruiance
My wit, my thought, my lust & loue so guide
That to thine honour I may me prouide

To set mine hart, in place there I may like
And gladly serue, with all affection
Great is ỳ pain which at mine hart doth stick
Till I be sped by thine election
Helpe Lady Goddes, that possession
I might of her haue, that in all my life
I clepen shall my quene, and harts wife.

And in the court of Loue, to dwell for aie
My will it is, and doen thee Sacrifice
Daily with Diane, else for to fight and fraie
And holden werre, as might will me suffice
That Goddes chast, I kepen in no wise
To serue, a figge for all her chastite
Her law is for Religiousite.

And thus gan finish praier, laud, and preice
Which that I youe to Venus on my knee
And in my heart, to ponder and to peice
I gaue anon her Image fresh beautie
Heile to that figure swete, and heile to thee
Cupide (qd. I) and rose, and yede my wey
And in the temple, as I yede I sey

A shrine surmounting all in stones riche
Of which the forze, was plesance to mine ye
With Diamond or Saphyre, neuer liche
I haue none seen, ne wrought so wonderlie
So when I met with Philobone in hie
I gan demaund, who is this sepulture
Forsoth (qd. she) a tender creature

Is shrined there, and Pitie is her name
She saw an Egle wreke him on a flie
And plucke his wing, & eke him in his game
And tender heart of that hath made her die
Eke she would wepe & mourne right pitously
To seen a louer suffer great distresse
In all the court nas none, that as I gesse

That coud a louer haue so well availe
Ne of his wo the torment or the rage
Aken for he was sure withouten faile
That of his griefe she coud the heat allwage
Instead of Pitie, spedeth hote corage
The matters all of court, now she is dead
I me report in this to womanhead.

For weile & weepe, and cry, and speake, & pray
Women would not haue pitie on thy plaint
Ne by that meane, to ease thine heart conuay
But thee receiuen, for their owne talent
And say that pitie causeth thee in consent
Of reuth to take, thy seruice and thy paine
In that thou maiest to please thy soueraine.

But this is counsaile, kepe it secretely
(Qd. she) I hold for all the world about
The quene of Loue it wist, and wote ye why
For if by me, this matter springen out
In court no lenger should I out of doubt
Dwellen, but shame in all my life endry
Now kepe it close (qd. she) this hardely.

Well, all is well, now shall ye seen she said
The fairest lady vnder Sonne that is
Come on with me, demeane you liche a maid
With shamefast dreed, for ye shal speke I wis
With her that is the myrrour, ioy, and blisse
But somwhat strange, and sad of her demene
She is, beware your countenance be sene.

Nor ouer light, ne reckles, ne to bold
Ne malapert, ne renning with your tong
For she will you obeisen and behold
And you demand, why ye were hence so long
Out of this court, withouten resort emong
In Rosiall her name is hote a right
Whose heart is yet, yeuen to no wight.

And ye also been as I vnderstond
With loue but light, auaunced by your word
Wight ye by hap, your fredome maken bond
And fall in grace with her, and wele accord
Wel might ye thanke the God of Loue & lord
For she that ye saw in your dreame appere
To loue such one, what are thei then the nere.

Yet wote ye what, as my remembraunce
Me yeueth now, ye fame where that ye lay
That ye with loue had neuer acquaintaunce
Sane in your dreame right late this other day
Why yes parde, my life that durst I lay
That ye were caught vpon an heath, when I
Saw you complain and sigh full pitously.

Within an herber, and a garden faire
Where flowers grow and herbs vertuous
Of which the sauour swete was & the heire
There were your selfe, ful hote and amorous
I wis ye been to nice and dangerous
I would ye now repent, and loue some newe
Nay by my troth, I said I neuer knewe.

The

The goodly wight, whose I shall be for aie
Gnide me the lorde, that loue hath made mine
But forth we went into a chamber gaie
There was Rosiall, womanly to se
Whose streams, sotell persing of her eye
Mine hart gan thrill, for beauty in the stound
Alas (qd. I) who haue me peue this wound.

And then I dzede to speake till at the last
I grete thee lady, reuerently and wele
When that my sigh, was gone and ouer past
And doune on knees, full humbly gan I knele
Beseching her, my feruent wo to kele
For there I toke full purpose in my mind
Unto her grace, my painfull hart to bind.

For if I shall all fully her discriue
Her hed as round, by compas of nature
Her haire as gold, she passed all aliue
And Lilly forhed had this creature
With lincsh browes, slawe of colour pure
Betwene the which, was meane disseuerance
From euery browe, to shew a distance.

Her nose directed streight, and euen as line
With forme and shape, thereto conuenient
In which ỹ gods milke white path doth shine
And eke her yen been bright and orient
As is the Smaragde, vnto my iudgement
Or yet these sterres heauenly small & bright
Her vilage is of louely red and white

Her mouth is short, and shitte in litle space
Flaming somedeale, not ouer red I mene
With pregnant lips, & thicke to kisse percace
For lippes thinne not fat, but euer lene
Thei serue of naught, thei be not worthy a bene
For if the balle been full, there is delite
Maximian truly thus doth he write.

But to my purpose, I say white as snowe
Been all her teeth, and in order they stond
Of one stature, and eke her breath I trowe
Surmounteth all odours that euer I fond
In swetenesse, and her body, face, and hond
Been sharply slender, so that from the head
Unto the foot, all is but womanhead.

I hold my peace, of other things hid
Here shall my soule, and not my tong bewray
But how she was araied, if ye me bid
That shall I well discouer you and say
A bend of gold and silke, full fresh and gay
With her intresse, broudered full wele
Right smothly kept, and shining euery dele.

About her necke, a flower of fresh deuise
With Rubies set, that lustie were to sene
And she in goune, was light and sommerwise
Shapen full wele, the colour was of grene
With aureat sent about her sides clene
With diuers stones, precious and riche
Thus was she raied, yet saw I neuer her liche

For if that Ioue had this lady seine
Tho Calixto ne Alcenia
They neuer hadden in his armes leine
Ne he had loued the faire Europa
Ne yet Dane ne Antiopa
For all their beautie stood in Rosiall
She semed liche a thing celestiall

In bountie, fauor, port and simplinesse
Pleasaunt of figure, mirrour of delite
Gracious to seen, and root of all gentilnesse
With Angell visage, lustie red and white
There was not lack, sauf daunger had alite
This goodly fresh, in rule and gouernance
And somdele strange she was for her pleasance.

And truly sone, I toke my leue and went
When she had me enquired, what I was
For more and more, impressen gan the dent
Of loues dart, while I beheld her fare
And efte againe I come, to seken grace
And vp I put my bill, with sentence clere
That followeth after, rede and ye shall here

O ye fresh, of beautie the roote
That nature hath formed so wele and made
Princes and quene, and ye that may do boote
Of all my langour, with your words glad
Ye wounded me, ye made me wo bestad
Of grace redresse my mortall giue as ye
Of all my hart the very causer be.

Now am I caught, and vnware sodainly
With persaunt streams, of your eye clere
Subiect to been, and seruen you meekely
And all your man, I wis my lady dere
Abiding grace of which I you require
That mercilesse, ye cause me not to sterue
But guerdon me, liche as I may deserue.

For by my troth, the daies of my breath
I am and will be your, in will and hart
Pacient and meke, for you to suffer death
If it require now, rue vpon my smart
And this I swere, I neuer shall out start
From Loues court, for none aduersitee
So ye would rue, on my distresse and me.

My

My destenye my fate and houre I blisse
That haue me set to been obedient
Onely to you the floure of all I wis
I trust to Venus neuer to repent
For euer ready glad and diligent
Ye shall me find in seruice to your grace
Till death my life out of my body race

Humble vnto your excellence so digne
Enforcing aye my wits and delight
To serue & please with glad hart & benigne
And been as Troylus Troyes knight
Or Anthonie for Cleopatre bright
And neuer you me thinkes, to renay
Thus shall I kepe vnto mine ending day.

Enprint my speech in your memoriall
Sadly my princes salue of all my sore
And thinke that for I would becomen thrall
And been your owne, as I haue said before
Ye must of pity cherish more and more
Your man, and tender after his desert
And giue him corage for to been expert.

For where that one hath his hart set on fire
And findeth neither refute ne pleasaunce
Ne word of cõfort, death will quite his hire
Alas that there is none allegeaunce
Of all their wo, alas the great greuaunce
To loue vnloued, but ye my lady dere
In other wise may gouerne this matere.

Truly gramercie friend of your good will
And of your profer in your humble wise
But for your seruice, take and kepe it still
And where ye say I ought you well to cherish
And of your griefe the remedy deuise
I know not why I nam acquainted well
With you, ne wote not sothly where ye dwell.

In art of loue and writ and songs make
That may be song in honour of the king
And quene of Loue and then I vndertake
Ye that is sad, shall then full merry sing
And dangerous, not been in euery thing
Beseech I you, but seen my will and rede
And let your answer put me out of drede.

What is your name, reherse it here I pray
Of whence and where, of what condicion
That ye been of, let see come off and say
Faine would I know your disposicion
Ye haue put vpon your old entencion
But what ye meane to serue me I ne wote
Sauf that ye say, ye loue me wonder hote.

My name alas, my hart why
Philogenet I cald am far and nere
Of Cãbrige clerke, ỳ neuer thinke to chaunge
Fro you ỳ with your heauenly stremes clere
Rauish mine hart and ghost, and all in fere
This is the first I write my bill for grace
Me thinke I see some mercy in your face.

And what I mene by gods ỳ all haue wrouȝt
My bill that maketh finall mencion
That ye ben lady in mine inward thought
Of all mine hart withouten offencion
That I best loue, and haue sith I begon
To draw to court, lo then what mist I sey
I yelde me here, vnto your nobleye.

And if that I offend or wilfully
By pompe of hart, your precept disobay.
Or doen again your will vnskilfully
Or greuen you for earnest or for play
Correct ye me right sharply then I pray
As it is seene vnto your womanhede
And rew on me, or els I nam but dede.

Nay God forbid to feffe you so with grace
And for a word of sugred eloquence
To haue compassion in so little space
Then wer it time that some of vs were hence
Ye shall not find in me such insolence
Aye what is this, may ye not suffer sight
How may ye looke vpon the candell light.

That cleare is and hotter then mine ye
And yet ye said the beames perse and frete
How shall ye then the candle light endure
For well wote ye that hath the sharper hete
And there ye bid me, you correct and bete
If ye offend, nay that may not be done
There come but few that speden here so sone

Withdraw your ye, withdraw frõ preses eke
Hurt not your selfe through folly with a loke
I would be sorie, so to make you sicke
A woman should beware eke whom she toke
Ye beth a clerke go serchen my booke
If any women ben so light to win
Nay abide a while, tho ye were all my kinne

So soone ye may not win mine hart in truth
The guise of court will seene your stedfastnes
And as you done to haue vpon you ruth
Your owne desert, and lowly gentilnes
That will reward you ioy for heauines
And tho ye waxen pale, and grene and dede
Ye muste it vse a while withouten drede.

And

And it accept and grutchen in no wise
But where as ye me heartely desire
To ben to loue me thinke ye be not wise
Cease of your language cease I you require
For he that hath this xx. yeare been here
May not obtaine, than marualle I that ye
Be now so bold of loue to treat with me

I mercy hart my lady and my loue
My right wise princesse and my liues guide
Now may I plaine to Venus all aboue
That rewthlesse ye may gise this wõder wide
What haue I done why may it not betide
That for my trouth I may receiued be
Alas than your daunger and your cruelte

In woful houre I got was welaway
In woful houre fostered and ysedde
In woful houre yborne that I ne may
My suplication sweetely haue I spedde
The frosty graue and cold must be my bedde
Without ye list your grace and mercy shew
Death with his axe so fast on me doth hew

So great disease and in so little while
So little toy that felt I neuer yet
And at my wo Fortune gynneth to smile
That neuer erst I felt so hard a fit
Confounded ben my spirits and my wit
Til that my lady take me to her cure
Which I loue best of earthly creature

But that I like that may I not come by
Of that I plaine that haue I habundaunce
Sorrow and thought they sit me wonder nie
Ye is withhold that might be my pleasaunce
Ye turne againe my worldly suffisaunce
O lady bright and saue your faithful trew
And or I die yet ones vpon me rew

With that I fell in sound and dead as stone
With colour slaine and wan as ash pale
And by the hand she caught me vp anon
Arise anon (qd. she) what haue ye dr̃ke dwale
Why sleepen ye it is no nitertale
Now mercy sweet (qd. I) ywis affraid
What thing (qd. she) hath made you so dismaid

Now wote I well that ye a louer be
Your hue is witnesse in this thing she said
Yf ye were serret might know (qd. she)
Curteous and kind all this should be alaid
And now mine hart all that I haue missaid
I shal amend and set your heart in ease
That word it is (qd. I) that doth me please

But this I charge that ye the sients keepe
And breake them not for slouth nor ignorance
With that she gan to smile and laughen deepe
I wis (qd. I) I wil do your pleasaunce
The xvi. statute doth me great greuaunce
But ye must that release or modifie
I graunt (qd. she) and so I will truly

And softely than her colour gan appeire
As rose so red throughout her visage all
Wherefore me think that it is according here
That she of right be cleaped rosiall
Thus haue I won with words great & small
Some goodly word of her that I loue best
And trust she shall yet set mine heart in rest.

GOeth on she said to Philobone and take
This man with you and lead him all about
within the court & shewe him for my sake
What louers dwel within and all ye rout
Of officers him shew, for he is out of dout
A straunger yet, come on (qd. Philobone)
Philogenet with me now must ye gone

And stalking soft with easy pace I saw
About the king stonden enuiron
Attendaunce Diligence and their fellaw
Fortherer Asperaunce and many one
Dread to offend there stood and not alone
For there was eke the cruel aduersary
The louers foe that cleaped his Displeasure

Which vnto me spake angerly and fell
And said my lady me discerne shall
Troweste thou (qd. she) that all that she did tell
Is true nay nay but vnder hony gall
Thy birth and his be nothing egall
Cast of thine heart, for all her words white
For good faith she loueth thee but a lite

And eke remember thine habilite
May not cõpare with her this well thou wot
Ye than came Hope and said my frend let be
Beleeue him not Dispaire he ginneth dote
Alas (qd. I) here is both cold and whote
The tone me biddeth loue the toder nay
Thus wote I not what me is best to say

But wel wote I my lady graunted me
Truly to be my wounds remedy
Her gentilnesse may not infected be
With doublenesse thus trust I til I die

So cast I void dispaires company
And taken hope to councel and to frend
Yea kepe that wel(qd.Philobone) in mind

And there beside within a bay window
Stood one in green ful large of bread & length
His beard as blacke as feathers of the Crow
His name was lust, of wōder might & strēgth
And with Delite to argue there he thinkth
For this was all his opinion
That loue was sin and so he hath begon

To reason fast and ledge auctorite
Nay(qd.Delite) loue is a vertue clere
And from the soule his progresse holdeth he
Blind appetite of lust doth often stere
And that is sin for reason lacketh there
For thou thinke thy neighbours wife do win
Yet think it wel that loue may not be sin

For God and seint they loue right verily
Void of all sin and vice, this know I well
Affection of flesh is sin truly
But verray loue is vertue as I fele
for verray loue may not thy freill desire ackele
For loue is loue without en sinne (punne
Now sint(qd.Lust) thou speakest not worthy a

And there I left them in their arguing
Roming ferther in the castel wide
And in a corner Lier stood talking
Of leasings fast with Flattery there beside
He said thou woman weare attire of pride
And men were found of nature variaunt
And could be false & shewen beau semblaunt

Than flattery bespake and said ywis
See so she goeth on patens faire and fete
It doth right well what pretty man is this
That rometh here now truly drink ne mete
Nede I not haue mine hart for toy doth bete
Him to behold so is he goodly fresh
It semeth for loue his hart is tender nesh

This is the court of lusty folke and glad
And wel becommeth their abite and array
O why be some so sory and so sad
Complaining thus in black and white & gray
Freres they ben and Monkes in good fay
Alas for routh great dole it is to seen
To see them thus bewaile and sory been

See how they cry & wring their hands white
For they so soone went into religion
And eke ỳ Nonnes with vail & wimple plight
Their thought that they ben in confusion
Alas they sain we fain perfection
In clothes wide and lack our liberte
But all the sin mote on our frends be

For Venus wote we would as faine as ye
That ben attired here and wel beseen
Desiren man and loue in our degree
Firme and faithful right as would the queene
Our frends wicke in tender youth and greene
Ayenst our will made vs religious
That is the cause we mourn and wailen thus

Than said the Monke and Freres in the tide
Wel may we curse our Abbes and our place
Our statutes sharpe to sing in copes wide
Chastly to keep vs out of loues grace
And neuer to feele comfort ne solace
Yet suffer we the heat of loues fire
And ofter than other haply we desire

O Fortune cursed why now and wherefore
Hast thou(they said) berait vs liberte
Sith nature yaue vs instrument in store
And appetite to loue, and louers be
Why mote we suffer such aduersite
Diane to serue and Venus to refuse
Ful often sith this matters doth vs muse

We serue and honour sore ayenst our will
Of chastity the gods and the queene
Us leuer were with Venus biden still
And haue reward for loue and soget bene
Unto these women courtly fresh and shene
Fortune we curse thy wheele of variaunce
There we were wel thou reuest our plesaunce

Thus leaue I them with voice of plaint & care
In raging wo crying ful piteously
And as I yede ful naked and full bare
Some I behold looking dispitously
On pouerty that deadly cast their eie
And welaway they cried and were not faine
For they ne might their glad desire attaine

For lack of richesse worldly and of gold
They banne and curse and weepe & saine alas
That pouerty hath vs hent ỳ whilome stood
At harts ease and free and in good case
But now we dare not shew our selfe in place
Ne vs embold to dwel in company
There as our hert would loue right faithfully

And yet againeward shriked euery Nonne
The pang of loue so straineth them to cry

Now

Now wo the time(qd.they)that we be boun
This hateful order nice wil doen vs die
We ligh and sob and bleden in wardlie (plaint
Fretting our selfe with thought & hard com=
That nie for loue we waxen wood and faint

And as I stood beholding here and there
I was ware of a sort ful languishing
Sauage and wild of looking and of chere
Their mantels and their clothes cytering
And oft they were of nature complaining
For they their members lacked foot and hand
With visage wry and blind I vnderstand

They lacked shap and beauty to preferre
Themselfe in loue and said that God and kind
Hath forged them to worshippen the sterre
Venus the bright and lesten all behind
His other werkes cleane and out of mind
For other haue their ful shap and beauty
And we(qd.they)ben in deformity

And nye to them there was a company
That haue the sisters waried and missaid
I meane the three of fatall destiny
That be our words and soone abraid
Out gan they cry as they had ben affraid
We curse(qd.they) that euer hath nature
Vformed vs this woful life to endure

And there he was contrite and gan repent
Confessing whole the wound that Cithere
Hath with the dart of whote desire him sent
And how that he to loue must subiect be
Than held he all his scornes vanite
And said that louers lead a blissedful life
Yong men and old & widdow maid and wife

Bireue my goddesse(qd.he)thy might
My scornes all and scoffes that I haue
No power for to mocken any wight
That in thy seruice dwel for I ded raue
This know I wel right now so God me saue
And I shalbe the chiefe post of thy faith
And loue vphold the reuers who so saith

Dissemble stood not fer from him in trouth
With party mantle party hood and hose
And said he had vpon his lady routh
And thus he wound him in and gan to glose
Of his intent ful double I suppose
And all the world he said he loued it wele
But aye me thought he loued her nere adele

Eke shamefastnes was there as I tooke hede
That blushed red and darst nat ben aknow
She louer was for thereof had she drede
She stood and hing her visage down alow
But such a sight it was to seene I trow
And of these roses rody on their stalke
There coud no wight her spy to speak or talke

In loues hart so gan she to abash
Ne durst not vtter all her pryuite
Many a stripe and many a greeuous lash
She gauen to them that wouldon louers be
And hindred sore the simple communalte
That in no wise durst grace and mercy craue
For were not she they need but aske and haue

Where if they now approchen for to speake
Than shamefastnesse returneth them againe
They think if they our secrets counsel breake
Our ladies wil haue scorne on vs certain
And auenture thinken great disdain
Thus shamefastnesse may bringen in dispeire
When she is dead the todet will be heire

Come forth a Vaunter now I ring thy Bell
I spied him soone to God I make a vow
He looke blacke as fendes doth in hell
The first(qd.he)that euer did vow
Within a word she come I wot not how
So that in armes was my lady free
And so hath ben a thousand mo than shee

In England Britain Spain and Picardy
Artois and Fraunce and vp in hte Holland
In Burgoine Naples and Italy
Nauerne and Greece,and vp in heathen lond
Was neuer woman yet that would withstond
To ben at commaundement whan I wold
I lacked neither siluer coyne ne gold

And there I met with this estate and that
And here I broched her and here I trow
Lo there goeth one of mine and wot ye what
Yon fresh attired haue I laid ful low
And such one ponder eke right well I know
I kept the statute when we lay ffere
& yet yon same hath made me right good chere

Thus hath a Vaunter blowen euery where
Al that he knoweth and more a thousand fold
His auncestry of kin was to lere
For first he maketh promise for to hold
His ladies counsel and it not vnfold
Wherefore the secret when he doth wishit
Than lieth he that all the world may wit

For falling so his promise and behest
I wounder sore he hath such fantasie
He lacketh wit I trow or is a beast
That can no bet himselfe with reason gie
Be mine aduise loue shalbe contrary
To his auaile and him eke dishonour
So that in court he shal no more soiour

Take heed (qd. she) this little Philobone
Where enuy rocketh in the corner yond
And sitteth dicke and ye shall see anone
His leane body fading face and hond
Himselfe he fretteth as I vnderstond
Witnesse of Ouid Methamorpholose
The louers so he is I wil not glose

For where a louer thinketh him promote
Enuy wil grutch repining at his wele
It swelleth sore about his harts rote
That in no wise he can not lue in hele
And if the faithful to his lady stele
Enuy wil noise and ring it round about
And sey much worse than done is out of doubt

And privy thought reioysing of himselfe
Stood not ferre thence in abite meruellous
Non is thought some spirit or some elfe
His subtil Image is so curious
How is (qd. I) that he is shaded thus
With yonder cloth I not of what colour
And nere I went and gan to lere and pore

And frained him question ful hard
What is (qd. I) the thing thou louest best
Or what is bote vnto thy paines hard
Me thinke thou liuest here in great vnrest
Thou wandrest aye from south to east & west
And east to north as ferre as I can see
There is no place in Court may holden thee

Whom followest thou where is thy hart yset
But my demaund aside I thee require
Me thought (qd. he) no creature may let
Now to ben here and where as I desire
For where as absence hath done out the fire
My mery thought, it kindeleth yet againe
That bodily me thinke with my soueraine

I stand and speak & laugh and kisse & halse
So that my thought comforteth me ful oft
I think God wote though all ỹ world be false
I wil be true I thinke also how soft
My lady is in speech and this on loft
Bringeth mine hart from ioy and gladnesse
This priuy thought alaieth mine beaunesse

And what I thinke or where to be no man
In all this earth can tel I wis but I
And eke there nis no swallow swift ne swan
So wight of wing ne halfe so yerne can flie
For I can ben and that right sodenly
In heauen in hell in Paradise and here
And with my lady whan I wil desire

I am of counsel ferre and wide I wote
With lord and lady and their priuity
I wot it all, and be it whote or cold
They shal not speake without en licence of me
I mine in such as seasonable be
For first the thing is thought within the hart
Er any word out from the mouth astart

And with ỹ word thought bad farewel & yede
Eke forth went I to seene the courts guise
And at the dore came in so God me spede
Twenty courtiours of age and of assise
Liche high and brode and as I me auise
The golden loue and leaden loue they hight
The one was sad the toder glad and light

Yes draw your heart with all your force
To lustinesse and ben as ye haue saied (might
And thinke that I no drop of fauour hight
Ne neuer had vnto your desire obaied
Til sodainly me thought me was affraied
To seene you waxe so dead of countenaunce
And pity bad me done you some pleasaunce

Out of her shrine she rose fro death to liue
And in mine eare ful priuely she spake
Doth not your seruaunt heng away to driue
Rosiall (qd. she) and than mine hart brake
For tenderthe and where I found much lack
In your person and I me bethought
And said this is ỹ man mine hart hath sought

Gramercy Pity might I not sufficse
To yeue the laud vnto thy shrine of gold
God woot I would for ruth that she did rise
From death to liue for me I am behold
To thanken you a thousand times told
And eke my lady Rosiall the shene
Which hath in comfort set mine hart ywene

And here I make mine protestacion
And deepely sweare as mine power to bene
Faithful deuoid of variacion
And here forbeare in anger or in tene
And seruiceable to my worlds queene
With all my reason and intelligence
To done her honour high and reuerence

I had not spoke so sone the word but she
My souerain did thank me hartely
And said abide ye shal dwel ful with me
Til season come of May, for than truly
The king of loue and all his company
Shal hold his feast ful rotally and well
And there I bade til that the season fell.

ON May day whan ỹ larke began to rise
To Watens went the lusty Nightingale
Within a temple shapen hauthorn wise
He might not sleepe in all the nightertale
But Domine labia gan he cry and gale
My lips open lord of loue I crie
And let my mouth thy preising now bewrie.

The Egle sang Venite bodies all
And let vs ioy to loue that is our health
And to the deske anon they gan to fall
And who came late he preced in by stealth
Thã said the Faucon our owne harts wealth
Domine dominus noster I wote
Ye be the God that done vs bremne thus hote

Cœli enarrant said the Popingay
Your might is told in heauen and firmament
And then came in the gold finch fresh and gay
And said this Psalme with harte glad intẽt
Domini est terra, This laten intent
The God of loue hath yearth in gouernaunce
And than the wren gan scippẽ and to daunce.

Iube Domine Lord of loue I pray
Commaund me wel this lesson for to rede
This legend is of all that woulden dye
Marters for loue, God if the soules spede
And to the Venus signe we out of drede
By influence of all thy vertue great
Beseeching thee to keepe vs in our heat

The second lesson Robin Redbrest sang
Haile to the God and goddes of our lay
And to the lectorn amorily he sprong
Haile (qd. eke) O fresh season of May
Our month glad that singen on the spray
Haile to the floures red and white and blew
Which by their vertue maketh our lust new

The third lesson the Turtil doue toke vp
And thereat lough the Mauis in scorne
He said O God as mote I dine or sup
This foolish Doue wil giue vs all an horne
There ben right here a M. better borne
To read this lesson which as wel as hee
And eke as hote can loue in all degree

The Turtil doue said welcom welcom May
Gladsome and light to louers that been trew
I thanke the lord of loue that doth purvey
For me to read this lesson all of dew
For in good sooth of corage I pursew
To serue my make til death vs must depart
And than Tue autem sang he all apart

Te deum amoris sang the Thrustel cocke
Tuball himselfe the first Musician
With keye of armonye coude not on locke
So sweet tune as that the Thrustel can
The lord of loue we praisen (qd. he) than
And so done all the foules great and light
Honour we May in false louers dispite

Dominus regnauit said the Pecocke there
The lord of loue that mighty prince pris
He hath receiued here and euery where
Now Iubilate sang what meaneth this
Said than the Linet welcome lord of blisse
Out stert the Owle with Benedicite
What meaneth all this mery fare (qd. he)

Laudate sang the Larke with voice ful shrill
And eke the Kight O admirabile
this quere wil thorow mine eares pierse ẽ thrill
But what, welcome this May season (qd. he)
And honour to the lord of loue mote be
That hath this feast so solempne and so hie
Amen said all and so said eke the Pie

And forth the Cuckow gan proceed anon
With Benedictus thanking God in hast
That in this May would visite hem echon
And gladden them all while the feast shall last
And therewithall a laughter out he brast
I thanke it God that I should end the long
And all the seruice which hath been so long

Thus sang they all the seruice of the feast
And that was done right early to my dome
And forth goeth all the court both most ẽ least
To fetch the flours fresh and branch ẽ blome
And namely hauthorn brought both page and
with fresh garlãts party blew ẽ white (grome
And than reioycen in their great delite

Eke ech at other threw the floures bright
The Primrose the Violet the gold
So than as I beheld the roial sight
My lady gan me sodainly behold
And with a true loue plited many a fold
She smot me through the hart as blive
And Venus yet I thanke I am alive.

Chaucers dreame, neuer before this time publiſhed in print. That which heretofore hath gone vnder the name of his dreame, is the book of the Ducheſſe: or the death of Blanch Ducheſſe of Lancaſter.

WHen Floza the queene of pleaſaunce
Had whole achieued thobeiſaunce
Of the freſh, and new ſeaſon
Thozow out euery region
And with her mantle whole couert
That winter made had diſcouert
Of aventure without light
In May I lay vpon a night
Alone, and on my lady thought
And how the Lozd that her wzought
Couth wel entaile in Imagery
And ſhewed had great maiſtry
When he in ſo little ſpace
Made ſuch a body, and a face
So great beauty with ſwiche features
Moze than in other creatures
And in my thoughts as I lay
In a lodge out of the way
Beſide a wel in a fozeſt
Where after hunting I took reſt
Nature and kind ſo in me wzought
That halfe on ſleepe they me bzought
And gan to dzeame to my thinking
With mind of knowliche like making
Foz what I dzeamed as me thought
I ſaw it, and I ſlept nought
Wherefoze is yet my ful beleeue
That ſome good ſpirit that eue
By meane of ſome curious pozt
Bare me, where I ſaw paine and ſpozt
But whether it were, I woke oz ſlept
Well wot I of, I lough and wept
Wherfoze I wol, in remembzaunce
Put whole the paine, and the pleaſaunce
Which was to me axes and hele
Would God ye wiſt it, euerdele
Oz at the leaſt, ye might o night
Of ſuch another, haue a ſight
Although it were, to you a payne
Yet on the mozow, ye would be fayne
And wiſh it might long dure
Then might ye ſay, ye had good cure
Foz he that dzeames, and wenes he ſee
Much the better, yet may hee
Wit what, and of whom, and where
And eke the laſſe it wol hindere
To thinke, I ſee this with mine eene
I wis this may no dzeame kene
But ſigne, oz ſignifiaunce
Of haſty thing ſouning pleaſaunce
Foz on this wiſe vpon a night
As ye haue heard, without light
Not all waking, ne ful on ſleepe
Bout ſuch houre, as louers weepe
And cry, after their ladies grace
Befell me, this wonder cace
Which ye ſhal heare, and all the wiſe
So wholly as I can deuiſe
In plaine Engliſh, euill wzitten
Foz ſleepe wziter wel ye witten
Excuſed is, though he do mis
Moze then one, that waking is
Wherefoze here of your gentilneſſe
I you requre my boiſtouſneſſe
Ye let paſſe, as thing rude
And heareth what I wol conclude
And of the enditing taketh no heed
Ne of the tearmes, ſo God you ſpeed
But let all paſſe, as nothing were
Foz thus befell, as ye ſhal here.

Within an yle, me thought I was
Where wall, and yate was all of glaſſe
And ſo was cloſed round about
That leuels none come in, ne out
Uncouth, and ſtraunge to behold
Foz euery yate, of fine gold
A thouſand fanes, aie turning
Entumed had, and bzidges ſinging
Diuers, and on ech fane a paire
With open mouth, again thaire
And of a ſute were all the toures
Subtily cozuen after floures
Of vncouth colours during aie
That neuer ben none ſeen in May
With many a ſmall turret hie
But man on liue, could I none ſie
Ne creature ſaue ladies play
Which were ſuch of their array
That as me thought of goodlihead
They paſſeden all, and womanhead
Foz to behold them daunce and ſing
It ſeemed like none earthly thing
Such was their vncouth countnaunce
In euery play of right vlaunce
And of one age, euerichone
They ſeemed all ſaue onely one
Which had of yeres ſuffiſaunce

For she might neither sing ne daunce
But yet her countenance was so glad
As she so few yeres had had
As any lady that was there
And as little it did her dere
Of lustines to laugh and tale
As she had full stuffed a male
Of disportz and new plaies
Faire had she been in her daies
And maistresse semed well to be
Of all that lusty companie
And so she might I you ensure
For one the conningest creature
She was, and so said euerichone
That euer her knew, there failed none
For she was sober and well auised
And from euery fault disguised
And nothing vsed but faith & truth
That she nas young, it was great ruth
For euery where and in ech place
She gouerned her, that in grace
She stode alway, with pooze and rich
That at a word, was none her liche
Ne halfe so able maistres to be
To such a lustie companie.

Befell me so, when I auised
Had, the yle that me suffised
And whole the estate, euery where
That in that lusty ile was there
Which was more wonder to deuise
Then the Ioieux paradise
I dare well say, for floure ne tree
Ne thing where in pleasance might be
There failed none, for euery wight
Had they desired, day and night
Riches, heale, beauty and ease
With euery thing that them might please
Thinke and haue, it cost no more
In such a country, there before
Had I not bene, ne heard tell
That liues creature might dwell
And when I had thus all about
The yle auised throughout
The state, and how they were araied
In my heart I were well payed
And in my selfe I me assured
That in my body I was well bred
Sith I might haue such a grace
To see the ladies and the place
Which were so faire I you ensure
That to my dome, though that nature
Would euer striue and do her paine
She should not con ne mow attaine
The least feature to amend
Though she would all her conning spend
That to beautie might auaile
It were but paine and lost trauaile
Such part in their natiuitie
Was them alarged of beauty
And eke they had a thing notable
Vnto their death, ay durable
And was that their beauty should dure
Which was neuer seene in creature
Saue only there (as I trow)
It hath not be wist ne know
Wherefore I prayse, with their conning
That during beautie, rich thing
Had they bene of their liues certaine
They had been quite of euery paine
And when I wend thus all haue seen
The state, the riches that might been
That me thought impossible were
To see one thing more then was there
That to beauty or glad conning
Serue or auaile might any thing

All sodainly as I there stood
This lady that couth so much good
Vnto me came with smiling chere
And said Benedicite, this yere
Saw I neuer man here but you
Tell me how ye come hider now
And your name, and where ye dwell
And whome ye seke, eke mote ye tell
And how you come be to this place
The soth well told may cause you grace
And els ye mote prisoner be
Vnto these ladies here and me
That haue the gouernance of this ile
And with that word she gan to smile
And so did all the lusty rout
Of ladies that stood her about
Madame (qd. I) this night past
Lodged I was, and slept fast
In a forest beside a well
And now am here, how should I tell
Wot I not, by whose ordinance
But onely fortunes purueiance
Which puts many as I gesse
To trauaile, paine, and businesse
And lettes nothing for their truth
But some fleeth eke, and that is ruth
Wherefore I doubt her brittilnes
Her variance and vnstedfastnes
So that I am as yet afraid
And of my being here amaid
For wonder thing semeth me

Thus many fresh ladies see
So fatre, so cunning, and so yong
And no man dwelling them among
Not I not how I hider come
Madame (qd. I) this all and some
What shuld I faine a long processe
To you that seme such a princesse
What please you command or say
Here I am you to obay
To my power, and all fulfill
And prisoner bide at your will
Till you duly enformed be
Of euery thing ye aske me:
This lady there right well apaid
Me by the hand toke, and said,
Welcome prisoner aduenturus
Right glad am I ye haue said thus,
And for ye doubt me to displease
I will assay to doe you ease
And with that word, ye anon
She, and the ladies euerichon
Assembled, and to counsaile went
And after that sone for me sent
And to me said on this manere
Word for word, as ye shall here,

To see you here, vs thinke marualle
And how without bote or saile
By any subtilty or wyle
Ye get haue entre in this yle
But not for that, yet shall ye see
That we gentil women be
Loth to displease any wight
Notwithstanding our great right
And for ye shall well vnderstond
The old custome of this lond
Which hath continued many yere
Ye shall well wete that with vs here
Ye may not bide, for causes twaine
Which we be purposed, you to saine.
Thone is this, our ordinance
Which is of long continuance
Wall not lothly we you tell
That no man here among vs dwell
Wherefore ye mote nedes retourne
In no wise may you here soiourne.
Thother is eke that our queene
Out of the Realme, as ye may seene
Is, and may be to vs a charge
If we let you goe here at large
For which cause, the more we doubt
To doe a fault, while she is out
Or suffer that may be noysaunce
Again our old accustomance.

And when I had these causes twaine
Heard, O God what a paine
All sodainly about mine hart
There came at ones, and how smart
In creeping soft as who would steale
Or doe me robbe of all mine heale
And made me in my thought so fraid
That in corage I stode dismaid
And standing thus, as was my grace
A Lady come more then apace
With huge prease her about
And told how the Mucne without
Was arriued and would come in
Well were they that thider might twin
They hyed so they would not abide
The bridling their horse to ride
By fiue, by fire, by two, by three
There was not one abode with me
The quene to meet euerichone
They went, and bode with me not one
And I after a soft pase
Imagining how to purchase
Grace of the quene there to bide
Till good fortune some happy guide
Me send might, that would me bring
Where I was borne to my wonning
For way ne foot knew I none
Ne whitherward I mit to gone
For all was sea about the yle
No wonder though me lift not smyle
Seing the case vncouth and straunge
And so like a perilous chaunge
Imagining thus, walking alone
I saw the Ladies euerichone
So that I might somwhat offer
Sone after that I drew me nere
And tho I was ware of the queene
And how the Ladies on their kneene
With ioyous words, gladly aduised
Her welcomed, so that it sufficed
Though the princes hole had be
Of all enuironed is with see:
And thus auising, with chere sad
All sodainly I waxed glad
That greater ioy, as mote I thrine
I trow had neuer man on line
Than I tho, ne heart more light
When of my Lady I had sight
Which with the quene come was there
And in one clothing both they were
A knight also there well beseene
I saw that come was with the queene
Of whome the Ladies of that yle
Had huge wonder long while

Till

Till at the last right soberly
The queene her speke full cunningly
With soft words in goodly wise
Said to the Ladies young and nise
My sisters how it hath bisall
I trow ye know it one and all
That of long time here haue I bene
Within this yle biding as quene
Liuing at ease, that neuer wight
More perfit ioy haue ne might
And to you been of gouernaunce
Such as you found in whole pleasaunce
In euery thing as ye know
After our tushome and our low
Which how they first found were
I trow ye wote all the manere
And who quene is of this yle
As I haue been long while
Sch seuen yeres not of vsage
Visit the heauenly armitage
Which on a rocke so high stonds
In strange sea out from all londs
That to make the pilgrimage
Is called a long perilous vyage
For if the wind be not good frend
The iourney dures to the end
Of him that it vndertakes
Of twenty thousand one not scapes
Upon which Rock groweth a tree
That certain yeres beares apples three
Which three apples who may haue
Been from all displeasaunce saue
That in the seuen yere may fall
This wote you well one and all
For the first apple and the next
Which groweth vnto you next
Hath three vertues notable
And keepeth youth aie durable
Beauty and loke, euer in one
And is the best in euerichone
The second apple red and grene
Onely with lookes of your yene
You nourishes in pleasaunce
Better than Partridge or Fesaunce
And feeds euery liues wight
Pleasantly with the sight.
The third apple of the three
Which groweth lowest on the tree
Who it beares may not faile
That to his pleasaunce may auaile
So your pleasure and beauty rich
Your during youth euer liche
Your truth, your conning, and your weale
Hath aye floured, and your good heale
Without sickues or displeasaunce
Or thing that to you was noysaunce
So that you haue as goddesses
Lued aboue all princesses
Now is befall as ye may see
To gather these said apples three
I haue not failed against the day
Thitherward to take the way
Wening to speed as I had oft
But when I come I find aloft
My sister which that here stands
Hauing those apples in her hands
Auising them and nothing said
But looked as she were well paid
And as I stood her to behold
Thinking how my ioyes were cold
Sith I those apples haue ne might
Euen with that so came this knight
And in his armes of me aware
Me tooke and to his ship me bare
And said, though him I neuer had seen
Yet had I long his lady been
Wherefore I should with him wend
And he would to his liues end
My seruant be, and gan to sing
As one that had wonne a rich thing
Tho were wy spirits fro me gone
So sodainly euerichone
That in me appeared but death
For I felt neither life ne breath
No good ne harme none I knewe
The sodaine paine me was so newe
That had not the hasty grace be
Of this lady that fro the tree
Of her gentilnesse so hyed
Me to comfort I had dyed
And of her three apples one
In mine hand there put anone
Which brought againe mind and breath
And me recouered from the death
Wherefore to her so am I hold
That for her, all things do I wold
For she was leche of all my smart
And from great paine so quite mine hart
And as God wote, Right as ye heare
Me to comfort with friendly cheare
She did her prowesse and her might
And truly eke so did this knight
In that he cowth, and oft said
That of my wo he was ill paid
And cursed the ship that them there brought
The mast, the master that it wrought
And as ech thing mote haue an end
My sister here your brother frend
Con with her words so womanly
This knight entreat, and cunningly

For

For mine honour and his also
And said that with her, we should go
Both in her ship, where she was brought
Which was so wonderfully wrought
So cleare, so rich, and so staid
That we were both content and paid
And me to comfort and to please
And mine heart to put at ease
She toke great paine, in little while
And thus hath wrought vs to this yle
As ye may see, wherefore echone
I pray you thanke her one and one
As heartily as ye can deuise
Or imagine in any wise,
At once there tho men might seen
A world of Ladies fall on kneen
Before my Lady, that there about
Was left none standing in the rout
But altogither they went at ones
To kerche, they spared not for the stones
Ne for estate, ne for their blood
Well shewed there, they couth much good
For to my Lady they made such feast
With such words that the least
So friendly and so faithfully
Said was, and so cunningly
That wonder was seing their youth
To her the language they couth
And wholly how they gouerned were
In thanking of my Lady there
And said by will and maundement
They were at her commaundement
Which was to me as great a ioy
As winning of the towne of Troy
Was to the hardy Grekes strong
When they it wan with siege long
To see my lady in such a place
So receiued as she was
And when they talked had a while
Of this and that and of the yle
My Lady and the ladies there
Altogither as they were
The Quene her selfe began to play
And to the aged ladie say
Now semeth you not good it were
Sith we be altogither here
To ordaine and deuise the best
To set this knight and me at rest
For woman is a feble wight
To rere a warre against a knight
And sith he here is in this place
At my list, danger, or grace
It were to me great vilany
To doe him any tyranny
But faine I would, now will ye here
In his owne country that he were
And I in peace, and he at ease
This were a way vs both to please
If it might be, I you beseech
With him hereof you fall in speech
This lady tho began to smile
Auising her a little while
And with glad chere she said anone
Madam I will vnto him gone
And with him speake, and of him fele
What he desires euery dele
And soberly this lady tho
Her selfe and other ladies two
She toke with her, and with sad chere
Said to the knight on this manere
Sir the princes of this yle
Whome for your pleasance many mile
Ye sought haue, as I vnderstond
Till at the last ye haue her fond
Me send hath here, and ladies twaine
To heare all thing that ye saine
And for what cause ye haue her sought
Faine would she wote, & whol your thought
And why you do her all this woe
And for what cause you be her so
And why of euery wight vnware
By force ye to your ship her bare
That she so nigh was agone
That mind ne speech had she none
But as a painfull creature
Dying abode, her aduenture
That her to see indure that paine
Here well say, vnto you plaine
Right on your selfe ye did amisse
Seing how she a princes is
This knight the which cowth his good
Right of his truth mened his blood
That pale he wox as any lead
And lookt as he would be dead
Blood was there none in nother cheke
Wordlesse he was and semed sicke
And so it proued, well he was
For without mouing any paas
All sodainly as thing dying
He fell at once downe sowning
That for his wo, this lady fraid
Unto the quene her hyed and said
Cometh on anon as haue you bliss
But ye be wise, thing is amisse
This knight is dead or will be soone
Lo where he lyeth in a swoone
Without word, or answering
To that I haue said any thing,
Wherefore I doubt, that the blame
Might be hindering to your name

which

Which floured hath so many yere
So long, that for nothing here
I would in no wise he dyed
Wherefore good were that ye hyed
His life to saue at the least
And after that his wo be ceast
Commaund him void or dwell
For in no wise dare I more mell
Of thing wherein such perill is
As like is now to fall of this:
This queene right tho full of great feare
With all the ladies present there
Unto the knight come where he lay
And made a Lady to him say:
Lo here the quene, awake for shame
What will you doe, is this good game
Why lye you here, what is your mind
Now is well seene your wit is blind
To see so many ladies here
And ye to make none other chere
But as ye set them all at nought
Arise for his loue that you bought
But what the said, a word not one
He spake, ne answer gaue her none
The quene of very pity tho
Her worship, and his like also
To saue there she did her paine
And quoke for feare, and gan to saine
For wo alas what shall I do,
What shall I say this man vnto
If he die here lost is my name
How shall I play this perilous game
If any thing be here amisse
It shall be said, it rigour is
Whereby my name impayre might
And like to die ere is this knight,
And with that word her hand she laid
Upon his brest, and to him said
Awake my knight, lo it am I
That to you speake, now tell me why
Ye fare thus, and this paine endure
Seeing ye be in country sure
Among such friends that would you heale
Your hearts ease eke and your weale
And if I wist what you might ease
Or know the thing that you might please
I you ensure it should not faile
That to your heale you might auaile
Wherefore with all my heart I pray
Ye rise, and let vs talke and play
And see how many ladies here
Be comen for to make good chere
All was for nought, for still as stone
He lay, and word spoke none
Long while was or he might braid
And of all that the quene had said
He wist no word but at the last
Mercy twise he cried fast
That pity was his voice to heare
Or to behold his painfull cheare
Which was not fained well wag to sein
Both by his visage and his eyn
Which on the quene at once he cast
And sighed as he would to brast
And after that he shright so
That wonder was to see his wo
For sith that paine was first named
Was neuer more wofull paine attained
For with voice dead he gan to plain
And to himselfe these words sain
I wofull wight, full of malure
Am worse then dead and yet dure
Maugre any paine or death
Against my will I fell my breath
Why nam I dead, sith I ne serue
And sith my Lady will me sterue
Where art thou death art thou agast
Well shal we meet yet at the last.
Though thou thee hide, it is for nought
For wher thou dwelst thou shalt be sought
Maugre thy subtill double face
Here will I die right in this place
To thy dishonour and mine ease
Thy manner is no wight to please
What needs thee sith I thee seche
So thee to hide my paine to eche
And wel wost thou I wil not ime
Who would me all this world here giue
For I haue with my cowardise
Lost ioy and heale, and my seruise
And made my soueraign Lady so
That while she liues I trow my fo
She will be euer to her end
Thus haue I neither ioy ne frend
Wot I not whether hast or sloth
Hath caused this now by my troth
For at the hermitage full hie
When I her saw first with mine eye
I hyed till I was aloft
And made my pace small and soft
Till in mine armes I had her fast
And to my ship bare at the last
Whereof she was displeased so
That endles there semed her wo
And I thereof had so great fere
That me repent that I come there
Which hast I trow gan her displease
And is the cause of my disease
And with that word he gan to cry
Now death, death, thy or thy

And

And motred wot I not what of slouth
And euen with that the queene of routh
Him in her armes tooke and said
Now mine owne knight be not euill apaid
That I a lady to you sent
To haue knowledge of your entent
For in good faith I meant but well
And would ye wist it euery dele
Nor will not do to you y wis
And with that word she gan him kisse
And prayed him rise, and said she would
His welfare by her truth, and told
Him how she was for his disease
Right sory, and fain would him please
His life to saue, these words tho
She said to him, and many mo
In comforting, for from the pain
She would he were deliuered faine
The knight tho vpcast his een
And when he saw it was the queen
That to him had these words said
Right in his wo he gan to braid
And him vp dresses for to kneele
The quene anuling wonder weele
But as he rose he ouer threw
Wherfore the quene, yet eft anew
Him in her armes anon tooke
And pitously gan on him looke
But for all that nothing she said
Ne spake not like she were well paid
Ne no chere made, more sad, ne light
But all in one to euery wight
There was seen, coming with astate
In her without noise or debate
For saue only a looke piteous
Of womanhead vndispiteous
That she showed in countenance
For seemed her heart, from obeisance
And not for that she did her peine
Him to recure from the peine
And his hart to put at large
For her entent was to his barge
Him to bring against the cue
With certain ladies and take leue
And pray him of his gentilnesse
To suffer her thencefoorth in peace
As other princes had before
And from thencefoorth for euermore
She would him worship in all wise
That gentilnesse might deuise
And paine her wholly, to fulfill
In honour his pleasure and will
And during thus, this knights wo
Present the quene and other mo
My lady and many another wight
Ten thousand ships at a sight
I saw come ouer the wawy flood
With saile and ore, that as I stood
Them to behold I gan marualle
From whome might come so many a saile
For sith the time that I was bore
Such a naue there before
Had I not seen ne so araied
That for the sight my heart plaied
To and fro within my brest
For ioy, long was or it would rest
For there was sailes full of floures
After castels with huge toures
Seming full of armes bright
That wonder lusty was the sight
With large toppes and masles long
Richly depeint and rear among
At certaine times gan repaire
Small birds downe from thaire
And on the ships bounds about
Sate and song with voice full out
Ballads and Layes right ioyously
As they cowth in their harmony
That you to write that I there see
Mine excuse is, it may not be
For why, the matter were to long
To name the birds and write their song
Whereof anon the tydings there
Vnto the quene soon brought were
With many alas, and many a doubt
Shewing the ships there without
Tho gan the aged lady wepe
And said alas, our ioy on slepe
Soon shalbe brought, ye long or night
For we discried ben by this knight
For certes it may none other be
But he is of yond companie
And they be come him here to seche
And with that word, her failed speche
Without remedy we be destroid
Full oft said all, and gan conclude
Holy at once at the last
That best was, shit their yates fast
And arme them all in good langage
As they had done of old vlage
And of faire words make their shot
This was their counsaile and the knot
And other purpose toke they none
But armed thus forth they gone
Toward the walls of the yle
But or they come there long while
They met the great lord of boue
That called is the god of Loue
That them anised with such there
Right as he with them angry were

Anasled

Auailed them not their wals of glasse
This mighty lord let not to passe
The shutting of their yates fast
All they had ordaind, was but wast
For whan his ships had found land
This lord anon with bow in hand
Into this yle with huge preasse
Hied fast, and would not ceasse
Til he came there, the knight lay
Of Queene, ne lady by the way
Tooke he no heed, but forth past
And yet all followed at the last
And whan he came where lay the knight
Well shewed he, he had great might
And forth the Queene called anone
And all the ladies euerichone
And to them said, is not this routh
To see my seruaunt, for his trouth
Thus leane, thus sicke, and in this paine
And wot not vnto whom to plaine
Saue only one, without mo
Which might him heale, and is his so
And with that word, his heauy brow
He shewed the Queene, and looked row
This mighty lord, forth tho anone
With o looke, her faults echone
He can her shew, in little speech
Commaunding her to be his lech
Withouten more shortly to say
He thought the Queene sone should obay
And in his hond he shoke his bow
And said right soone, he would be know
And for she had so long refused
His seruice, and his lawes not vsed
He let her wit, that he was wroth
And bent his bow, and forth he goth
A pace or two, and euen there
A large draught, vp to his eare
He drew, and with an arrow ground
Sharpe and new, the Queene a wound
He gaue, that pierced vnto the hert
Which afterward, ful sore gan smert
And was not whole, of many yeare
And euen with that, be of good cheare
My knight quoth he, I wil the hele
And thee restore to parfite wele
And for ech paine, thou hast endured
To haue two ioies, thou art cured
And forth he past by the rout
With sober cheare, walking about
And what he said, I thought to heare
Wel wist he which his seruants were
And as he passed anon he fond
My lady and her tooke by the hond
And made her chere as a Goddes
And of beaute called her princes
Of bounty eke gaue her the name
And said there was nothing blame
In her, but she was vertuous
Sauing she would no pity vse
Which was the cause he that her sought
To put that far out of her thought
And sith she had whole richesse
Of womanhead, and friendlinesse
He said it was nothing sitting
To void pity his owne legging
And gan her preach, and with her play
And of her beauty told her aie
And said she was a creature
Of whom the name should long endure
And in bookes ful of pleasaunce
Be put for euer in remembraunce
And as me thought more friendly
Unto my lady, and goodlely
He spake, than any that was there
And for thappuls, I trow it were
That she had in possession
Wherefore long in procession
Many a pace arme vnder other
He welke, and so did with none other
But what he would commaund or say
Forthwith needs all must obay
And what he desired at the lest
Of my lady was by request
And whan they long together had bene
He brought my lady to the Quene
And to her said, so God you speed
Shew grace, consent, that is need
My lady tho ful conningly
Right wel auised, and womanly
Do wne gan to kneele vpon the flowres
Which Aprill nourished had with shoures
And to this mighty lord gan say
That pleaseth you, I woll obay
And me restraine from other thought
As ye wol all thing shal be wrought
And with that word kneeling she quoke
That mighty lord in armes her tooke
And said you haue a seruaunt one
That trewer liuing is there none
Wherefore good were, seeing his trouth
That on his paines he had routh
And purpose you to her his speech
Fully auised him to lech
For ofone thing ye may be sure
He wil be yours, while he may dure
And with that word right on his game
He thought he lough, and told my name
Which was to me meruaile, and fere
That what to do I nist there
Ne whether was me bet or none

There to abide, or thus to gone
For wel wend I my lady would
Imagen, or deme, that I had told
My counsaile whole, or made complaint
Unto that lord, that mighty saint
So verily, ech thing vnsought
He said as he had knowne my thought
And told my trouth and mine vnease
Bet then I couth haue for mine ease
Though I had studied all a weeke
Well wist that lord that I was seeke
And would be leched wonder faine
No man me blame, mine was the paine
And when this lord had all said
And long with my lady plaid
She gan to smile with spirit glade
This was the answere that she made
Which put me there in double peyne
That what to do, ne what to seine
Wist I not, ne what was the best
For was my heart then fro his rest
For as I thought, that smiling signe
Was token that the hart encline
Would to requests reasonable
Because smiling is fauorable
To euery thing that shall thriue
So thought I tho, anon blriue
That worldlesse answere in no toun
Was tane for obligacioun
Ne called surety, in no wise
Amongst them that called ben wise
Thus was I in a ioyous dout
Sure and vnsurest of that rout
Right as mine heart thought it were
So more or lesse wex my fere
That if one thought made it wele
Another shent it eueridele
Til at the last I couth no more
But purposed as I did before
To serue trewly my liues space
Awaiting euer the yeare of grace
Which may fall yet or I sterue
If it please her that I serue
And serued haue, and wol do euer
For thing is none, that me is leuer
Then her seruice, whole presence
Mine heauen is whole, and her absence
An hell, ful of diuers paines
Which to the death, full oft me straines
Thus in my thoughts, as I stood
That vnneth feit I harme ne good
I saw the Queene a little paas
Come where this mighty lord was
And kneeled downe in presence there
Of all the ladies that there were
With sober countenaunce attled
In few words that wel suffised
And to this lord, anon present
A bill, wherein whole her entent
Was written, and how she besought
As he knew euery will and thought
That of his godhead, and his grace
He would forgiue, all old trespace
And vndispleased be of time past
For she would euer be stedfast
And in his seruice to the death
Vse euery thought while she had breath
And sight and wept, and said no more
Within was written all the sore
At which bill the lord gan smile
And said he would within that yle
Be lord and syre, both east and west
And cald it there his new conquest
And in great councell tooke the Queene
Long were the tales them betweene
And ouer her bill he read thrise
And wonder gladly gan deuise
Her features faire, and her visage
And bad good thrift on that Image
And said he trowed her compleint
Should after cause her be coseint
And in his sleeue, he put the bill
Was there none that knew his will
And forth he walke apace about
Beholding all the lusty rout
Halfe in a thought with smiling chere
Til at the last, as ye shal here
He turned vnto the Queene ageine
And said to morne, here in this pleine
I wol ye be, and all yours
That purposed ben to weare flours
Or of my lusty colour vle
It may not be to you excuse
Ne none of yours in no wise
That able be to my seruise
For as I said haue here before
I wil be lord for euermore
Of you, and of this yle, and all
And of all yours that haue shall
Joy, peace, ease, or in pleasaunce
Your liues vse without noisaunce
Here wil I in state be seen
And turned his visage to the Queene
And you giue knowledge of my will
And a ful answere of your bill
Was there no nay, ne words none
But very obeisant seemed echone
Queene and other that were there
Wel seemed it they had great fere
And there tooke lodging euery night

Was

was none departed of that night
And some to read old Romances
Them occupied for their pleasances
Some to make berelaics, and laies
And some to other diuerse plaies
And I to me a Romance tooke
And as I reading was the booke
Me thought the spheare had so run
That it was rising of the sun
And such a prees unto the plaine
Assemble gone, that with great paine
One might for other go ne stand
Ne none take other by the hand
Withouten they disturbed were
So huge and great, the prees was there.

And after that within two houres
This mighty lord all in floures
Of diuers colours many a paire
In his estate vp in the aire
Wel two fathum, as his hight
He set him there, in all their sight
And for the Queene and for the knight
And for my lady, and euery wight
In hast he sent, so that neuer one
Was there absent, but come echone
And when they thus assembled were
As ye haue heard, me say you here
Without more tarrying on hight
There to be seen of euery wight
Up stood among the prees aboue
A counsailer, seruant of loue
Which semed wel, of great estate
And shewed there, how no debate
Owe ne goodly might be vsed
In gentilnesse, and be excused
Wherefore he said, his lords will
Was euery wight there should be still
And in pees, and one accord
And thus commanded at a word
And can his tongue to swiche langage
Turne that yet, in all mine age
Heard I neuer so conningly
Man speake, ne halfe so faithfully
For euery thing he said there
Seemed as it inscaled were
Or approued, for very trew
Swiche was his cunning language new
And wel according to his chere
That where I be, me thinke I here
Him yet alway, when I mine one
In any place may be alone
First con he of the lusty ple
All that state in little whyle
Rehearse, and wholly euery thing
That caused there his lords comming
And euery wele and euery wo
And for what cause ech thing was so
Wel shewed he there in easy speech
And how the sicke had need of lech
And that whole was, and in grace
He told plainly why ech thing was
And at the last he con conclude
Voided euery language rude
And said, that prince, that mighty lord
Or his departing would accord
All the parties there present
And was the fine of his entent
Witnesse his presence in your sight
Which sits among you in his might
And kneeled downe withouten more
And not a word, spake he more.

Tho gan this mighty lord him dresse
With cheare auised, to do largesse
And said vnto this knight and me
Ye shal to joy restored be
And for ye haue ben trew ye twaine
I graunt you here for euery paine
A thousand toies euery weeke
And looke ye be no longer seeke
And both your ladies, lo hem here
Take ech his owne, both of good chere
Your happy day is new begun
Sith it was rising of the sun
And to all other in this place
I grant wholly to stand in grace
That seruen trewly, without slouth
And to auaunced be by trouth
Tho can this knight, and I downe kneele
Wening to do wonder wele
Seeing O Lord your great mercy
Us hath enriched, so openly
That we deserue may neuer more
The least part, but euer more
With soule and body trewly serue
You and yours til we sterue
And to their ladies there they stood
This knight that couth so mikel good
Went in hast, and I also
Joyous, and glad were we tho
And also rich in euery thought
As he that all hath and ought nought
And them besought in humble wise
Us tacceept to their seruice
And shew vs of their friendly cheares
Which in their treasure many yeares
They kept had, vs to great paine
And told how their seruices twaine
Were and would be, and so had euer

And to the death chaunge would we neuer
Ne do offence, ne thyng like till
But till their ordinaunce and will
And made our othes fresh new
Our old seruice to renew
And wholly theirs for euermore
We there be come, what might we more
And wel awaiting, that in slouth
We made ne fault, ne in our trouth
Ne thought not do, I you ensure
With our will, where we may dure

This season past, againe an eue
This lord of the Queene took leue
And said he would hastely returne
And as good leisure there sojourne
Both for his honour, and for his ease
Commaunding fast, the knight to please
And gaue his statutes in papers
And ordent diuers officers
And forth to ship the same night
He went, and soone was out of sight
And on the morrow when the aire
Attempred was and wonder faire
Early at rising of the sun
After the night away was run
Playing vs on the riuage
My lady spake of her voiage
And said she made small iournies
And held her in straunge countries
And forthwith to the Queene went
And shewed her wholly her entent
And tooke her leaue with cheare weeping
That pity was, see that parting
For to the Queene it was a paine
As to a martir new ylaine
That for her wo, and she so tender
Yet I weepe oft when I remember
She offerd there to resigne
To my lady eight times or nine
Thastate, the ple, shortly to tell
If it might please her there to dwell
And said for euer her linage
Should to my lady do homage
And hers be hole without en more
Ye, and all theirs for euermore
Nay God forbid, my lady eft
With many conning word and soft
Said, that euer such thing should beene
That I consent should, that a Queene
Of your estate, and so well named
In any wise should be attamed
But would be faine with all my hert
What so befell, or how me smert
To do thing that you might please
In any wise, or be your ease
And kissed there, and bad good night
For which leue, wept many a wight
There might men here my lady prised
And such a name of her araised
What of cunning and friendlinesse
What of beauty with gentilnesse
What of glad and friendly cheares
That she vsed in all her yeares
That wonder was here euery wight
To say wel, how they did their might
And with a prees vpon the morrow
To ship her brought, and what a sorrow
They made, when she should vndersaile
That and ye wist, ye would meruaile
Forth goeth the ship, out goeth the sond
And I as wood man vnbond
For doubt to be behind there
Into the sea withouten fere
Anon I ran, till with a wawe
All sodenly I was ouerthrawe
And with the water to and fro
Backward and forward trauailed so
That mind and breath, nigh was gone
For good, ne harme, knew I none
Till at the last with hookes twene
Men of the ship, with mikel peine
To saue my life, did such trauaile
That and ye wist, ye would meruaile
And in the ship, me drew on hie
And laiden all that I would die
And laid me long down by the mast
And of their clothes, on me cast
And there I made my testament
And wist my selfe, not what I ment
But when I said had what I would
And to the mast my wo all told
And tane my leaue of euery wight
And closed mine eyen, and lost my sight
Auised to die, without more speech
Or any remedy to seech
Of grace new, as was great need
My lady of my paine tooke heed
And her bethought, how that for trouth
To see me die, it were great routh
And to me came, in sober wise
And softly said, I pray you rise
Come on with me, let be this fare
All shall be well, haue ye no care
I will obey ye and fulfill
Holy in all that lords will
That you and me not long ago
After his list, commaunded so
That there againe, no resistence
May be without great offence

And

And therefore here now, what I say
I am and wil be friendly aye
Rise vp behold, this auauntage
I graunt you inheritage
Peaceably without strife
During the daies of your life
And of her apples in my sleue
One she put and tooke her leue
In words few and said good hele
He that all made, you send and wele
Wherewith my paines all at ones
Tooke such leaue, that all my bones
For the new durense pleasaunce
So as they couth, desired to daunce
And I as whole, as any wight
Up rose with ioyous heart and light
Hole and vnsicke, right wele at ease
And all forget had my disease
And to my lady, where she plaid
I went anone, and to her said
He that all ioies, persons to please
First ordained, with parfite ease
And euery pleasure can depart
Send you madame, as large apart
And of his goods, such plenty
As he has done you of beauty
With hele and al that may be thought
He send you all, as he all wrought
Madame (quoth I) your seruaunt trew
Haue I ben long, and yet will new
Without chaunge, or repentaunce
In any wise, or variaunce
And so wil do, as thriue I euer
For thing is none, that me is leuer
Then you to please, how euer I fare
Mine hearts lady, and my welfare
My life, mine hele, my lech also
Of euery thing, that doth me wo
My helpe at need, and my surete
Of euery ioy, that longs to me
My succours whole in all wise
That may be thought or man deuise
Your grace Madame, such haue I found
Now in my need, that I am bound
To you for euer so Christ me saue
For heale and liue of you I haue,
Wherefore is reason, I you serue
With due obeisaune, till I sterue
And dead and quicke be euer yours
Late, early, and at all hours
Tho came my lady, small alite
And in plaine english con conlite
In words few, whole her entent
She shewed me there, and how she ment
To meward in euery wise
Wholly she came at their deuise
Without proces, or long trauell
Charging me to keepe counsell
As I would to her grace attaine
Of which commaundement I was layne
Wherefore I passe ouer at this time
For counsell cords not well in rime
And eke the oth that I haue swore
To breake, me were better vnbore
Why for vntrue for euermore
I should be hold, that neuermore
Of me in place should be report
Thing that auaile might, or comfort
To mewards, in any wise
And ech wight would me dispise
In that they couth, and me reprene
Which were a thing, sore for to greue
Wherefore hereof more mencion
Make I not now, ne long sermon
But shortly thus, I me excuse
To rime a councel, I refuse.
Sailing thus two daies or three
My lady towards her countree
Ouer the waues, high and greene
Which were large, and deepe betweene
Upon a time me called and said
That of my hele, she was well paid
And of the Queene, and of the ple
She talked with me long whyle
And of all that she there had seene
And of the state, and of the queene
And of the ladies, name by name
Two houres or mo, this was her game
Till at the last the wind can rise
And blew so fast, and in such wise
The ship, that euery wight can say
Madame er eue be of this day
And God tofore, ye shall be there
As ye would fainest that ye were
And doubt not, within sixe houres
Ye shall be there, as all is yours
At which words she gan to smile
And said that was no long while
That they her set, and vp she rose
And all about the ship she gose
And made good cheare to euery wight
Till of the land, she had a sight
Of which sight glad, God it wot
She was abashed, anon a boot
And forth goeth shortly you to tell
Where she accustomed was to dwell
And receiued was as good right
With ioyous cheare, and hearts light
And as a glad new auenture
Pleasaunt to euery creature

With which landing tho I woke
And found my chamber ful of smoke
My cheekes cke vnto the eares
And all my body weat with teares
And all so feeble, and in such wise
I was, that vnneth might I rise
So sare trauailed, and so faint
That neither knew I kirke ne saint
Ne what was what, ne who was who
Ne auised, what way I would go
But by a venturous grace
I rise and walkt, sought pace and pace
Til I a winding staire found
And held the vice aye in my hond
And vpward softly so can creepe
Till I came where I thought to sleepe
Moze at mine ease, and out of preace
At my good leisure, and in peace
Till somewhat I recomfort were
Of the trauell, and great feare
That I endured had before
This was my thought without moze
And as a wight witlesse and faint
Without moze, in a chamber paint
Ful of stories old and diuers
Moze then I can now rehearse
Unto a bed, ful soberly
So as I might ful southly
Pace after other, and nothing said
Till at the last down I me laid
And as my mind wold giue me leue
All that I dreamed had that eue
Before all I can rehearse
Right as a child at schoole his verse
Doth after that he thinketh to thriue
Right so did I, for all my liue
I thought to haue in remembraunce
Both the payne, and the pleasaunce
The dreame whole, as it me befell
Which was as ye here me tell
Thus in my thoughts as I lay
That happy or vnhappy day
Wot I not so haue I blame
Of the two, which is the name:
Befell me so, that there a thought
By processe new on sleepe me brought
And me gouerned so in a while
That againe within the yle
Me thought I was, where of the knight
And of the ladies I had a sight
And were assembled on a greene
Knight and lady, with the queene
At which assembly there was said
How they all content and paid
Were wholly as in that thing
That the knight there should be king
And they would all for sure witnesse
Wedded be, both more and lesse
In remembraunce without more
Thus they consent for euermore
And was concluded, that the knight
Depart should the same night
And forthwith there tooke his voiage
To tourney for his marriage
And returne with such an host
That wedded might be least and most
This was concluded, written and sealed
That it might not be repealed
In no wise but aie be firme
And all should be within a terme
Without more excusation
Both feast and coronation
This knight which had thereof the charge
Anon into a little barge
Brought was late against an eue
Where of all he tooke his leaue
Which barge was as a mans thought
After his pleasure to him brought
The Queene her selfe accustomed aye
In the same barge to play
It needeth neither mast ne rother
I haue not heard of such another
No maister for the gouernaunce
Hie sayled by thought and pleasaunce
Without labour east and west
All was one, calme, or tempest
And I went with at his request
And was the first praied to the fest.
When he came in his countree
And passed had the wauy see
In an hauen deepe and large
He left his rich and noble barge
And to the court, shortly to tell
He went, where he wont was to dwell
And was receiued as good right
As heire and for a worthy knight
With all the states of the lond
Which came anon at his first sond
With glad spirits, full of trouth
Loth to do fault, or with a slouth
Attaint be in any wise
Their riches was their old seruise
Which euer trew had be fond
Sith first in habite was the lond
And so receiued there her King
That forgotten was no thing
That owe to be done, ne might please
Me their souereine Lord do ease
And with them so shortly to saye
As they of custome had done aye

For

For seuen yere past was and more
The father, the old wise and hore
King of the land toke his leue
Of all his barons on an eue
And told them how his daies past
Were all and comen was the last
And hartily prayed hem to remember
His sonne which yong was and tender
That borne was their prince to be
If he returne to that countre
Might by aduenture or grace
Within any time or space
And to be true and friendly aye
As they to him had bene alway
Thus he them prayd, without more
And toke his leue for euermore.
Knowen was how tender in age
This young prince a great viage
Uncouth and straunge, honours to seche
Toke in hond with little speche
Which was to seke a princes
That he desired more then riches
For his great name that floured so
That in that time there was no mo
Of her estate, ne so well named
For borne was none that euer her blamed
Of which princes, somwhat before
Here haue I spoke, and some will more
So thus befell as ye shall heare
Unto their lord they made such cheare
That ioy was there to be present
To see their troth and how they ment
So very glad they were echone
That them among there was no one
That desired more riches
Then for their Lord such a princes
That they might please, and that were faire
For last desired they an heire
And said great surety were ywis
And as they were speaking of this
The prince himselfe him auised
And in plaine English vndisguised
Them shewed hole his iourney
And of their counsell can them prey
And told how he ensured was
And how his day he might not passe
Without diffame and great blame
And to him, for euer a shame
And of their counsell and auise
There he prayth them once or twise
And that they would, within ten daies
Auise and ordaine him such wayes
So that it were no displeasaunce
Ne to this Realme ouer great grieuaunce
And that he haue might to his feast
Sixty thousand at the least
For his intent within short while
Was to returne vnto his ple
That he came fro and kepe his day
For nothing would he be away.
To counsaile tho the Lords anon
Into a chamber euerychone
Togither went, them to deuise
How they might best and in what wise
Puruey for their Lords pleasaunce
And the Realmes continuance
Of honor, which in it before
Had continued euermore
So at the last they found the wayes
How within the next ten daies
All might with paine and diligence
Be done, and cast what the dispence
Might draw, and in conclusion
Made for ech thing prouision:
When this was done, wholly tofore
The prince, the lords all before
Come, and shewed what they had done
And how they couth by no reason
Find, that within the ten daies
He might depart by no waies
But would be fiftene at the least
Or he returne might to his feast
And shewed him euery reason why
It might not be so hastily
As he desired, ne his day
He might not keepe by no way
For diuers causes wonder great
Which when he heard in such an heat
He fell for sorow and was seke
Still in his bed, whole that weke
And nigh the tother, for the shame
And for the doubt, and for the blame
That might on them be aret
And oft vpon his brest he bet
And said alas mine honour for aye
Haue I here lost cleane this day
Dead would I be alas my name
Shall ate be more henceforth in shame
And I dishonoured and repreued
And neuer more shall be beleeued
And made swich sorow, that in trouth
Him to behold it was great routh
And so endured the daies fiftene
Till that the Lords on an euen
Him come, and told they ready were
And shewed in few words there
How and what wise they had purueyd
For his estate, and to him said
That twenty thousand knights of name
And fourty thousand without blame

All come of noble ligine
Togider in a compane
Were lodged on a riuers side
Him and his pleasure there tabide
The prince tho for toy vp rose
And where they lodged were, he goes
Without more that same night
And these his supper made to dight
And with them bode, till it was dey
And forthwith so toke his tourney
Leuing the streight, holding the large
Till he came to his noble barge
And when this prince, this lustie knight
With his people in armes bright
Was comen where he thought to pas
And knew well none abiding was
Behind, but all were there present
Forthwith anon all his intent
He told them there, and made his crys
Through his ost that day twise
Commaunding euery liues wight
There being present in his sight
To be the morow on the ryuage
Where he begin would his vyage
The morow come the cry was kept
Few was there that night that slept
But trussed and purueied for the morow
Fault of ships was all their sorrow
For saue the barge and other two
Of shippes there saw I no mo
Thus in their doubts as they stood
Waxing the sea, comming the flood
Was cried to ship, goe euery wight
Then was but hie that hie might
And to the barge me thought echone
They went, without was left not one
Horse male, trusse, ne bagage
Salad, speare, gardbrace, ne page
But was lodged, and roome ynough
At which shipping me thought I lough
And gan to maruaile in my thought
How euer such a ship was wrought
For what people that can encrease
Ne euer so thicke might be the preasse
But all had roome at their will
There was not one was lodged ill
For as I trow, my selfe the last
Was one, and lodged by the mast
And where I loked I saw such rome
As all were lodged in a towne
Forth goth the ship said was the creed
And on their knees for their good speed
Downe kneeled euery wight a while
And prayed fast that to the yle
They might come in safety
The prince and all the company
With worship and without blame
Or disclaunder of his name
Of the promise he should retourne
Within the time he did sojourne
In his lond biding his host
This was their prayer left and most
To kepe the day it might not been
That he appointed had with the queen
To returne without slouth
And so assured had his trouth
For which fault this prince this knight
During the time slept not a night
Such was his wo and his disease
For doubt he should the quene displease
Forth goth the ship with such spede
Right as the prince for his great nede
Desire would, after his thought
Till it vnto the yle him brought
Where in hast vpon the sand
He and his people toke the land
With harts glad and chere light
Wening to be in heauen that night
But or they palled had a while
Entring in toward that yle
All clad in blacke with chere piteous
A lady which neuer dispiteous
Had be in all her life tofore
With sory chere and hart to tore
Unto this prince where he gan ride
Come and said, abide abide
And haue no hast, but fast retourne
No reason is ye here sojourne
For your vntruth hath vs diseried
Wo worth the time we vs allied
With you, that are so soon vntrew
Alas the day that we you knew
Alas the time that ye were bore
For all this lond by you is lore
Accursed be he you hider brought
For all our ioy is turnd to nought
Your acquaintance we may complaine
Which is the cause of all our paine.
Alas madame quoth tho this knight
And with that from his horse he light
With colour pale and cheekes lene
Alas what is this for to mene
What haue ye said, why be ye wroth
You to displease I would be loth
Know ye not well the promesse
I made haue to your princesse
Which to perfourme is mine intent
So mote I spede as I haue ment
And as I am her very trew
Without change or thought new

And also fully her seruand
As creature or man liuand
May be to lady or princesse
For she mine heauen and whole richesse
Is and the lady of mine hele
My worlds ioy and all my weale
What may this be, whence coms this speech
Tell me Madame I you beseech,
For sith the first of my liuing
Was I so fearfull of nothing
As I am now to heare you speake
For doubt I feele mine heart breake
Say on madame, tell me your will
The remnaunt is it good or ill
Alas (qd. she) that ye were bore
For, for your loue this land is lore
The quene is dead and that is ruth
For sorow of your great vntruth
Of two partes of the lusty rout
Of ladies that were there about
That wont were to talke and play
Now are dead and cleane away
And vnder earth tane lodging new
Alas that euer ye were vntrew
For when the time ye set was past
The quene to counsaile sone in hast
What was to doe, and said great blame
Your acquaintaunce cause would, and shame
And the ladies of their anuse
Prayed, for need was to be wise
In eschewing tales and songs
That by them make would ill tongs
And sey they were lightly conquest
And prayed to a poore feast
And soule had their worship wetued
When so vnwisely they conceiued
Their rich treasour and their heale
There famous name and their weale
To put in such an auenture
Of which the sclaunder euer dure
Was like without helpe of appele
Wherefore they ne de had of counsele
For euery wight of them would say
Their closed yle, an open way
Was become, to euery wight
And wel apprcued by a knight
Which he alas without paysaunce
Had soone acheued thobeisaunce
All this was moued at counsel thrise
And concluded daily twise
That bet was die without blame
Then lose the riches of their name
Wherefore the deaths acquaintaunce
They chese, and left haue their pleasaunce
For doubt to liue, as reprcued
In that they you so soon beleeued
And made their othes with one accord
That eat, ne drinke, ne speake word
They should neuer but euer weping
Bide in a place without parting
And vse their dayes in penaunce
Without desire of allegeaunce
Of which the truth anon con preue
For why the queen, forthwith her leue
Toke at them all that were present
Of her defauts fully repent
And dyed there withouten more
Thus are we lost for euermore
What should I more hereof reherse
Comen within, come see her herse
Where ye shall see the piteous sight
That euer yet was shewed to knight
For ye shall see ladies stond
Ech with a great rod in hond
Clad in black with visage white
Ready each other for to smite
If any be that will not wepe
Or who that makes countenance to slepe
They be so bet, that also blew
They be as cloth that dyed is new
Such is their perfite repentance
And thus they kepe their ordinance
And will doe euer to the death
While them endures any breath

This knight tho in armes twaine
This lady tooke and gan her laine
Alas my birth, wo worth my life
And euen with that, he drew a knife
And through gowne, dublet, and shert
He made the blood come from his hert
And let him downe vpon the greene
And full repent closed his eene
And saue that ones he drew his breath
Without more, thus he tooke his death
For which cause the lusty hoast
Which in a battaile on the coast
At once for sorow such a cry
Gan rere, thorow the company
That to the heauen heard was the soune
And vnder therth als fere downe
That wild beasts for the feare
So sodainly afrayed were
That for the doubt, while they might dure
They ran as of their liues vnsure
From the woods vnto the plaine
And from the valleyes, the high mountaine
They sought and ran as beasts blind
That cleane forgotten had their kind
This wo not ceased to counsaile went

Thele

These Lords, and for that lady sent
And of aunse what was to done
They her besought she say would sone
Weping full sore all clad in blake
This lady softely to them spake
And said, my lords by my trouth
This mischicke it is of your sloth
And if ye had that iudge would right
A prince that were, a very knight
Ye that ben of astate echone
Dye for his fault should one and one
And if he hold had the promesse
And done that longs to gentilnesse
And fulfilled the princes beheest
This hastie harme had bene a feast
And now is vnrecouerable
And vs a slaunder aye durable
Wherefore I say, as of counsaile
In me is none that may auaile
But if ye list for remembraunce
Puruey and make such ordinance
That the queene that was so meke
With all her women dede or seke
Might in your land a chappell haue
With some remembraunce of her graue
Shewing her end with the pity
In some notable old city
Nigh vnto an high way
Where euery wight might for her pray
And for all hers that haue been trew
And euen with that she changed hew
And twise wisshed, after the death
And sight, and thus passed her breath
Then said the Lords of the host
And so concluded least and most
That they would euer in houses of thacke
Their liues lead, and weare but blacke
And forsake all their pleasaunces
And turne all ioye to penaunces
And bare the dead prince to the barge
And named them should haue the charge
And to the hearse where lay the queen
The remnaunt went, and down on kneen
Holding their hondes on high con crie
Mercy, mercy, cuerich thrie
And cursed the time that euer slouth
Should haue such masterdome of trouth
And to the barge a long mile
They bare her forth, and in a while
All the Ladies one and one
By companies were brought echone
And past the sea and tooke the land
And in new herses on a sand
Put and brought were all anon
Unto a city closed with stone
Where it had been vsed aye
The kings of the land to lay
After they raigned in honours
And writ was which were conquerours
In an abbey of Nunnes which were blake
Which accustomed were to wake
And of vsage rise ech a night
To pray for euery lines wight
And so befell as is the guise
Ordeint and said was the seruise
Of the prince and of the queen
So deuoutly as might been
And after that about the herses
Many orisons and verses
Without note, full softely
Said were, and that full heartily
That all the night till it was day
The people in the Church con pray
Unto the holy Trinitie
Of those soules to haue pitie.

And when the night past and ronne
Was, and the new day begonne
The yong morow with rayes red
Which from the Sunne ouer all con spred
A tempered clere was and faire
And made a time of wholsome aire
Befell a wonder case and strange
Among the people and gan change
Soone the word and euery woo
Unto a ioy, and some to two
A bird all fedred blew and greene
With bright rayes like gold betweene
As small thred ouer euery ioynt
All full of colour strange and coint
Uncouth, and wonderfull to sight
Upon the quenes herse con light
And song full low and softely
Three songs in her harmony
Unletted of euery wight
Till at the last an aged knight
Which semed a man in great thought
Like as he set all thing at nought
With visage and ein all forwept
And pale, as man long vnslept
By the herses as he stood
With hasty hondling of his hood
Unto a prince that by him past
Made the bridde semwhat agast
Wherefore she rose and left her song
And depart from vs among
And spread her wings for to passe
By the place, he entred was
And in his hast shortly to tell
Him hurt, that backeward downe he fell

Item

From a window richly peint
With liues of many diuers feint
And bet his wings and bled fast
And of the hurt thus died and past
And lay there well an houre and more
Till at the last of briddes a store
Come and sembled at the place
Where the window broken was
And made swiche wamentacioun
That pity was to heare the soun
And the warbles of their throtes
And the complaint of their notes
Which from ioy cleane was reuerted
And of them one the glas soone perted
And in his beke of colours nine
An herb he brought flourdelise all grene
Full of small leaues and plaine
Swart and long with many a vaine
And where his fellow lay thus dede
This hearb down laid by his hede
And dressed it full softily
And hong his head and stood thereby
Which hearb in lesse then halfen houre
Gan ouer all knit, and after floure
Full out and were ripe the seed
And right as one another feed
Would, in his beake he tooke the graine
And in his fellowes beke certaine
It put, and thus within the third
Up stood, and prined him the bird
Which dead had be in all our sight
And both togither forth their flight
Toke, singing from vs, and their leue
Was none disturb hem would ne greue
And where they parted were, and gone
Thabbesse the seeds sowne echone
Gadred had, and in her hand
The herb she toke, well auisand
The leafe, the seed, the stalke, the floure
And said it had a good sauour
And was no common herb to find
And well approued of vncouth kind
And then other more vertuouse
Who so haue it might for to vse
In his nede, sowre, leafe, or graine
Of their heale might be certaine
And laid it downe vpon the herse
Where lay the quene and gan reherse
Echone to other that they had sene
And taking thus, the sede wex grene
And on the dry herse gan spring
Which me thought a wondrous thing
And after that floure, and new sede
Of which the people all tooke hede
And said, it was some great miracle
Or medicine fine more then triacle
And were well done there to assay
If it might ease in any way
The corses, which with torch light
They maked had there all that night
Some did the lords there consent
And all the people thereto content
With easie words and little fare
And made the quenes vilage bare
Which shewed was to all about
Wherefore in swoone fell whole the rout
And were so sorry most and least
That long of weping they not ceast
For of their lord the remembraunce
Unto them was such displeasaunce
That for to liue, they called a paine
So weee they very true and plaine
And after this the good abbesse
Of the graine gan chese and dresse
Three, with her fingers cleane and small
And in the quenes mouth by tale
One after other full easily
She put, and full conningly
Which shewed soone such vertue
That prised was the medicine trew
For with a smiling countenance
The queene vprose and of vsaunce
As she was wont to euery wight
She made good cheere, for which sight
The people kneling on the stones
Thought they in heauen were soule & bones
And to the prince where he lay
They went to make the same assay
And when the quene it vnderstood
And how the medicine was good
She prayed she might haue the graines
To releue him from the paines
Which she and he had both endured
And to him went and so him cured
That within a little space
Lusty and fresh on liue he was
And in good hele, and hole of speech
And lough, and said gramercy leech
For which the ioy throughout the town
So great was, that the bels sown
Afraied the people, a iournay
About the city euery way
And come, and asked cause and why
They ronged were so stately
And after that the queene, thabbesse
Made diligence, or they would cesse
Such, that of ladies soone a rout
Sewing the queene was all about
And called by name echone and told
Was none forgetten young ne old

There

There might men see ioyes new
When the medicine fine and trew
Thus restored had euery wight
So well the queue as the knight
Unto perfit ioy and hele
That fleting they were in such wele
As folke that would in no wise
Desire more parfit paradise
And thus when passed was the sorrow
With mikle ioy soon on the morrow
The king, the queen, and euery lord
With all the Ladies by one accord
A generall assembly
Gret cry, through the country
The which after as their intent
Was turned to a Parliament
Where was ordained and auised
Euery thing, and deuised
That please might, to most and least
And there concluded was the feast
Within the yle to behold
With full consent of young and old
In the same wise as before
As thing should be withouten more
And shipped, and thither went
And into strange Realmes sent
To kings, queenes, and dutchesses
To diuers princes and princesses
Of their image and can pray
That it might like them at that day
Of mariage, for their sport
Come see the yle, and them disport
Where should be iousts and tournaies
And armes done, in other waies
Signifying ouer all the day
After Aprill within May
And was auised that ladies tweine
Of good estate and well beseine
With certaine knights and squiers
And of the queenes officers
In manner of an embassade
With certain letters closed and made
Should take the barge and depart
And seeke my lady euery part
Till they her found, for any thing
Both charged haue queue and king
And as their lady and maistres
Her to beseke of gentilnes
At the day there for to been
And oft her recommaund the queen
And prayes for all loues to hast
For but she come all woll be wast
And the feast, a bustinesse
Without ioy, or lustinesse
And toke them tokens and good speed
Prayd God send, after their nede
Forth went the ladies and the knights
And were out fourteene daies and nights
And brought my lady in their barge
And had well sped and done their charge
Whereof the queue so heartily glad
Was, that in soth such ioy she had
When the ship approched lond
That she my lady on the lond
Met, and in armes so constraine
That wonder was behold them twaine
Which to my dome, during twelue houres
Neither for heat ne watry shoures
Departed not no company
Sauing themselfe, but none them by
But gaue them laysour at their ease
To rehearse ioy and disease
After the pleasure and courages
Of their young and tender ages
And after with many a knight
Brought were, where as for that night
They parted not, for to pleasaunce
Content was hert and countenaunce
Both of the queue, and my maistresse
This was that night their businesse
And on the morrow with huge rowt
This prince of lords him about
Come, and to my Lady said
That of her comming glad and well apaid
He was, and full cunningly
Her thanked and full heartily
And lough and smiled, and said ywis
That was in doubt in safety is
And commaunded do diligence
And spare for neither gold ne spence
But make ready, for on the morow
Wedded with saint John to borow
He would be, withouten more
And let them wite this lese and more
The morow come and the seruice
Of mariage in such a wise
Said was, that with more honour
Was neuer prince ne conquerour
Wedde, ne with such company
Of gentilnesse in chiualry
Ne of Ladies so great routs
Ne so beseen as all abouts
They were there, I certifie
You on my life withouten lie

And the feast hold was in tentis
As to tell you mine entent is
In a rome a large plaine
Under a wood, in a champaine
Betwixt a riuer and a well

Where neuer had abbay ne fell
Ben, ne kirke house ne village
In time of any mans age
And dured three months the feast
In one estate, and neuer ceast
From early the rising of the sonne
Till the day spent was and ygonne
In iusting, daunсing, and lustinesse
And all that sowned to gentilnesse

And as me thought, the second morrow
When ended was all old sorrow
And in surety, euery wight
Had with his lady slept a night
The Prince, the Queene, and all the rest
Unto my lady made request
And her besought oft, and prayed
To me wards to be wel apaied
And consider mine old trouth
And on my paines to haue routh
And me accept to her seruise
In such forme, and in such wise
That we both might be as one
Thus prayed the Queene, and euerichone
And for there should be no nay
They stint iusting all a day
To pray my lady and requere
Be content, and out of fere
And with good heart make friendly cheare
And said it was a happy yeare
At which she smiled and said ywis
I trow wel he my seruaunt is
And would my welfare as I trist
So would I his, and would he wist
How and I knew that his trouth
Continue would without slouth
And be such as ye here report
Restrayning both courage and sport
I couth consent at your request
To be named of your fest
And do after your plaunce
In obeying your pleasaunce
At your request this I consent
To please you in your entent
And eke the souraine aboue
Commanded hath me for to loue
And before other him prefer
Against which Prince may be no wer
For his power ouer all raigneth
That other would for nought him paineth
And sith his will and yours is one
Contrary in me shal be none
Tho (as me thought) the promise
Of marriage before the mese
Desired was of euery wight
To be made the same night
To put away all maner douts
Of euery wight thereabouts
And so was do, and on the morrow
When euery thought and euery sorow
Dislodged was out of mine hert
With euery wo, and euery smert
Unto a tent Prince and Princes
Me thought, brought me and my maistres
And said we were at ful age
There to conclude our marriage
With ladies knights and squers
And a great host of ministers
With instruments and sounes diuerse
That long were here to rehearse
Which tent was church perochiall
Ordaint was in especiall
For the feast and for the sacre
Where archbishop, and archdiacre
Song ful out the seruise
After the custome and the guise
And the churches ordinaunce
And after that to dine and daunce
Brought were we, and to diuerse plaies
And for our speed ech with praies
And merry was most and least
And said amended was the feast
And were right glad lady and lord
Of the marriage and thaccord
And wished vs hearts pleasaunce
Joy, hele, and continuaunce
And to the minstrils made request
That in encreasing of the fest
They would touch their cords
And with some new ioyeux accords
Moue the people to gladnesse
And praiden of all gentilnesse
Ech to paine them for the day
To shew his cunning and his play
Tho began sownes merueious
Entuned with accords ioyous
Round about all the tents
With thousands of instruments
That euery wight to daunce them pained
To be merry was none that fayned
Which sowne, me troubled in my slepe
That fro my bed forth I lepe
Wening to be at the feast
But when I woke all was leaft
For there nas lady ne creature
Saue on the wals old portraiture
Of horsmen, haukes and hounds
And hurt deare full of wounds
Some like bitten, some hurt with shot
And as my dreame seemed that was not

And when I wake, and knewe the trouth
And ye had seen of very routh
I trowe ye would haue wept a weke
For neuer man yet halfe so seke
I went escaped with the life
And was for fault that sword ne knife
I find ne might my life tabridge
Ne thing that kerued, ne had edge
Wherewith I might my woful paine
Haue voided with bleeding of my vaine
Lo here my blisse, lo here my paine
Which to my lady I do complaine
And grace and mercy her require
To end my wo and busy feare
And me accept to her seruise
After her seruice in such auise
That of my dreame, the substaunce
Might turne once to cognisaunce
And cognisaunce to very preue
By ful consent, and good leue
Or els without more I pray
That this night or it be day
I mote vnto my dream returne
And sleping so forth aie sojourne
About the pley of pleasaunce
Under my ladies obeisaunce
In her seruice, and in such wise
As it please her may to deuise
And grace ones to be accept
Like as I dreamed when I slept
And dure a thousand yeare and ten
In her good wil, Amen, Amen.

Fairest of faire, and goodliest on liue
All my secre to you I plaine, and shriue
Requiring grace and of complaint
To be healed or martered as a saint
For by my trouth I sweare, and by this booke
Ye may both heale and slea me with a looke.

Go forth mine owne true heart innocent
And with humblesse, do thine obseruaunce
And to thy lady on thy knees present
Thy seruice new, & think how great plesance
It is to liue vnder the obeisance
Of her that may with her loks soft
Giue thee the blisse that thou desirest oft.

Be diligent, awake, obey, and dreede
And not to wild of thy countenaunce
But meeke and glad, and thy nature leed
To do eche thing, that may her plesance
When thou shalt sleep, haue aie in remẽbrance
Thimage of her which may with loks soft
Giue thee the blisse that thou desirest oft.

And if so be that thou her name find
Written in booke, or els vpon wall
Looke that thou as seruant true and kind
Thine obeisaunce as she were there withall
Fayning in loue is breeding of a fall
From the grace of her whose lokes soft
May giue the blisse that thou desirest oft.

Ye that this Balade read shall
I pray you kepe you from the fall.

The Floure and the Leafe.

When that Phebus his chaire of gold so hie
Had whirled vp the sterry sky aloft
And in the Boole was entred certainly
When shoures sweet of raine discended oft
Causing the ground fele times and oft
Vp for to giue many an wholsome aire
And euery plaine was clothed faire

With new greene and maketh small flours
To springen here and there in field & in mede
So very good and wholsome be the shoures
That it renueth that was old and deede
In winter time and out of euery seede
Springeth the herbe so that euery wight
Of this season weyeth glad and light

And I so glad of the season swete
Was happed thus vpon a certaine night
As I lay in my bed sleepe ful vnmete
Was vnto me, but why that I ne might
Rest I ne wot for there nas earthly wight
As I suppose had more hearts ease
Then I, for I had sickenesse nor disease

Wherefore I mervaile greatly of my selfe
That I so long withouten sleepe lay
And vp I rose three houres after twelfe
About the springing of the day
And on I put my geare and mine array
And to a pleasaunt groue I gan passe
Long or the bright sonne vp risen was

In which were Okes great streight as a line
Vnder the which the grasse so fresh of hew
Was newly sprong and an eight foot or nine
Euery tree well fro his fellow grew
With braunches brode lade with leues new

That

That ſpꝛongen out ayen the ſonne ſhene
Some very red and ſome a glad light grene

Which as me thought was right a pleſaunt
And eke the bꝛidde̅s ſong foꝛt here (light
Would haue reioiſed any earthly wight
And I that couth not yet in no manere
Heare the Nightingale of all the yere
Full buſily herkened with hart and with eare
If I her voice perceiue coud any where

And at the laſt a path of litle bꝛeade
I found that greatly had not vſed be
Foꝛ it foꝛgrowen was with graſſe and weede
That well vneth a wight might it ſe
Thouꝛt I this path ſome whider goth parde
And ſo I followed till it me bꝛought
To right a pleaſaunt herber well ywꝛought

That benched was and with turfes new
Freſhly turued whereof the greene gras
So ſmall, ſo thicke, ſo ſhoꝛt, ſo freſh of hew
That moſt like vnto green wel wot I it was
The hegge alſo that yede in compas
And cloſed in all the green herbere
With ſicamour was ſet and eglatere

Wꝛethen in fere ſo wel and cunningly
That euery bꝛaneh and leafe grew by meſure
Plain as a boꝛd of an height by and by
I ſee neuer thing I you enſure
So wel done foꝛ he that tooke the cure
It to make ytrow did all his peine
To make it paſſe all tho that men haue ſeyne

And ſhapen was this herber roofe and all
As a pꝛety parlour and alſo
The hegge as thicke as a caſtel wall
That who that liſt without to ſtond oꝛ go
Though he would all day pꝛien to and fro
He ſhould not ſee if there were any wight
Within oꝛ no but one within well might

Perceiue all tho that yeden there without
In the field that was on euery ſide
Couered with coꝛne and graſſe ẏ out of doubt
Though one would ſeeke all the woꝛld wide
So rich a field coud not be eſpide
On no coaſt as of the quantity
Foꝛ of all good thing there was plenty

And I that all this pleaſaunt ſight ſie
Thought ſodainly I felt ſo ſweet an aire
Of the eglentere that certainly
There is no heart I deme in ſuch diſpaire
Ne with thoughts froward and contraire
So ouerlaid but it ſhould ſoone haue bote
If it had ones felt this ſauour ſoote

And as I ſtood and caſt aſide mine eie
I was ware of the faireſt Medle tre
That euer yet in all my life I ſie
As ful of bloſomes as it might be
Therein a goldfinch leaping pꝛetile
Fꝛo bough to bough and as him liſt he eet
Here and there of buds and floures ſweet

And to the herber ſide was ioyning
This faire tree of which I haue you told
And at the laſt the bꝛid began to ſing
Whan he had eaten what he eat wold
So paſſing ſweetly that by manifold
It was moꝛe pleaſaunt then I coud deuiſe
And when his ſong was ended in this wiſe

The Nightingale with ſo merry a note
Anſwered him that all the wood rong
So ſodainly that as it were a ſote
I ſtood aſtonied ſo was I with the ſong
Thoꝛow rauiſhed that till late and long
I ne wiſt in what place I was ne where
And ayen me thought ſhe ſong euē by mine ere

Wherefoꝛe I waited about buſily
On euery ſide if I her might ſee
And at the laſt I gan full well eſpy
Where ſhe ſat in a freſh greene laurey tree
On the further ſide euen right by me
That gaue ſo paſſing a delicious ſmell
Accoꝛding to the eglentere full well

Whereof I had ſo inly great pleaſure
That as me thought I ſurely rauiſhed was
Into Paradiſe where my deſire
Was foꝛ to be and no ferther paſſe
As foꝛ that day and on the ſote graſſe
I ſat me downe foꝛ as foꝛ mine entent
The birds ſong was moꝛe conuenient

And moꝛe pleaſaunt to me by many fold
Than meat oꝛ dꝛinke oꝛ any other thing
Thereto the herber was ſo freſh and cold
The wholſome ſauours eke ſo comfoꝛting
That as I demed fꝛith the beginning
Of the woꝛld was neuer ſeen oꝛ than
So pleaſant a ground of none earthly man

And as I ſat the birds harkening thus
Me thought that I heard voices ſodainly
The moſt ſweeteſt and moſt delicious

That euer any wight I trow trewly
Heard in their life for the armony
And sweet accord was in so good musike
That the voice to Angels most was like

At the last out of a groue euen by
That was right goodly and pleasant to sight
I sie where there came singing lustily
A world of ladies but to tell aright
Their great beauty it lieth not in my might
Ne their array neuertheless I shall
Tell you a part though I speake not of all

The surcotes white of veluet wele sitting
They were clad and the semes echone
As it were a maner garnishing
Was set with Emerauds one and one
By and by but many a rich stone
Was set on the purfiles out of dout
Of colors sleues and traines round about

As great pearles round and orient
Diamonds fine and rubies red
And many another stone of which I went
The names now and euerich on her head
A rich fret of gold, which without dread
Was full of stately rich stones set
And euery lady had a chapelet

On her head of fresh and grene
So wele wrought and so merueilously
That it was a noble sight to sene
Some of laurer and some ful pleasantly
Had chapelets of woodbind and sadly
Some of Agnus castus were also
Chapelets fresh but there were many of tho

That daunced and eke song ful soberly
But all they yede in maner of compace
But one there yede in mid the company
Soole by her selfe but all followed the pace
That she kept, whose heauenly figured face
So pleasaunt was and her wele shape person
That of beauty she past hem euerichon

And more richly beseene by many fold
She was also in euery maner thing
On her head ful pleasaunt to behold
A crowne of gold rich for any king
A braunch of Agnus castus eke bearing
In her hand and to my sight trewly
She lady was of the company

And she began a roundell lustely
That Suse le soyle, de vert moy men call
Seen & mon ioly euer en dormy
And than the company answered all
With voice sweet entuned and so small
That me thought it the sweetest melody
That euer I heard in my life soothly

And thus they came daunsing and singing
Into the middes of the mede echone
Before the herber where I was sitting
And God wot me thought I was wel bigone
For than I might auise hem one by one
Who fairest was who coud best dance or sing
Or who most womanly was in all thing

They had not daunced but a little throw
When that I heard not fer of sodainly
So great a noise of thundering trumps blow
As though it should haue departed the skie
And after that within a while I sie
From ỳ same groue where ỳ ladies come out
Of men of armes comming such a rout

As all ye men on earth had ben assembled
In that place wele horsed for the nones
Stering so fast that all the earth trembled
But for to speake of riches and stones
And men and horse I trow ye large wones
Of Petit John ne all his treasory
Might not vneth haue bought ỳ tenth party

Of their array who so list heare more
I shal rehearse so as I can a lite
Out of the groue that I spake of before
I sie come first all in their clokes white
A company that were for their delite
Chapelets fresh of okes seriall
Newly sprong and trumpets they were all

On euery trumpe hanging a broad bancre
Of fine Tartarium were ful richely bete
Euery trumpet his lords armes here
About their necks with great pearles set
Colers brode for cost they would not lete
As it would seeme for their scochones echone
Were set about with many a precious stone

Their horse harneis was all white also
And after them next in one company
Came kings of armes and no mo
In clokes of white cloth of gold richly
Chapelets of greene on their heads on hye
The crowns ỳ they on their scochones bere
Were set with pearle ruby and Saphere

And eke great Diamonds many one

But all their hoꝛſe harneis and other geare
Was in a ſute accoꝛding euerichone
As ye haue heard the foꝛeſaid trumpets were
And by ſeeming they were nothing to leꝛe
And there guiding they did ſo manerly
And after hem came a great company

Of heraudꝭ and purſeuaunts eke
Arraied in clothes of white veluet
And hardily they were no thing to ſeke
How they on hem ſhould the harneis ſet
And euery man had on a chapelet
Scochonꝭ and eke hoꝛſe harneis in dede
They had in ſute of hem that bekoꝛe him yede

Next after hem came in armour bꝛight
All ſaue their heads ſeemely knights nine
And euery claſpe and naile as to my ſight
Of their harneis were of red gold fine
With cloth of gold and furred with ermine
Were the trappou.s of their ſtedes ſtrong
Wide and large that to the ground did hong

And euery booſe of bꝛidle and paitrell
That they had was woꝛth as I would wene
A thouſand pound and on their heads well
Dꝛeſſed were cꝛownes of laurer grene
The beſt made that euer I had ſene
And euery knight had after him riding
Thꝛee henſh men on him awaiting

Of which euery on a ſhoꝛt tronchoun
His loꝛds helme bare ſo richly bight
That the woꝛſt was woꝛth the raunſoun
Of a king, the ſecond a ſhield bꝛight
Bare at his neck the thꝛed bare vpꝛight
A mighty ſpheare ful ſharpe ground and kene
And euery child ware of leaues grene

A freſh chapelet vpon his haires bꝛight
And clokes white of fine veluet they were
Their ſteeds trapped and raied right
Without difference as their loꝛds were
And after hem on many a freſh coꝛſere
There came of armed knights ſuch a rout
That they beſpꝛad the large field about

And all they were after their degrees
Chapelets new made of laurer grene
Some of oke and ſome of other trees
Some in their hondꝭ bare boughes ſhene
Some of laurer and ſome of okes kene
Some of hauthoꝛne and ſome of woodbind
And many mo which I had not in mind

And ſo they came their hoꝛſes freſhly ſtering
With bloody ſownes of her trompes loud
There ſie I many an vncouth diſguſing
In the arrap of theſe knights pꝛoud
And at the laſt as euenly as they coud
They took their places in middes of the mede
And euery knight turned his hoꝛſe hede

To his fellow and lightly laid a ſpeare
In the reſt and ſo iuſtes began
On euery part about here and there
Some bꝛake his ſpere, ſome dꝛewdown hoꝛſe and man
About the field aſtray the ſteeds ran
And to behold their rule and gouernaunce
I you enſure it was a great pleaſaunce

And ſo the iuſtes laſt an houre and moꝛe
But tho that cꝛowned were in laurer grene
Wan the puſe their dints were ſo ſoꝛe
That there was none ayenſt he might ſuſtene
And the iuſting all was left of clene
And fꝛo their hoꝛſe the ninth alight anon
And ſo did all the remnant euerichon

And foꝛth they yede togider twain and twain
That to behold it was a woꝛldly ſight
Toward the ladies on the green plain
That ſong and daunced as I ſaid now right
The ladies as ſoone as they goodly might
They bꝛake of both they ſong and dance
And yede to meet hem with full glad ſemblãce

And euery lady tooke ful womanly
By the hond a knight and foꝛth they yede
Unto a faire laurer that ſtood faſt by
With leues lade the boughes of great bꝛede
And to my dome there neuer was indede
Man that had ſeen halfe ſo faire a tre
Foꝛ vnderneath there might it wel haue be

An hundꝛed perſons at their own pleſance
Shadowed fꝛo the heat of Phebus bꝛight
So that they ſhould haue feit no greuance
Of raine ne haile that hem hurt might
The ſauour eke reioice would any wight
That had be ſicke oꝛ melancolius
It was ſo very good and vertuous

And with great reuerence they enclining low
To the tree ſo ſoot and faire of hew
And after that within a little thꝛow
They began to ſing and daunce of new
Some ſong of loue ſome plaining of vntrew
Environing the tree that ſtood vpꝛight
And euer yede a lady and a knight

And at the last I cast mine eie aside
And was ware of a lusty company
That came coming out of the field wide
Hond in hond a knight and a lady
The ladies all in surcotes that richely
Purfiled were with many a rich stone
And euery knight of greene ware mantels on

Embrouded well so as the surcotes were
And euerich had a chapelet on her hed
Which did right well vpon the shining here
Made of goodly floures white and red
The knights eke that they in hond led
In sute of hem ware chapelets euerichone
And before hem went minstrels many one

As Harpes, Pipes, Lutes, and Sautry
All in greene and on their heads bare
Of diuers floures made full craftely
All in a sute goodly chapelets they ware
And so dancing into the mede they fare
In mid the which they found a tuft that was
All ouerspradd with floures in compas

Whereto they enclined euerichon
With great reuerence and that full humbly
And at the last there began anon
A lady for to sing right womanly
A Bargaret in praising the daisie
For as me thought among her notes swete
She said Si douiet & la Margarete

Then they all answered her in fere
So passingly well and so pleasauntly
That it was a blisful noise to here
But I not it happed sodainly
As about noone the sonne so feruently
Ware whote that the pety tender floures
Had lost the beauty of her fresh coloures

Forshronke with heat the ladies eke todrent
ỹ they ne wist where they hem might bestow
The knights swelt for lack of shade nie shent
And after that within a little throw
The wind began so sturdily to blow
That down goeth all the floures euerichone
So that in all the mede there laft not one

Saue such as succoured were among ỹ leues
Fro euery storme that might hem assaile
Growing vnder hegges and thicke greues
And after that there came a storme of haile
And raine in feare so that withouten faile
The ladies ne the knights nade o threed
Dry on them so dropping was her weed

And whan ỹ storm was cleane passed away
Tho in white that stood vnder the tre
They felt nothing of the great affray
That they in greene without had in yde
To them they yede for routh and pite
Them to comfort after their great disease
So faine they were the helpelesse for to ease

Then I was ware how one of hem in greene
Had on a crown rich and well sitting
Wherfore I demed wel she was a Quene
And tho in greene on her were awaiting
The ladies then in white that were coming
Toward them and the knights in fere
Began to comfort hem and make hem chere

The Queen in white ỹ was of great beauty
Tooke by the hond the queen ỹ was in greene
And said suster I haue right great pity
Of your annoy and of the troublous tene
Wherein ye and your company haue bene
So long alas, and if that it you please
To go with me I shall do you the ease

In all the pleasure that I can or may
Wherof the tother humbly as she might
Thanked her for in right ill array
She was with storm and heat I you behight
And euery lady then anon right
that were in white, one of them took in greene
By the hond, which when ỹ knights had sene

In likewise ech of them took a knight
Clad in greene and forth with hem they fare
To an hegge where they anon right
To make their lists they would not spare
Boughes to hew downe and eke trees square
Wherwith they made hem stately fires great
To dry their clothes ỹ were wringing weat

And after that of herbs that there grew
They made for blisters of the sonne brenning
Very good and wholsome ointments new
Where that they yede the sick fast anointing
And after that they yede about gadering
Pleasaunt salades which they made hem eat
For to refresh their great vnstaunch heat

The lady of the leafe then began to pray
Her of the floure for so to my seeming
They should be as by their array
To soupe with her, and eke for any thing
That she should with her all her people bring
And she ayen in right goodly manere
Thanketh her of her most friendly cheare

Saying

Saying plainly that she would obay
With all her hart all her commaundement
And then anon without lenger delay
The lady of the Leafe hath one ysent
For a palfray after her intent
Arayed well and faire in harneis of gold
For nothing lacked that to him long should

And after that to all her company
She made to purvey horse and every thing
That they needed and then full lustily
Even by the herber where I was sitting
They passed all so pleasantly singing
That it would haue comforted any wight
But then I sie a passing wonder sight

For then the nightingale that all the day
Had in the laurer sete, and did her might
The whol service to sing longing to May
All sodainly gan to take her flight
And to the lady of the leafe forty right
She flew, and set her on her hond softly
Which was a thing I marueled of greatly

The goldfinch eke that fro the medill tre
Was fled for heat into the bushes cold
Unto the Lady of the Flower gan fle
And on hir hond he set him as he wold
And pleasantly his wings gan to fold
And for to sing they pained hem both as sore
As they had do of all the day before

And so these Ladies rode forth a great pace
And all the rout of knights eke in fere
And I that had sene all this wonder case
Thought I would assay in some manere
To know fully the trouth of this matere
And what they were that rode so pleasantly
And when they were the herber passed by

I drest me forth and happed to mete anon
Right a faire Lady I you ensure
And she come riding by hir selfe alone
All in white with semblance ful demure
I saluted her and bad her good aventure
Must her befall as I could most humbly
And she answered, my doughter gramercy

Madam (qd. I) if that I durst enquere
Of you I would fayne of that company
Wit what they be that past by this arbere
And she ayen answered right friendly
My faire doughter all tho that passed hereby
In white clothing, be seruants everichone
Unto the Leafe, and I my selfe am one

Se ye not her that crowned is (qd. she)
All in white, Madame (qd. I) yes
That is Diane goddes of chastity
And for bicause that she a maiden is
In her hond the braunch she bereth this
That Agnus castus men call properly
And all the ladies in her company

Which ye se of that heard chaplets weare
Be such as han kepte alway her maidenhede
And all they that of laurer chaplets beare
Be such as hardy were and manly indeed
Victorious name which neuer may be dede
And all they were so worthy of ther hond
In her time that none might hem withstond

And tho that weare chapelets on ther hede
Of fresh woodbind, be such as neuer were
To loue untrue in word, thought, ne dede
But aye stedfast, ne for pleasance ne fere
Thogh that they should their harts all to tere
Would neuer flit, but euer were stedfast
Till that their lines there asunder brast

Now faire madame (qd. I) yet I would pray
Your ladiship if that it might be
That I might know by some maner way
Sith that it hath liked your beaute
The trouth of these Ladies for to tell me
What that these knights be in rich armour
And what tho be in grene and weare the flour

And why that some did reuerence to the tre
And some unto the plot of floures faire
With right good will my fair doghter (qd. she)
Sith youre desire is good and debonaire
Tho nine crowned be very exemplaire
Of all honour longing to chiualry
And those certaine be called the nine worthy

Which ye may se riding all before
That in her time did many a noble dede
And for their worthines ful oft haue bore
The crowne of Laurer leaues on their hede
As ye may in your old bookes rede
And how that he that was a conquerour
Had by laurer alway his most honour

And tho that beare bowes in their hond
Of the precious laurer so notable
Be such as were I woll ye understond
Noble knights of the round table
And eke the douseperis honourable
Which they beare in signe of victory
It is witnes of their dedes mightily

Eke there be knights old of the Garter
That in her time did right worthily
And the honour they did to the laurer
Is forby they haue their laud wholly
Their triumph eke, and marshall glory
Which vnto them is more parfit riches
Then any wight imagine can or telle

For now I am acertained throughly
Of euery thing I desired to know
I am right glad that I haue said sothly
Ought to your pleasure if ye will me trow
(Qd. she) ayen but to whome doe ye owe
Your seruice, and which will ye honour
Tell me I pray, this yeere the leafe or the flour

For one leafe giuen of that noble tre
To any wight that hath done worthily
And it be done so as it ought to be
Is more honour then any thing earthly
Witnes of Rome that founder was truly
Of all knighthood and deeds marueious
Record I take of Titus Liuius

Madame (qd. I) though I least worthy
Unto the leafe I owe mine obseruaunce
That is (qd. she) right well done certainly
And I pray God to honour you auaunce
And kepe you fro the wicked remembraunce
Of male bouch, and all his crueltie
And all that good and well conditioned be

And as for her that crowned is in greene
It is Floza of these floures goddesse
And all that here on her awaiting beene
It are such that loued idlenes
And not delite of no buisines
But for to hunt and hauke and play in medes
And many other such idle dedes

For here may I no lenger now abide
I must follow the great company
That ye may see yonder before you ride
And forth as I couth most humbly
I tooke my leue of her as she gan hie
After them as fast as euer she might
And I drow homeward for it was nigh night

And for the great delite and pleasaunce
They haue to the floure and so reuerently
They vnto it do such obeisaunce
As ye may se, now faire Madame (qd. I)
If I durst aske what is the cause and why
That knights haue the signe of honour
Rather by the leafe than by the floure

And put all that I had seen in writing
Under support of them that lust it to rede
O little booke thou art so vnconning
How darst thou put thy self in preas for drede
It is wonder that thou werest not rede
Sith that thou wost ful lite who shall behold
Thy rude langage full boistously vnfold

Explicit.

Sothly doughter (qd. shee) this is the trouth
For knights euer should be perseuering
To seeke honour without feintise or slouth
Fro wele to better in all maner thing
In signe of which with leaues aye lasting
They be rewarded after their degree
Whose lusty green May, may not appaired be

But aye keping their beauty fresh and greene
For there nis storme that may hem deface
Haile nor snow wind nor frosts kene
Wherfore they haue this propertie and grace
And for the floure within a little space
Woll be lost so simple of nature
They be, that they no greeuance may endure

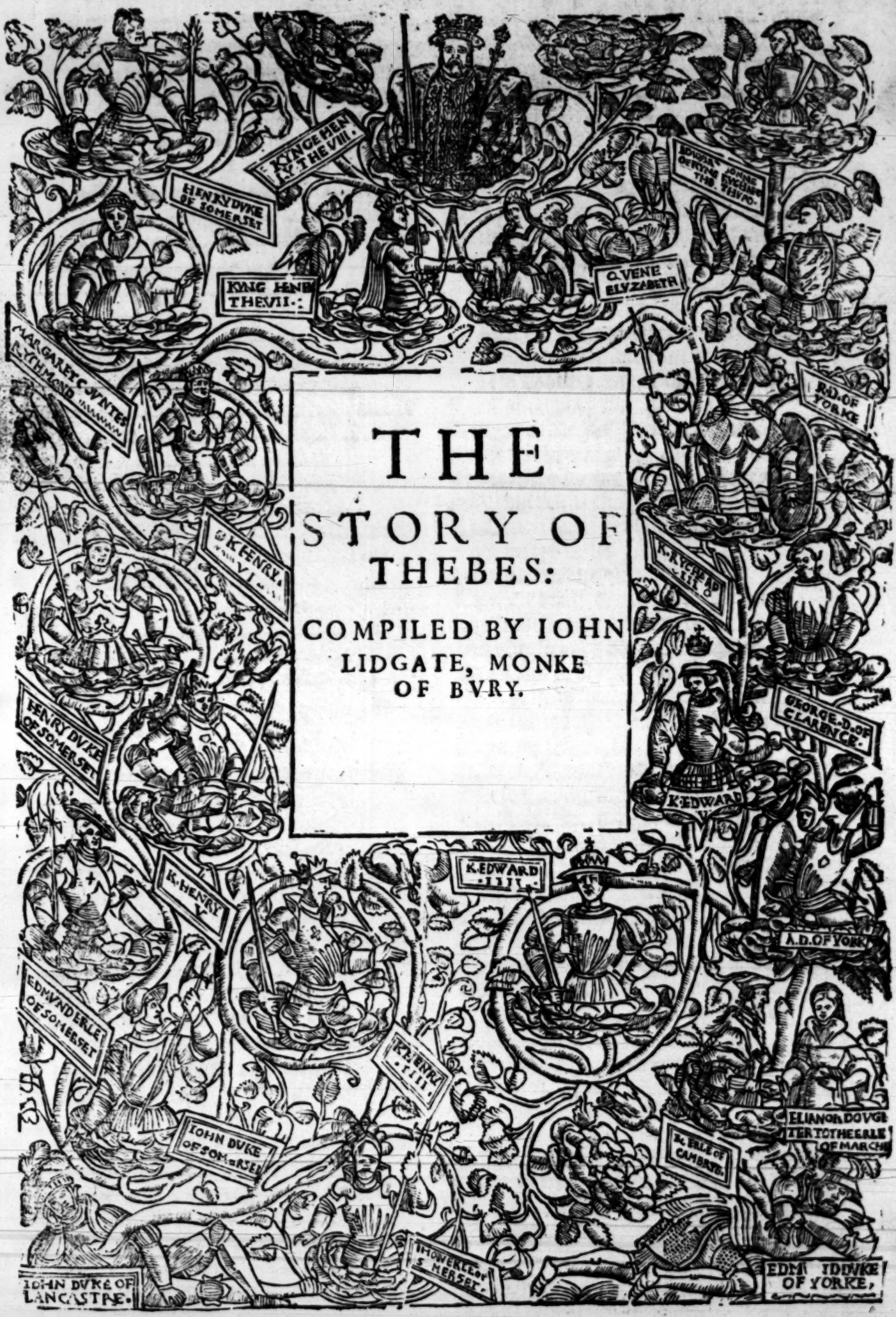
And euery storme will blow them saone away
Ne they last not but for a season
That if their cause the very trouth to say
That they may not by no way of reason
Be put to no such occupacion
Madame (qd. I) with all mine whole seruise
I thanke you now in my most humble wise

Chaucers wordes vnto his owne Scriuener.

Adam Scriuener if euer it thee befall
Boece or Troyles for to write new(scall
Under thy long locks thou maist haue ỹ
But after my making thou write more trew
So oft a day I mote thy werke renew
It to correct and eke to rubbe and scrape
And all is thorow thy negligence and rape.

Et sic est finis.

Thus endeth the workes of Geffray Chaucer.



THE STORY OF THEBES:

COMPILED BY IOHN LIDGATE, MONKE OF BVRY.

Here beginneth the Prologue of the Story of Thebes.

WHen bright Phebus passed was the Ram,
Midde of Aprill, and into the Bull cam
And Saturn old, with his frostie face
In Virgine, taken had his place
Melancolike and slow of motion
And was also in thoppolition
Of Lucina the Moone, moist and pale
That many shoure, fro heauen made auaile
When Aurora was in the morow redde
And Jupiter in the Crabbes hedde
Hath take his paleis, and his mansion
The lustie time, and ioly fresh season
When that Flora, the noble mighty quene
The soile hath clad, in new tender greene
With her flourys, craftily meint
Braunch and bough, with white & red depeint
Flering the Baume, on hilles and on vales
The time in soth, when Canterbury tales
Complet and told at many sondry stage
Of estates, in the pilgrimage
Euerich man, like to his degree
Some of disport, some of moralitee
Some of knighthood, loue and gentillesse
And some also, of perfit holinesse
And some also, in soth of ribaudrie
To make laughter, in the company
Eche admitted, for none would other greue
Like as the Loke, the Mylar and the Reue
Aquite hem selfe, shortly to conclude
Boistously in her termes rude
When they hadden well dronken of the bolle
And eke also with his pilled nolle
The Pardoner, beardles all his chin
Glasslie eyes, and face of Cherubin
Telling a tale, to anger with the Frere
As openly, the story can you lere
Word by word, with euery circumstance
Echone pwrite, and put in remembraunce
By him that was, if I shall not faine
Floure of Poets, throughout all Bretaine
Which sothly had most of excellence
In Rhetorike, and in eloquence
Rede his making, who list the trouth find
Which neuer shall, appallen in my mind
But alway fresh beene in mine memory
To whom be youe prise, honour and glory
Of well seeing first in our language
Thicke Register, in this pilgrimage
All that was told, forgetting nought at all
Fained tales, nor thing hitorial
With many Prouerbs, diuers and vncouth
By rehearsaile, of his sugred mouth
Of eche thing, keping in substaunce
The sentence whole, without variaunce
Voiding the chaffe lothly for to laine
Enlumining the true piked graine
By crafty writing of his sawes sweet
Fro the time that they did mete
First the pilgrimes sothly euerichone
At Tabard, assembled one by one
And fro Southwerke, sothly for to say
To Canterbury riding on her way
Telling a tale, as I rehearse can
Liche as the host assigned euery man
None so hardie his bidding disobey
And this while that the pilgrimes ley
At Canterburie, well lodged one and all
I not in soth what I may it call
Hap or Fortune in conclusion
That me befell, to enter into the toun
The holy sainct plainly to visit
After my sickness vowes to acquite
In a Cope of blacke, and not of greene
On a palfray slender, long and lene
With rustie bridell, made not for the sale
My man tofore me with a void male
That of Fortune tooke mine Inne anon
Where the pilgrimes were lodged euerichone
The same time, her gouernour the host
Stonding in halle, full of wind and bost
Liche to a man, wonders sterne and fers
Which spake to me, and said anon dan Piers
Dan Dominike, dan Godfray or Clement
Ye be welcome newly into Kent
Though your bridel haue nother boos ne bell
Beseeching you that ye wil tell
First of your name, and what countre
Without more, shortly that ye be
That loke so pale, all deuoid of blood
Upon your head a wonder thredbare hood
Well arrated, for to ride late
I answered, mine name was Lidgate
Monke of Bury, nie fiftie yere of age
Come to this toun, to doe my pilgrimage
As I haue hight, I haue thereof no shame
Dan John (qd. he) well brouke ye your name
Though ye be sole, with right glad and light
Praying you to Suppe with vs this night
And ye shall haue made, at your deuis

A great pudding, or a round hagis
A tranch moile, a tansie or a froise
To been a Monke, slender is your coise
Ye haue ben sicke, I dare mine head assure
Or lette sede in a faint pasture
Lift vp your head, be glad take no sorrow
And ye should home ride with vs to morow
I say when ye refted haue your fill
After supper, slepe will done none ill
Wrap well your head clothes round about
Strong nottie ale, will make you to rout
Take a pillow that ye lie not low
Ikneed be, spare not to blowe
To hold wind, by mine opinion
Will engendre, Colles passion
And make men to greuen on her roppes
When thei haue filed her mawes & her crops
But toward night, eate some Fenell rede
Annis, Comin, or Coriander sede
And like as I power haue and might
I charge you, rise not at midnight
Though it so be the moon shine clere
I will my selfe be your Orlogere
To morow early, when I see my time
For we will forth pareell afore prime
Accompany parde shall do you good
What looke vp Monke, for by Cockes blood
Thou shalt be merrie, who so that say nay
For to morow, anon as it is day
And that it ginne, in the East daw
Thou shalt be bound to a new law
At going out of Canterburie toun
And lien aside thy profession
Thou shalt not chese, nor thy selfe withdraw
If any mirth be found in thy maw
Like the custome of this company
For none so proud that dare me denie
Knight nor knaue, Chanon, Priest, ne Nonne
To tell a tale plainly as they konne
When I assigne and see time opportune
And for that we, our purpose woll contune
We will homeward, the same custome vse
And thou shalt not, plainly thee excuse
Be now well ware, studie well to night
But for all this, be of heart light
Thy wit shal be the sharper and the bet
And we anon were to supper set
And serued well vnto our pleasance
And soon after by good gouernaunce
Vnto bedde goeth euery manner wight
And toward morow as soone as it was light
Euery pilgrime, both bet and worse
As badde our hoste, tooke anon his horse
When the Sunne rose in East full clere
Fully in purpose, to come to dinere
Vnto Osprying, and breake there our fast
And when we were fro Canterburie past
Nought the space, of a bow draught
Our host in hast, hath my bridell raught
And to me saied, as it were in game
Come forth dan John, by your christen name
And let vs make some maner mirth or play
Shete your horts, a twenty deuill way
Is no disport, so to patere and say
It woll make your lips wonder dray
Tell some tale, and make thereof a tape
For by my Rouncie thou shalt it not escape
But preach not of none holinesse
Ginne some tale, of mirth or of gladnesse
And nodde not with thine heauy berke
Tell vs some thing that draweth to effect
Onely of ioy, make no lenger let
And when I saw it would be no bet
I obeyed vnto his bidding
So as the law me bound in all thing
And as I coud with a pale chere
My tale I gan anon, as ye shall here.

Finitur Prologus de Thebes.

Et sequitur quoque pars prima libri.

Here beginneth the history of the distruction of the City of Thebes,

SIrs (qd. I) sith of your courtesie
I entred am, into your company
And admitted, a tale for to tell
By him that hath, power to compell
I meane our host, gouernour and guide
Of you echone riding here beside
Though that my wit, barein be and dull
I wil rehearse, a story wonderfull
Touching the siege and destruction
Of worthy Thebes, the mighty roiall toun
Built and begun, of old antiquite
Upon the time, of worthy Iosue
By diligence of King Amphion
Thicke cause first, of his foundacion
For which his fame, which neuer shall away
In honour flowreth, yet vnto this day
And in story remembred, is and praised
But how the wals, were on height raised
It is wonder, and maruelle for to here
But if you list, I shal you platly lere
The maner whole, platly in sentence
Under support, of your patience
As write mine author, and Bochas both two
Read her bookes, and ye shal find it so
How this king, this prudent Amphioun
With his sweetnesse, and melodious soun
The city built, that whilome was so strong
And armony of his sweet song
By vertue only, of the werbles sharpe
That he made in Mercuries Harpe
Of which the strengs were not touched soft
Whereby the wals, raised were aloft
Without craft of any mans hand
Ful yore ago, and of Greekes land
Which is a thing of Poets told
Neuer ysein, nother of yong nor old
But as Bochas, list to specifie
Cleare expouning, this darke Poesie
Sith Mercury, God of eloquence
Take by the might of heauenly influence
Unto this king at his natiuite
Through glad aspects that he should be
Most excellent, by craft of Rhetorike
That in this world, was none to him like
Which signifieth to hem that been prudent
The Musicall, the lusty instrument
I meane the Harpe, most melodious
Loue to this king by Mercurius
And his song, this author can you teach
Was nothing, but the crafty speach
Of this king ycalled Amphion
Whereby he made, the countries enuiron
To haue such lust in his words sweet
That were so pleasant, sauourable and meet
In her eares, that shortly there was none
Disobeisaunt, with the king to gone
Where so euer, that him list to assigne
His chere, his port, was eft so benigne
That through his stering, and exhortacioun
With him they went, first to build this toun
And forsooke, ech man his country
By one assent to make this city
Roiall and rich, that liche was none
And thus the wals, made of lime and stone
Were reised first, by singing of this King
Liche as Poets, faine in her writing
Passing rich, and roial of entaile
Here may ye see, how much may auaile
The goodlihead, and the lowlinesse of a king
And specially, in chere and in speaking
To his lieges, and to bearen hem faire
In his apport, and shew him debonaire
And not to been, to straunge ne solein
In countinance outward, be disdein
Which causeth oft, who that can aduert
Great hatred in the peoples hert
And therevpon, priuely woi rowne
When a Prince, doth vpon hem frowne
Shortly deme, for all his excellence
Emong hemselfe, out of his presence
Euerich conclude, liche his fantasie
And thus ful oft, gendred is enuie
In folkes hearts, of solcunte and pride
For such as list not ones to looke aside
To reward hem when they low lout
And againe kind, it is out of doubt
That any heed, by record of the wise
Should the foot of disdaine dispise
Which beareth him vp, who so can take heede
And sustaineth, in his most neede
As his piller, and his suppoaile
For finally, ne were the poraile
Her bearer vp, and supportacion
Farewell Lordship, and denomination
Throughout the land, of euery high estate
Wherefore me seemeth, more is fortunate
Of Mercury the swote sugred Harpe
Then Mars sweard, whetted kene and sharp
More accepted with aspects good
Then is this God, with his lookes wood

What the goodlihead of a prince auaileth to winne the hearts of his people.

For humble speech, with glad countenaunce
May a Prince, soothly auaunce
Among his people, harts for to winne
Of inward loue, which will not twinne
Then gold, richesse, pride or tyranny
Other disdaine, daunger or surquedy
For of Lords, clerks can report
But that loue, her crowne doe support
The fine is not, in conclusion
I take record, of King Amphion

Example good of King Amphion.

That built Thebes, by his eloquence
More then of pride, or of violence
Noble and rich, that like was no where none
And thus the wals made of lime and stone
Were reised first by singing of this king
Like as Poets fayned in her writing

How after the opinion of some aucthours, King Cadmus build first the citty of Thebes.

But soothly yet, some expositours
Grounding hem, vpon old aucthours
Saine that Cadmus, the famous old man
Ful long afore, the city first began
And the ground, of building set
And the bounds, by compasse out met
With thonges out kerue, of a Bulles side
Which enuiron, stretch might wide
To get in land, ful large space
Wherevpon to build, a dwelling place

How the country of Boece, tooke first his name of a Bulles skinne, and after called Thebes. And how King Cadmus was exiled out of Thebes, by prowesse of King Amphion.

And called was the soile, thus getten in
Whilom Boece, of the Buls skin
The name after, into Thebes tourned
But Cadmus, hath not there long sotourned
Like in story, as it is compiled
For shortly he fro thence was exiled
Neuer after for to dwel in the toun
By the knighthood of this Amphioun
Which vp performeth, rich for the nones
The city Thebes, of mighty square stones
As I you told, a lite here tofore
And Cadmus, thus his kingdome hath lorne
Sceptre and crowne, and his power totall
Now haue I told, vnto you ground of all
That ye wel know by information
Clearely the pith, and the position
Of this matter, as clerkes can you tell
It were but vain, lenger for to dwell
To tary you on this mattere
Sith my tale, which that ye shal here
Vpon our way, wil last a long while
The space in sooth, as I suppose of vii. mile
And now ye know, first how Amphioun
Built and began, this city and this toun
Raigning there, long after as I rede
Of him no more, for I wil procede
To my purpose, that I first began
Not telling here, how the line ran

How the line of Amphion by discent, was conuaied to King Laius.

Fro king to king, by succession
Conueying downe, by the stocke of Amphion
Seriously by line, all the discent
But leaue all this, plainly of entent
To tel forth, in bookes as I rede
How Laius, by processe gan succede.

Here beginneth the story of King Laius, and Iocasta his wife.

THo beare the Crowne, in this mighty land
Holding the Scepter, of Thebes in his hand
Manly and wise, during all his life
And Iocasta, called was his wife
Full womanly, the story saith certein
For a time, though she were barein
Til Laius, in ful humble wise
To haue a child, did Sacrifice
First Appollo, in his chaire so bright
And Iupiter, that hath so great a might
Beseeching hem, with deuout reuerence
To graunt only, through her influence
That his request, executed may bee
And specially, to Goddesses three
He besought, Pallas and Iuno

And

And Diane, for to helpe also
That he be not defrauded, of his boone
And his prayer, accepted was ful soone
That finally, through his rites old
Euenlike, as his hart wold
The Queene Iocasta, hath anon conceiued
Which when the kyng fully hath perceiued
He made in hast, him list not to abide
Through his kingdome, messengers ride
Fro coast to coast, the story can deuise
For Diuinours, and Philosophers wise
For such as were famous Philiciens
And wel expert, Astronomiens
To come in hast, vnto his presence
To find out, shortly in sentence
By craft only, of calculacion
The childs fate, and disposicion

How the Astronomiens, and Philosophers of Thebes, calcled out the fate of Edippus.

And therupon, to yeue a iudgement
The root I take, at the ascendent
Truly sought out, by minute and degree
The selfe houre, of his natiuitee
Not forget, the heauenly mansions
Clearely searched, by final fractions
First by seconds, terces, and eke quartes
On Augrime stones, and on white cartes
Vpriued out, by diligent labour
In tables correct, deuoid of all errour
Iustly sought, and found out of both two
The yeares collect, and expause also
Considred eke, by good inspection
Euery houre, and constellacion
And ech aspect, and looke eke diuers
Which were good, and which also peruers
Where they were toward, or at debate
Happy, wilful, or infortunate

The cursed constellation, and disposition of the heauen, and the natuity of Edippus.

And finally, in conclusion
They found Saturne, in the Scorpion
Heauye cheared, Malencolike and loth
And wood Mars, furious and wroth
Holding his scepter, in the Capricorne
The same houre, when this child was borne
Venus direct, and contrarious
And depressed in Mercurius hous
That the dome, and iudgement finall
Of these clerkes, to speak in speciall
By fatall fort, that may not be withdraw
That with his swerd, his fader shall be slaw

How the fate of Edippus disposed, that he should slea his owne father.

There may no man, helpe it ne excuse
On which thing, the kyng gan sore muse
And cast he would, on that or ther side
Again her dome, for himselfe prouide
Shape away, and remedy to forne
Bidding the Queen, when ỳ child were borne
Without mercy, or moderly pitee
That he be dead, it may none other bee
And in all hast, like as he hath sent
She obaied his commaundement
With wofull heart, and pitous looke
And face pale, her young sonne she tooke
Tender and greene, both of flesh and bones
To certaine men, ordained for the nones
Fro point to point, in all manner thing
To execute the bidding of the king
They durst not delay it nor abide
But to a forrest that stood there beside
They tooken her way, and fast gan hem speed
The Kings will, to performe indeed
Hauing thereof, pasting heauinesse
But when that, they beheld the faierenesse
Of the child, and excellent beauty
In her heart, they had great pity
And plainly cast, emong hem was no strife
That the child, should haue his life
And anon high vpon a tree
In place, that no man might it see
They heng him vp, the story can rehearce
But first his feet, they gan through pierce
And on boughes, tender tough and smale
They knit him vp, shortly this is no tale
Him to preserue, from beasts wild and rage
And after that, they tooken her voiage
Toward Thebes, in all the hast they may
But of fortune, thilke same day
With her hounds, searching vp and doun
The hunts went of king Polibon
Through the forrest, gan for to find
Some atone, and some come behind
And gan search, and seeke wonder fore
Emong the hils, and the holts hore
And as they rengen, the trenches by and by
They heard a noise, and a pitous cry

How the huntes of King Polibon, found the child in the forrest, and presented him vnto the King.

Of this child, honging on a tree
And all at ones, drough hem for to see
And left not, till they haue him found
And tooke him downe, and his feet vnbound
And bare him home, vnto Polibon
King of Archady, the famous region
And when that he, the child first can see
Of his wounds, he had great pitee
To behold, his tender feet so biede
And called him Edippus, as I rede
Which is to sain plainly, this is no sage
Bored the feet, as in that langage
And first the King, in his roiall hall
Made his men, a norice for to call
This yong child, to foster and to kepe
With her milke, that he nought ne wepe
And his Leches, he charged eke also
Til he were whole, her deuour for to do
Fully in purpose, for this child was feire
After his day, to maken him his heire
For cause only, who so taketh heed
Sonne had he none, by line to succeed
And that he had a wife or none
I find not, and therfore I let it gone
But by processe, of daies and of yeares
This Edippus, emong his playing feares
Was in port passing full of pride
That none with him, might in peace abide
In hart he was so inly surquidous
Malencolike and contrarious
Ful of despite, and of high disdaine
That no wight durst, shortly him withsaine
Til on a day, he gan with one debate
To whom he had specially great hate
Which of rancour, and of hasty tene
As he that might his pride not sustene
Gan vpon him cruelly to braid
And vnto him felly thus he said
Whereto (qd. he) art thou so proud of port
Contraire also, euer in any disport
Froward and fell, lasting euery in one
As thou were Lord, of vs euerichone
And presumest fully in werking
Like as thou were sonne vnto the King
And descended of his roiall blood
But whether so thou, be wroth or wood
Thou art nothing, if thee list take hede
Appertaining vnto his kinrede
But in a forrest founden and vnknow
Whē thou were yong, therfore beare thee low
And vtterly remember thee if thee list
Thy birth and blood, are both two vntwist
This is the fine, shortly of my tale
Wherewith Edippus gan to wexe pale
And chaunge also, cheare and countenaunce
And gan apeint in his remembraunce
Word by word, and forgat right nought
And felly mused in this, and aboue thought
And cast he would, without more tarrying
The trouth enquire of Polibon the King
And when he saw opportune space
And the King in a secret place
He him besought, lowly on his knee
To his request, benignely to see

The request of Edippus, vnto the King Polibon.

And that he would plainly, and not spare
Of his birth, the true ground declare
And make him sure, of this thing anone
If he were, his very sonne or none
And Polibon only of gentillesse
When he beheld, the great heauinesse
Of Edippus, and the woful paine
He gan dissimule, and in a maner faine
Liche as he had ben, verily his heire
But more and more, he falleth in dispeire
And downe ayen, on knees gan fall
Him coniuring, by the Goddes all
To tel trouth, and nothing to hide
Affirming eke, he wil not abide
Lenger with hym, but riden and enquere
Til time, he may the very sooth lere
In any part of hap, or of fortune
And for that he was so importune
In his desire, the King without abode
Curiously told told him, how it stode

The answere of the King vnto Edippus.

In a forest first, how he was found
Vpon a tree, by the feet ybound
And how he cast in conclusion
To make him King of that region
After his day, shortly for to tell
But Edippus, would no lenger dwell
But tooke leaue, and in hast gan ride
To a Temple fast there beside
Of Apollo, in story as is told
Whose statue stood, in a chaire of gold
On wheles foure, burned bright and shene
And within, a Spirit ful vncleene
By fraud only, and fals illusion
Answere yaue to euery question
Bringing the people, in ful great errour
Such as to him did false honour
By rites vsed, in the old dawes
After the custome of Paganmes lawes
And Edippus, with ful humble chiere

To

To Apollo made his preiere
Beseeching him, on his knees low
By some signe, that he might know
Through euidence, shortly comprehended
Of what kinred, that he was discended
And when Edippus, by great deuocion
Fynished hath fully his oryson
The fiend anon, within inuisible
With a voice dreadful and horrible
Bad him in hast, take his voiage
Toward Thebes, where of his linage
He hearen shall, and be certified
And on his way, anon he hath him hied
By hasty iourney, so is his horse constrained
Day by day, till he hath attained
Unto a castel, Pilotes yealled
Rich and strong, and wele aboue ywalled
Adiacent by right of the country
And appertinent, to Thebes the city
Kyng Laius being there present
For to hold a maner of turnement
With his knights, young and couragious
And other folke, that were desirous
To preue hemselfe, shortly for to tell
Who that by force, other might excell
Or get a name, through his prowesse
Euerich of hem, did his businesse
On horsebacke, and eke on foot
All be that some, found it full vnsoot
Rather a play, of war then of peace
Where Edippus put himselfe in preace
As he that was alle ready to debate
Enforcing him, to enter in at gate
Maugre all tho, that him would let
And in the preace, of auenture he met

How Edippus slough his Fader by ignoraunce, at the Castell of Pilotes.

King Laius, and cruelly him slough
Though the story, telleth not hough
Ne no wight can, of all the company
By no signe, it verily aspy
By whose hond, the King was slaw
For Edippus, gan him in hast withdraw
And kept him coy of entencioun
Great was the noise, and pitous soun
In the castell, for slaughter of the King
Dole and complaint, sorrow and weping
But for they saw, that heauines and thought
Ayenst death, auaileth lite or nought
They ordaine, with rites full royall
For the feast, called Funerall
And eke the custome, of the daies old
The corps they brent, into ashes cold
And in a vessell, round made as a ball
They closed him, in gold and metall
And after that, did her busie cure
In Thebes, to make a Sepulture
And richely, hem list no lenger let
The ashes, they did enclose and shet
Of this matter, there is no more to sayen
But to Edippus, I will retourne ayen
Which him enhasteth aie, from day to day
Toward Thebes, in all that euer he may
Brenning in hart, as whote as any fire
The fine to know, of his fatall desire
But for that he, failed of a guide
Out of his way, he went fer aside
Through a wild, and a wast countree
By a mountaine, that stood vpon the see.

How Edippus passed by the hill, where the Monster lay, that was called Spinx.

Where that Monsters, of many diuers kind
Were conuersaunt, in story as I find
Emong which, soothly there was one
So inly cruell, that no man durst gone
For dread of death, forth by that passage
This Monster was, so mortall in his rage
Which had also, by discripcion
Body and foot, of a fierce Lion
And like a maid, in soth was head and face.

The destruction of the foule Monster.

Fell of his looke, and cruell to manace
And odious of countenaunce and sight
And as I rede, Spinx that Monster hight
Worse then Tigre, Dragon, or Serpent
And I suppose, by Enchauntement
He was ordained, on the hill tabide
To slea all tho, that passeden beside
And specially all, that did faile
To expoune, his misty deuinatle
His probleme eke, in words plaine and bare
Without auise, fully to declare
Or with the life, he might not escape
This is very sooth, plainly and no iape
And if that he, by declaracion
Yaue therevpon, cleare exposicion
He should in hast, there was none other mene
Slaen this Monster, for all his cruell tene
There may of mercy, be none other graunt
But of all this, Edippus ignoraunt
This dreadful hill, stonding a roch
Or he was ware, ful nigh gan approch
More perrilous platly, that he wend

And sodainly, the Monster gan desrend
To stoppen his way, and letten his passage
Thus abreding, with a fel courage

The words of the foule Monster.

Saied, I haue in hart inly great disport
That fortune hath, brought thee to my fort
To make a prise, if thou may endure
The fatall end, of this auenture
Set at a fine, soothly by daies old
And by and by, all the case him told
Charging him, to bee wel ware and wise
Get the palme, and beare away the prise
Touching this thing, set atwene vs tweine
Of life or death, which we shall dreine
And this Monster, with a dispitous cheare
His probleme gan, thus as ye shull heare.

The probleme that Spinx put to Edippus.

There is a beast, mercilous to see
The which in sooth at his natiuitee
Is of his might, so tender and so grene
That he may, himselfe not sustene
Upon his feet, though he had it sworne
But if that he, be of his moder borne
And afterward, by processe of age
On foure feet, he maketh his passage
And then vpon three, if I shal not faine
And alderlast, he goeth vpright on twaine
Diuers of port, and wonderful of cheares
Til by length, of many sondry yeares
Naturally, he goeth ayen on three
And sithen on foure, it may none other bee
And finally, this is the trouth plein
He recouereth kindly ayein
To the matter, which that he came fro
Lo here my probleme, is all ydo
Muse herevpon, without war of strife
It to declare, or lese thy life
And when Edippus, can this thing auert
Wel assured, in his manly hert
Gan in his heart, search vp and doun
And of prudence, cast in his reasoun
By great auise, what thing this may be
Seeing also, that he may not fle
And how there was, counsaile none ne rede
To tel trouth, or els to be dede
And by ful good deliberation
Thus he answered, in conclusion
Thou Spinx (qd. he) false and fraudolent
Thou foule Monster, thou dragon, thou serpēt
That on this hill, like as I conceiue
Liest in await, folkes to deceiue
But trust wel, for all thy sleighey wit
Thy false fraud, shal anon be quit
Me list not to whisper, neither roune
But thy probleme, I shal anon expoune
So openly, thou shalt not go therefro
Lo this it is, take good heed thereto

How Edippus expouned the probleme, that Spinx put vnto him.

Thilke beast, thou spake of heretofore
Is euery man, in this world yborne
Which may not go, his limmes be so soft
But as his moder, beareth him aloft
In her armes, when he doeth cry or weepe
And after that, he ginneth for to creepe
On foure feet, in his tender youth
By experience, as it is oft couth
Afore ycrekened, his hands both two
And by processe, thou maiest consider also
With his two feet, for all thy fell rene
He hath a staffe, himselfe to sustene
And then he goeth, shortly vpon three
And alderlast, as it must needes bee
Upholding his staffe, he walketh vpon twaine
Til it so be, through age he attaine
That luste of youth, wasted be and spent
Then in his hond, he taketh a potent
And on three feet, thus he goeth ayen
I dare affirme, thou maiest it not withsein
And soone after, through his vnwieldy might
By influence, of natures right
And by experience, as euery man may know
Like a child, on foure he creepeth low
And for he may here, no while sotourne
To yearth ayen, he must in hast retourne
Which he came fro, he may it not remew
For in this world, no man may eschew
This very sooth, shortly and no dout
When the wheele of kind commeth about
And naturally hath his cours ynome
By circuit, as doth the sphere some
That man and child, of high and low estate
It gayneth not, to make more debate
His time yset, that he must fine
When Atropos, of malice doth entwine
His liues threed, by Cloto first compouned
Lo here thy probleme, fully is expouned
At euery meeting, as I tooke on hond
To the law, that thou must needs stond
And in all hast, of mine honds dey
For of reason, thou canst it not withsey
And this Spinx, awaped and amate
Stood all dismaied, and disconsolate

with

With chere doun cast, heauy as any leade
And Edippus anon, smote off the head
Of this fend, stinking and vnswete
And the country set wholly in quicte
Whereby he hath such a price wonne
That his fame in euery coast is ronne
Through all ỳ lond, ỳ this monster was slaw
And line right, to Thebes he gan drawe
Well receiued for his worthinesse
For his manhood and his prowesse
And for they seigh, he was a semely knight
Well fauoured in euery mans sight
And saw also Thebes, the mighty toun
Not onely they, but all the regioun
Were destitute of a gouernour
Ayen her foon, hauing no succour
Hem to defend, but the Quene alone
Emong hemselfe, making full great mone
For there was none as bookes specifie
The sceptre and croune to occupy
For which the Lords all by one assent
Within a toune set a parlement
Shortly concluding, yif it might been
Prudently to treat with the Quene
Namely they, that held hem selfe most sage
To condiscend by way of marriage
She to be ioyned to this manly knight
Passing prudent, and famous eke of might
Most holie man, as they can discerne
The worthy citie to kepe and gouerne
And through counsaile of the lords all
To her desire plainly she is fall
And accorded, without more tarrying
That of Thebes, Edippus shall be king
By full assent was none that saied nay
And time set ayen a certaine day
Emong hemselfe and finally deuised
The wedding was, in Thebes solempnised
Full rially, that nedes must vntrue
Onely for he, his moder tooke to wiue
Unwist of both, he was of her blood
And ignorant, shortly how it stood
That he tofore, had his fader slaw
For which this wedding, was ayenst the law
And tofore God, is neither fair ne good
Nor acceptable blood to touch blood
Which cause hath be, of great confusion
In many a lond and many a region
Ground and root of vnhap and mischaunce
The fine concluding alway with vengeaunce
As men haue seen by cleare experience
And holy writ recordeth in sentence
How Herode faithly, in his life
By violence toke, his brothers wife
For she was faire, and pleasant to his sight
And kept her still, by force through his might
Although to her, title had he non
And for her sake the holy man saint John
For his trouth, in prison lost his hede
Wherefore I rede euery man take hede
Whether so he be lord, prince, or king
That he beware, to eschue such wedding
Ere that the sword of vengeance him manace
Lest he lese hap, fortune, and grace
Taking ensample in all maner thing
Of Edippus, in Thebes crounced king
All be that he wrought of ignorance
Full darke and blind, of his wofull chaunce
And yif vnwist that he of innocence
As ye haue herde, fell in such offence
For which he was punished, & brought lowe
What are they worthy that her errour know
And from the knot list not to abstaine
Of such spousaile, to God and man vncleue
I can not sein, ne more thereof deuise
Demeth your selfe, that prudent been & wise
And eke Edippus haueth emong in mind
Of whome the wedding like as ye may find
Unhappy was, and passing odious
Infortunate, and eke vngracious
I am weary more thereof to write
The hatefull processe also to endite
I passe ouer, fully of intent
For Imeneus was not there present
Nor Lucina, list not there to shine
Ne there was none of the Muses nine
But one accord to maken melody
For there song not, by heauenly armony
Neither Clio, nor Caliope
None of the sustren, in nomber thrise thre
As they did, when Phitolaie
Ascended vp high, aboue the skie
To be wedded, this Lady vertuous
Unto her Lord, the God Mercurius
And as Patrician, ynamed de Capelle
In his booke of wedding, can you telle
There concluding in his marriage
The Poet, that whilom was so sage
That this Ladie called Sapience
Ywedded was vnto Eloquence
As it sat well, by heauenly purueiaunce
Hem to be ioyned by knot of alliaunce
But both two sothly of intent
At wedding, in Thebes were absent
That caused after, great aduersity
For finall end, of that solemnity
Was sorow and wo, and destruccion
Utter ruine of this roiall toun
There may no man, helpe it ne succour
For a time in ioy though they flour.

The names of the people, being at the wedding of the king Edippus, and of Iocasta the Quene.

But at his wedding, plainly for to tell
Was Cerberus, chief porter of hell
And Herebus, fader to Hatred
Was there present, with his wholl kinred
His wife also with her browes blacke
And her doughters, sorow for to make
Hidously chered and vgly for to see
Megera, and Thesiphonee
Alecto eke, with Labour and Emie
Ired, Fraud, and false Trechery
Treason, Pouert, Indigence and Nede
And cruell Death, in his rent wede
Wretchednesse, Complaint, and eke Rage
Fearfull, Pale, Dronkennes, croked age
Cruell Wars, and many a Tigre wood
Brenning ire, and vnkind blood
Fraternall hate, depe set in the root
Sauf only death, that there nas no boot
Allured othes, at fine vntrew
All these folke were at wedding new
To make the towne desolate and bare
As the story after shall declare
But aie in Thebes, with his walles strong
Edippus raigneth many a day and long
And as mine author write in wordes plain
By Iocasta, he had sonnes twain
Ethiocles, and also Polimite
And in bookes, as sondry Clerkes write
Doughters two, full goodly on to se
Of which that one hight Antigone
And that other called was Ismein
Of her beauty inly sourerein
Edippus aie, deuoid of warre and strife
With Iocasta, ledde a merrie life
Till fortune of her iniquitie
Had enuie of his prosperitie
For when he shone most rich in his renoun
From her whele, she plunged him adoun
Out of his ioy into sodain woo
As she is woont frowardly to do
And namely hem that setten her affiaunce
Of hartily trust, in her variannce
For when the king, passing of great might
Sat with the quene, vpon a certaine night
Casually, when his folke echone
Out of chamber sodainly were gone
Ere he was ware, Iocasta gan behold
The careers of his wounds old
Upon his feete imprinted wonder depe
Touraing her face, brast out for to weepe
So secretly he might it not espie
And she anon, fell into a fantasie
Aye on this thing musing more and more
And in her bed, gan to sighen sore
And when the king conceiueth her distresse
He gan inquire of her heauines
Fully the cause, and thoccasion
For he will wite, in conclusion
What her aileth, and why she farde so
My Lord (qd. she) without wordes mo
Percell cause of this sodain rage
Is, for that I in my tender age
Had a Lord ynamed Laius
King of this toun, a man right vertuous
By whom I had a sonne right wonder faire
Likely to ben his successour and haire
But bicause his Diuinours told
At his birth, sothly that he should
Yif he had life, by fatall destine
Slaen his fader, it might none other be
For which the king his fate to eschue
Bad men in hast, as him thought due
To slea the child, and haue thereof no roth
And I anon, bad without sloth
To certaine men, vp pain of iudgement
To execute the commaundement
Of the King, as I paue hem in charge
And forth they gone to a forest large
Adiacent vnto this countree
Persing his feet, and heng him on a tree
Not performing therecution
On him they had such compassion
Left him there, and resorted home ayen
Being in doubt and vncerten
At their repaire, as they tolden all
Of this child, what afterward is befall
Sauf they said, hunts had him found
Which ladden him forth, & his feete vnbound
But to what coast they could not declare
Which percell is, of mine euill fare
Ground and cause of mine heauy chere
Considered eke, the wounds that appeare
Upon your feet, & wot not what they mene
And o thing aie is at mine hart grene
My Lord alas, but of new date
King Laius slain, was but late
At a Castell nigh this country
Upon your comming into this city
All this yweyed, and reckened into one
Maketh mine heart as heauy as a stone
So that I can counsell none ne red
And with that word the king lift vp his hed
And abreid with sharpe sighes smert
And all this thing by order can aduert
Curiously by good auisement
And by signes cleare and euident

Concei-

Concelueth well and sore gan repent
It was himselfe, that Iocasta ment
And when the king sigh in maners plain
By her Goddes, she gan him constrain
To shew out the cause of his affray
And it expoune, and make no delay
Crop and root, shortly why that he
Entred first, into that countre
From whence he came, & from what region
But he her put in delusion
As he had done at for the nones
Till at last he brast out at ones
Unto the quene and gan a processe make
First how he was in the forest take
Wounded the feet, and so forth euery thing
Of his cherishing, with Polibon the king
And whole the cause why he him forsoke
And in what wise he the way tooke
Coward Thebes, as Apollo bad
And of fortune how that he was lad
Where that Sphinx kept the mountaine
And how that he also slowe in certaine
King Laius at the castle gate
Coward night, when it was full late
And how to Thebes, that he gan him spede
To find out the stocke of his kinrede
Which vnto him gan waxe couth
For by processe of his greene youth
He found out wele by reckening of his life
That she was both his moder and his wife
So that all night, and suing on the morow
Betwene hem two began a new sorow
Which vnto me were pitous for to tell
For thereupon yif I should dwell
A long space, it would you occupy
But ye may read in a Tragedy

Tragœdiæ Senece de Egipto Reg. Thebax.

Of Worall Seneck, fully his ending
His dole, his mischicke, and his complaining
How with sorow and vnwieldy age
This Edippus fell in dotage
Lost his wit and his worldly delite
And how his sonnes had him in despite
And of disdaine, tooke of him no keepe
And eke bookes sain, his yen out he wepe
And as mine author liketh to deuise
As his sonnes, rebuke him and despise
Upon a day, in a certain place
Out of his head his yen he gan race
And cast at hem, he can none other boot
And of malice they trade him vnder foot
Fully deuoid both of loue and dread
And whē Edippus, for mischiek was thus ded
Within a pit, made in the yearth low
Of cruelty his sonnes gan him throw
Worse then Serpent, or any Tygre wood
But of cursed stocke commeth vnkind blood
As in story, ye may rede heretofore
Al by though the Rose grow out of the thorne
Thus of Edippus when he was blind & old
The wretched end, I haue you plainly told
For which shortly, to man and child I rede
To be well ware, and take heed
Of kindly right, and of conscience
To do honour and due reuerence

How euery man ought of duty, to doe reuerence to his Father and Mother, or els there will fall vengeance.

To fader and moder of what estate thei be
Or certaine els, they shull neuer thee
For who that is not to them debonaire
In speach, in port, for to treat hem faire
Hem to obay in honesty and drede
And hem to cherish of what they haue nede
I dare affirme, excepting none estate
That he shall first be infortunate
In all his werke, both on sea and lond
And of what thing that he take on hond
For the time forward, to him and contraire
Waste of his goods, plainly and appaire
Find plenty of conteke, warre and strife
Unhappy end, and shortnes of life
And gracelesse, of what he hath to do
Hatred of God, and man also
Therefore no man, be thereof reckles
But make your mirrour, of Ethiocles
And his brother, called Polimite
Which in such things greatly wer to wite
As ye shall here, of hem how it fill
And when we ben discended doun this hill
As I passed here the low vaile
I shall begin the remnant of my tale.

Explicit prima pars istius Codialli.

Immediate sequitur secunda pars eiusdem.

PAssed ỳ Thrope, of Boghton on the blee
By my kalender I gan ation to see
Through the Sonne, ỳ full clere gan shine
Of the clocke, that it drew to nine
And saw also, as siluer drops shene
Of the dew like perles on the grene
Vapoured vp into the aire aloft
When Zephyrus with his blowing soft
The weder made lustie, smooth and faire
And right attemper, was the holesome aire
The same houre, all the whol rout
Of the pilgrimes, riding round about
In my tale, whom I gan procede
Rehearsing forth as it was indede
When Edippus, buried was and graue
How his sonnes the kingdome for to haue

How the sonnes of Edippus, debated for the crowne.

Emong hem selfe, by full mortall hate
For the croune, gonne for to debate
Which of hem iustly shall succede
And the Sceptre of the toune possede
Auerting nought, neither to right ne wrong
But ech of hem, to make his party strong
And his querele, proudly to sustene
From whose hearts was deuoided cleane
Of brotherhood, the faithfull alliance
False couetise so made hem at distaunce
Fully werching, into destruccion
And ruine of this noble toun
So hote brent, of hatred and enuie
Of both two, through pompous surquedie
That neither would plainly in a point
Other forbeare, they stode in such diuoynt
Like as they had of birth bene forcins
Till of the toun the noble citizeins
Knights, Barons, with many a worthy lord
Shope a way, to make hem of accord
And to set them in quiet and in pees
But for his part, this Ethiocles
Alledge gan, that he was first borne
For which he ought of reason, go tofore
In the citie to be crouned king
Sith by law there was no letting
For vnto him longeth the heritage
By discent, and by title of age

The controuersie of the two brethren.

But Polimite of full high disdaine
All openly, gan reply againe
And for his part, said in especiall
Reason was none, that he should haue all
Both Regalie, and dominacion
And the lordship wholly of the toun
And he right nought out of the city
But line in vile and in pouerty
Concluding without fere or drede
Rather then it suffer he would be dede
And thus alas, through her enuious strife
At end, euerich lost his life
At great mischefe, as ye shall after here
But thilke time, the Lords all in fere
Full busily did her diligence
By great auise, and full high prudence
To set hem in quiet, and in rest
Counsailing hem plainly for the best
To leaue her strife, of wisdome and of reason
And condiscend to some conclusion
Which to both, might most auaile
And finally, through her gouernaile

The common vnion betweene these two brethren.

The Lords all tho being present
Haue hem brought to been of one assent
Of one heart, as brother vnto brother
Euerich of hem to raigne after other
Yere by yere, as it commeth about
So that the toun, shall absent him out
Fully that yere, and himselfe gie
By his manhood, and his chiualrie
Haunt himselfe in dedes Marciall
While his brother in his Seriall
Holdeth his Sceptre, the city to gouerne
And when the yere, his course hath run yern
And is come out, he shall haue repeire
To reigne in Thebes, like as Lord and heire
There to receiue fully his dignity
While that other, voideth the city
Pacientlie taking his auenture
Till he ayen his honour may recure
Thus interchaunge euery yere they shall
That one ascendeth, that other hath a fall
They must obey, of heart and take it well
Like as that one, reioyeth of the wele
For this was whole the composition
Betweene the brethren, and conuencion

Fully

Fully knit vp by great auisement
To forze the Goddes, by othe of Sacrament
Neuer after to grutch ne to vary
But accomplish shortly and not tarry
Like as thaccord enrolled in the toun
From point to point, made mencioun.
But alderfirst by reason of his age
Ethiocles had the auantage
To reigne afore, and weare the crown
Polimite him hasting out of toune
During that yere, it may none other be
Whiles his brother sate in his royalte
Full richly, vpon Fortunes whele
And rode him forth armed bright in stele
This Polimite, sothly as I rede
Himselfe alone, on a royall stede
Without guide, all the long day
Being aferd, to kepe the high way
In his heart hauing suspicion
To his brother of malice and treason
Lest he pursue through fals & vnkind blood
to haue him dead, for couetise of good
That he alone might haue possession
During his life fully of the toun
For which in hast hauing no felaw
Polimite aside gan him withdraw
By a forest, toyning to the See
Knowing right nought, the site of ỹ countre
Full of hilles, and of high mountaines
Craggie rockes, and but few plaines
Wonder dredfull, and lothsome of passage
And therewithall full of beasts rage
Holding his way, of heart nothing light
Mate and weary, till it draweth to night
And all the day, beholding enuiroun
He neither saw Castle, Towre, ne toun
The which thing greueth him full sore
And sodainly the Sea began to rore
Wind and tempest hidously tarise
The raine doun beat in full grisly wise
That many a beast therof was adrad
And nigh for fere gan to were madde
As it sempte, by the wofull sownes
Of Tigres, Beares, Bores and Lioums
Which for refute, hemselfe for to saue
Euerich in hast draweth vnto his caue
But Polimite in this tempest huge
Alas the while findeth no refuge
Ne him to shroud saw no where no succour
Till it was passed almost midnight houre
A large space, that the starres cleare
The clouds voided, in heauen did appeare
So that this knight out of the forest large
Gan approch, into the lond of Arge

How Polimite first came into the Land of Arge.

Seeing a Pallace mighty of building
Of which Adrastus called was the king
A lustie man, rich and wondre sage
And yonne was somdeale into age
Borne of the yle that called is Chison
And somtime sonne, of the king Cholon
And for his wit, in story as is couth
He chosen was in his tender youth
Of Arge to be crowned king
Chiefe of all Greece, by record of writing
Not by discent nor succession
And but aloncly of free election
He held of Arge, the Scepter in his hand
As most worthy of all Greekes land
Loued and drad for wisdome and iustice
And as the story plainly can deuise
This worthy king, had daughters two
Passing faire, and right good also
It were to long her beauty to descriue

Argiue and Deiphile, the daughters twaine of king Adrastus.

And the eldest called was Argiue,
Deiphile ynamed the second
And Adrastus, like as it is found
This worthy king had sonne none
To succed, after he be gone
For which he was during all his life
Triste in heart, and passingly penslife
But wholly his trust and his hope stood
By alliance of some worthy blood
Brought in by mene of his doughters twain
That he shalbe released of his pain
Through recomfort of some high mariage
And sothly yet, full oft in his corage
He troubled was, by occasion
Of a sweuene, and of a vision

The dreame of king Adrastus of a wild Bore and a fierse Lion.

Shewed to him, vpon a certain night
For as him thought, his inward sight
While he slept, by cleare inspection
A wild Bore and a fierse Lyon
Possede shull, these beasts in her rage
His doughters two by bond of mariage
In short time within a certaine day
Which brought his hart in full great affray

But

But thing in soth that destine hath shape
Here in this world, full hard it is tescape
And maruelous, a man to tschue his fate
And Polimite, of whome I spake late
With the tempest bete, and all bereined
By grace only, the citie hath attained
Where Adrastus, full stately of degree
Thilke time held his ryall see
The trouble night, derke and obscure
Hath brought this knight, onely by auenture
Through the city enclosed with a wall
Unto the palaice chefe and principall
Where as the king in his chamber aloft
Lay in his bed and slept wonder soft
Eke all his folke, had her chambers take
Like as Fortune, parauenture had shape
Theselfe time, because it was so late
And casuelly the porter at gate
As it had be right for the nones
And in a porche, buit of square stones
Full naightily, enarched enuiroun
Where the domes, and pies of the toun
Were executed, and lawes of the king
And there this knight without more tarying
Weary and mate from his Steed alite
Hanging the reine in all the hast he might
Upon his arme, sure him for to kepe
And laid him doun, and gan anon to slepe
As him semed that time for the best
And while that he lay thus for to rest
Of auenture there came a knight riding
One the worthiest of the world liuing
Curteis, lowly, and right vertuous
As saith mine auctor called Tideus
Vrous in armes, and manly in werking
Of his birth, some vnto the king
Of Calidoine, a lond of great renoun
As he alas out of that regioun
Exiled was, for he his brother slow
As the stage of Thebes writ the manner how
Al be that he, to him no malice ment
For on a day, as they on hunting went
In a forest for Hart and for Hind
So as he stood vnder a great linde
And casually let his Arow slippe
He slough his brother Menclippe
Through mortall sort, his hand was begiled
For which he was banished and exiled
As the law narow set his charge
As for this case, he came first to Arge
Into the porch where Polimite did slepe
Of auenture, ere he toke any kepe
The same night hidously besein
With the tempest of thundre and of rein
And felt also anoy and great damage
Through the forest holding his passage
As Polimite had doe tofore
In perceil oft, likely to be lore
With beasts rage, set on euery side
Till of grace, without any guide
He rode through Arge, the great mighty toun
Strait vnto the palace & to ỹ chief dongeoun
Like as I told where Polimite lay
And at his comming made a great affray
For he was blind through darknes of ỹ nizt
And him to gie, he ne fond no light
Whan he came in, of priket ne of torch
Till he vnwarely entred into the porch
And would haue take, there his herbergage
But Polimite stert vp in a rage
Sodainly awaked, as I rede
With the neying of his proud Stede
And first of all, whan that he beheld
A knight armed and on his brest a sheld
And gan the manere, of this ray aduert
Of very ire vpon his horse he stert
And cruelly gan Tideus enquere
Whence he come, and what he did there
And bad in hast, his answere to deuise
And Tideus in full humble wise
Answered ayen, of very gentilnes
And said in soth, of high distresse
Of the tempest, and the darke night
He driuen was like an arrant knight
Of nede onely and great necessity
And him constrained of great aduersity
To take lodging, where so that he might
And in that Court, therefore he alight
Without more, thinking none outrage
Ne to no wight, meaning no damage
Than Polimite of malice and of pride
Told him shortly, he should not abide
Ne lodge there, though he had it swore
For I (qd. he) toke it vp before
And will it kepe, during all this night
I sey the platly, maugre all thy might
(Qd. Tideus than) it is no curtesie
Me to deuoid, but rather vilany
Yet ye take hede, that seme a gentill knight
And as I suppose, ye haue no title of right
To this lodging, by way of heritage
More than haue I, for all your fel rage
And parde yet, it shall be no disease
Till to morow though ye do me ease
Of gentillesse, onely with your leue
To suffer me, it shall but little grieue
But aye the more Tideus speake faire
Polimite was froward and contraire

And

And shortly saith, it gaineth not to strive
That of force, he shal devoid blive
Or vtterly atweene hem both two
This thing to try, he must haue do
And Tideus seeing, no better meane
Ful like a knight, in stele armed cleane
Without abode, fast gan him speed
Wonder lively, for to stride his steed
And thus these knights, pompous and elate
For litle cause, fellen at debate

How Tideus and Polimite striuen for her lodging.

And as they ronne, togider on horsbacke
Either on other, first his speare drake
And after that, ful surquedous of pride
With sharpe swords, they togider ride
Ful yrously, these mighty Champions
In her fury, like Tigres or Lions
As they hurtell, that all the palaice shooke
And King Adrastus, out of his sleep wooke
And made in hast, his Chamberlaines call
And through ỳ Court, his worthy knights all
Commanding hem, to discend and see
And report, what it might be
This wonderful noise, in his Court by night
And whā they seigh, two strāge knights fight
In plates thicke, and in bright maill
Without Judge, they had great maruaill
And were dismaied, of this vncouth thing
And as they found, told to the King
And Adrastus, for darkenesse of the night
From his chamber, with many torches light
Into the Court, is discended doun
All his meine stonding enuiroun
Of these knights hauing great wonder
And of manhood, he put hem first asunder
Hem commaunding, like a gentil king
To leauen her strife, and cesten of fighting
And entred in, with a knightly looke
And first from hem, her swords both he tooke
Affirming eke, as to his fantasy
It was a rage, and a great foly
So wilfully, her liues to impart.
Without en Judge, her quarel to depart
And specially, in the darke night
Whan neither might, of other haue sight
Charging hem, vp pain of her life
So discouere, and stinten of her strife
And tho Tideus, in all the hast he might
Ful humbly from his stede alight
And right mekely, with chere & countenaunce
Put him wholly, in the gouernaunce
Of Adrastus, in all maner thing
And Polimite eke, made no tarrying
To hie him also, and would not withsey
The kings bidding, lowly to obey
So as him ought, with due reuerence
And as they stood, both in his presence
He gan enquere, first of her estate
The cause also, why they were at debate
Of her Countries, soothly and her age
And asked hem eke, touching her linage
By discent, of what stock they were born
And Tideus, his answere yaue before
Told plainly, and made no lesing
How hee was son vnto the king
Of Calcidoine, and right ful heire therto
And of his exile, the cause he told also
As ye haue heard in the story rad
And Polimite, with chere and face sad
Unto the King, touching his Country
Said he was born, in Thebes the City
And Iocast, the great famous Queene
His moder was, without any weene
But of his fader, whilom King and lord
For very shame, he spake neuer a word
Only, for if I shal not faine
His fader was, and brother, both twaine
The which in sooth, he was ful loth to tell
And eke the King would him not compell
Of gentillesse, but bad without blame
Of his birth, for to haue no shame
For wholly the caas, he knew euerdele
Touching his kin, he knew ỳ ground ful wele
Like as it was, by ful clere report
Enforcing him, for to do comfort
With all his might, and all his busy paine
This manly king, to these knights twaine
And to hem said, before him as they stood
He wist wel, that of ful worthy blood
They were descended, touching her kinred
And made in hast, his officers lead
The straunge knights, being at debate
Through his pallace, to chamber of estate
Ech by himselfe, for to take his ease
And euery thyng, in sooth ỳ might hem please
Was offred hem, like to her estates
And whan they were disarmed of her plates
Cuisshens, Greues, and her Sabatons
Her Harneis voyded, and her Habergeons
Two mantels, vnto hem were brought
Fret with pearle, and rich stones wrought
Of cloth of gold, and Violet crimsin
Ful richly furred with Ermin
To lap hem in, ayens the cold morow
After the rage, of her nights sorow
To take her rest, til the sonne arise
And whan the King in ful prudent wise

First of all, he was not recheles
The knights hearts for to ses in pees
That euer after, I dare affirme it wele
Ech was to other, true as any stele
During her life, both in word and deed
Under a knot, bound of brotherheed
And Adrastus, the worthy king famous
A feast made, rich and plenteous
To these knights, himselfe therest present
And after meet, ful goodly he hath sent
This noble King, for his doughters deare
Of gentilesse, for to make cheare
To the knights, come fro so ferre
And like in sooth, as Lucifer the sterre
Gladdeth in morrow, at his vprising
So the ladies, at her comming
With the streames, of her eyen clere
Goodly apport, and womanly manere
Countenances, and excellent fairenesse
To all the Court, brought ten in gladnesse
For the freshnesse, of her heauenly cheres
So agreeable was, vnto the straungeres
At her entre, that in especiall
Hem thought it like a thing celestiall
Enhasting hem, in ful knightly wise
Ayenst hem goodly to arise
And as they met, with humble countenaunce
Ful cunningly did her obseruaunce
Hem conueying, into her sitting place
But soothly, I haue laiser none ne space
To rehearse, and put in remembraunce
Wholly the maner of her daliaunce
It were too long, for you to abide
But wel I wot, that the god Cupide
By influence, of his mighty hond
And the feruence of his fiery brond
Her meeting first, fortuned hath so wele
That his arrowes of gold, and not of stele
Ypeirced han, the knights hearts twaine
Through the brest, with such a lusty paine
That there abode, sharpe as speare or launce
Deepe yfiched the point of remembraunce
Which may not lightly rased be away
And thus in ioy, they driue forth the day
In play and reuell, for the knights sake
And toward night they her chamber take
At due time, as her fader bad
And on her way, the knights hem lad
Reuerently, vp by many a staire
Taking leaue, gan anon repaire
To her lodging, in ful stately a Tour
Alligned to hem, by the herbeiour
And after spices plentye, and the wine
In Cups great, wrought of gold ful fine
Without tarrying, to bed straight they gone
Touching her rest, whether they sleepe or none
Demeth ye louers, that in such manner thing
By experience, haue fully knowledging
For it is not declared in my booke
But as I find, the king all night wooke
Thoughtfull in heart, the story specifies
Musing sore, and ful of fantasies
First aduerting, the great worthynesse
Of these knights, and the semelinesse
Her lusty youth, her force, and her manhood
And how they were come of roiall blood
And thus he gan to reuolue about
And in his heart hauing a maner of doubt
Atweene two, hanging in a balaunce
Whether he should make an aliaunce
Atweene his doughters, & the knights twain
For one thing aie, his heart gan constrain
The remembraunce of his auision
Of which toforn, made is a mencion
Touching the Lion, and the wild Boze
It needeth not, to rehearse it no moze
Casting alway, in his fantasie
What it might clearely signifie
This darke dream, that was hid and close
But on the morrow, Adrastus vp arose
And to the Temple, the right way he tooke
And gan pray, deuoutly on his booke
To the goddes, of his dreame to specifie
And they him bed, homeward for to hie
And to behold in the knights shields
The fell beasts, painted in the fields
Which shal to him, by cleare inspection
Ful plainly make declaracion
Of his dreame, which he had on the night,
And Adrastus, enhasted him ful right
In her shields, wisely to behold
Where that he saw, as the goddes told
In the shields, hanging vpon hookes
The beasts rage, with her mortall crookes
And to purpose, like as writ Bochas
Polimite ful strait enbraced was
In the hide, of a fierce Lioun
And Tideus, aboue his Habergeoun
A gipoun had, hidous sharper and hoore
Wrought of the bristles, of a wild Boore
The which beasts as the story leres
Where wrought, and bete vpon her baneres
Displaied brode, whan they should fight
Where fore the king, whan he had a sight
At his repaire, in heart was full glad
And with a face, ful demure and sad
With his lords, that he about him had
To the temple, he the knights lad
And whan they had, with all circumstaunces
Of Rites old, done her obseruaunces

Home

Home to the Court, they retourne ayein
And in hall, rich and wel beseen
This worthy King, of heart liberall
Made a feast, solempne and roiall
Which in dainties, surely did excell
But it were vain, euery course to tell
Her straunge sewes, and other subtilties
Ne how they sat, like her degrees
For lack of time, I let ouerslide
And after meat, Adrastus tooke aside
The knights two, and like a prudent man
In secret wise, thus his tale he gan.

How Adrastus spake to the two knights in secret touching the marriage of his doughters.

Sirs (qd. he) I ne doubt it nought
That it is freth and green, aie in your thought
How that first, by Gods ordinaunce
And after next, through fates puruciaunce
And by werking of fortunes hond
How ye were brought, into this lond
Both twain, but now this last night
Of whose comming, I am ful glad and light
First in my self, shortly to expresse
Whan I consider, and see the likelinesse
Of your persons, with the circumstaunces
And whole the maner of your gouernaunces
Seeing ful wel, wherto should I faine
Ye ben likely, hereafter to attaine
To great estate, and habundaunce of good
Through your birth, and your roial blood
Ye may not faile, but ye haue wrong
For ye are both manly, and right strong
And for to set your hearts more at rest
My purpose, is I hope for the best
So that in you, be no variaunce
To make a knot, as by aliaunce
Atween you, and my doughters two
If your harts accord wele therto
And for I am fully in dispeire
To succeed, for to haue an heire
Therfore ye shal haue possession
During my life of halfe my region
Forth with in hond, and all after my day
There is no man, that therto shal say nay
And sothly after, whan that I am graue
Ech of you, shal his part haue
Of this kingdome, as I haue prouided
This is to say, it shal be deuided
Atween you two, euerich to be crouned
Your properties, by equity compouned
So egally, in euery mans sight
That ech of you, reioice shal his right
And in your wit, ye shal the lond amend
And of manhood, knightly it defend
Ayens our enemies, and our mortal foon
And for the daies, passed ben and goon
Of my desires, and my lusty youth
I am ful set, for to make it couth
That ye shal haue, like mine opinioun
The gouernaunce of all this Regioun
To this entent, me semeth for the best
Ye to gouern, and I to liue in rest
Fully to follow, the lust of my desires
Hunt and hauke, in woods and riueres
Whan so euer, I haue therto pleasaunce
And for to haue none other entendaunce
Unto nothing, but to mine ease
For which shortly, if it agree and please
That I haue said, to you that ben so wise
And be according, vnto your aduise
Delaieth not, but in words plain
That you semeth, yeue answer again
And whan Adrastus, had his tale fined
Tideus with head, ful low enclined
As he that was a very gentil knight
With his power, and his ful might
Ful humbly, thanked the King
Couching his proffer, and so high a thing
And for his party, said he would assent
Fully of heart, neuer to repent
To all that euer, the King hath said
And Polimite, was also appaid
In the story, as it is comprehended
On euery part fully, is whole discended
The Kings wil, to fulfill indeed
From point to point, and thereupon proceed
Whither so that euer, they win or lese
And Tideus, made his brother chese
Of gentillesse, and of curtesy
Which that was most, to his fantasy
Of the Sisters, for to haue to wiue
And he in sooth chosen hath Argiue
Which eldest was, ful womanly to se
And Tideus tooke Deiphile
Of her beauty most souerain excellent
Adrastus throughout, his lond hath sent
For his lords, and his Baronage
To be present at the marriage
Of the knights, and make no letting
And they echone, come at his bidding
In goodly wise, meke and ful benigne
Ayen the day that he did assigne,
And thider come, ful many a lusty knight
Ful wele beseen, and many a lady bright
From euery coast, and many a fresh squier
The story seith, and many a commuter
To behold, the great roialty

And the manner, of this ſolempnity
But to tel all the circumſtaunces
Of iuſts, reuel, and the diuerſe daunces
The feaſts rich, and the yefts great
The painfull ſighes, and the feruent heat
Of louesfolke, yemming is the glede
And deuiſe of many a ſolein wede
The touches ſtole, and the amorous lookes
By ſubtil craft, laid out lines and hookes
The iolous folke, to traien and begile
In their awaits, with many a ſundry wile
All this in ſooth deſcriuen I ne can
But wele I, the new fame ran
This meane while, with ful ſwift paſſage
Unto the Thebes, of this marriage
And be repoꝛt trew, and not famed
Tho whan therof, the eares hath attained
Wine Auctour writ, of Ethiocles
Couching the honour, and the great encres
Of Polimite highly magnified
And that he newly was allied
With Adꝛaſtus, in the lond of Arge
The which thing, he greatly gan to charge
Dꝛeading inly, that this Marriage
Shall after time, turne to his damage
Soꝛe muſing, and caſting vp and doun
The great power, and the high renoun
Of Adꝛaſtus, the which of Greekes lond
Had all the power, ſoget to his hond
Leaſt that he, foꝛ Polimites ſake
Would vpon him, a new war make
But if that he, like the conuenciouu
At time ſet deliuer vp the toun
To his bꝛother, by bond of oth ſwoꝛne
And by couenaunt, allured here tofoꝛne
If ye remember, late as I you told
Which he was not in purpoſe foꝛ to hold
But foꝛ his beſt, caſt him foꝛ to vary
And therevpon, liſt no lenger tary
Liche his deſires, to ſhape remedies
And firſt he ſent foꝛ his next allies
In whom he had, his moſt affiaunce
Foꝛ his iogds, that had gouernaunce
Of his kingdome, to come to him anon
And whan they weren, preſent euerichon
He ſaid plainly, wening foꝛ the beſt
That his hert, ſhall neuer be in reſt
But in ſoꝛrow, and in a maner of dꝛead
Til his bꝛother vtterly be dead
That he in Thebes, in his roiall ſete
Might alone reigne in quiete
He meant himſelfe, ſhoꝛtly and none other
Unpertourbed, of Polimite his bꝛother
And at his counſaile diuerſe of entent
I find wꝛitten, thꝛee folkes were preſent
Some in ſooth that faithful were and trew
And ſome alſo, that can chaunge of new
And other eke that betweene twaine
Couertly coud vnder colour faine.

Commendation of trouth.

The firſt ſaid, aboue all thing
Trouth ſhould long vnto a King
Of his woꝛd, not be variable
But plaine and whole, as a contre ſtable

How truth is preferred in the booke of Eſdre aforne Kings, women, and wine.

Foꝛ trouth firſt, without any wene
Is chiefe piller, that may a King ſuſtene
In ioy and honour, foꝛ to lead his life
Foꝛ trouth ſometime, had a pꝛerogatife
As of Eldꝛe, the booke can ſpecifie
Recoꝛd I take, of pꝛudent Neemye
That woꝛthy Kings, foꝛ all her great pꝛide
Wine, and woman, ben eke ſet aſide
With all power, and dominacion
Hauing reward, in compariſon
To trouths might, and trouths woꝛthineſſe
Foꝛ as Eldꝛe, plainly doth expꝛeſſe
Who ſo taketh heed, in the ſame place
The influence ſoothly, and the grace
Of trouth alone, this old Neemye
Gat him licence, to reedifie
The wals new, of Hieruſalem
Which is treaſure chiefe of euery Realme
Foꝛ Salomon wꝛite, how the things twaine
Trouth and mercy, linked in a Chaine

Trouth and mercy preſeruen a King from all aduerſity.

Pꝛeſerue a King, like to his degree
From all miſchiefe, and all aduerſitee
Alas therefoꝛe, that any doubleneſſe
Variaunce, oꝛ elꝛ vnlikerneſſe,

Chaunge not doubleneſſe ſhould not bee in a King.

Chaunge of woꝛd, oꝛ mutability
Fraud oꝛ diſceit, oꝛ inſtability
Should in a king haue domination
To cauſen after his deſtruction
Of kings readeth the ſtoꝛy down by row
And ſeeth how many, haue ben ouerthꝛow
Thꝛough her falſhed, from foꝛtunes whele
Foꝛ vnto God, it pleaſeth neuer adele
A king to be double of entent

Foꝛ

For it may hap, that the world is went
Ful oft sith, by sleight of her werking
But thus the truth, God seeth in euery thing
Right as it is, for there may be no cloud
Tofore his sight, trouth for to shroud
It may be clipsed, and derked by disceit
By false engine, ligging in awcrt
As a serpent, for to vndermine
But at last, it wil clearely shine
Who ỳ saith nay, and shew his bright bemes
For it in soth, of kingdomes and of realmes
Is bearer vp, and conseruatrice
From all mischiefe, and soothfast mediatrice
To God aboue, who so list to see
To keepe a king in prosperitee
On euery side, as I affirme dare
For which ye kings & lords beth wele ware
Your behestis iustly for to hold
And thinketh how Thebes with his walls old
Distroyed was platly, this is no les
For the doublenesses of Ethiocles
That with his people, sore after bought
Only for that he, not by counsaile wrought
Of hem that were both trew and wise
Him list not werke, by her auise
But left trouth, and set his fantasy
To be gouerned by false flattery

The counsell of false Flatterers.

That bad him thinke how he was a knight
And to hold of force, more than of right
During his life, the lordship of the toun
And not to lese his possessioun
For no bond, nor hests made tofore
But let his brother blow in an horn
Where that him list or pipe in a rede
This was the counsaile, platly and the rede
Of such as list not, to say the sooth
But falsly flatter, with her words smooth
And whan they had whole her tale tined
Ethiocles fully is enclined
Whosoeuer there at laugh or weepe
Like her counsaile, possession to kepe
Who that saith nay, gentheth there ayein
Him to contraire, him thought was but vein

How the yeare was come out that Ethiocles reigned in Thebes.

But in this while, that the benesonne
The zodiagnes, round about ronne
Sith Ethiocles, by iust reckening
In Thebes was crowned, lord and king
Holding the Sceptre, and the Diademe
That by reason, as it would seme
The time was ful complete, and the space
Of couenaunt he should void his place
And Polimite eke, his iourney make
Toward Thebes possession to take
Of due title, but he had wrong
Which thought in soth, ỳ yere was wonder long
Of his exile, or that it come about
And for he had in heart a manner of doubt
Least in his brother, were falsehead found
To aquite himselfe like as he was bound
To Adrastus, he gan declare his hert
Beseeching him, this matter to aduert
And therevpon to yeue counsaile sone
Touching his right, what was best to done
Whether it were best, to go or to abide
Or like a knight, manly to ride
Himselfe alone, and make no message
For to chalenge his rightful heritage
Within Thebes, either by pees or strife
And therevpon, to ieoperde his life
Thus was he set, for all his fierce brother
But Adrastus, soothly thought another
Bet was to send, then himselfe to gon
Least he were trapped, among his mortal fon
Hauing his brother, suspect in this caas
That by fraud, or by some fallas
He would werke, to his destruction
If he were hardy, to enter into the toun
For which he bad him, prudently take heed
Fully concluding, hewit were more speed
That some other, be to Thebes sent
To perceiue, fully the entent
Of Ethiocles inward by some signe
And if that he, his crowne wil resigne
For thilke yeare, like as ỳ made his oth
And whan he knew how his purpose goth
Therevpon to werken, and procede
And thus Adrastus, wisely gan him rede.

How Tideus took vpon him, to doe the message of Polimite his brother.

And while they treat vpon this matere
Tideus with a manly chere
Saied vtterly for his brothers sake
This message he would vndertake
With whole thenprise, of hem all ate
Were it welefull, or unfortunate
He wil not spare, whatsoeuer betide
But Adrastus, on that other side
And Polimite in conclusion
Were contraire to that opinion
And saied soothly, as hem thought right
Sith that he was, so well apmued knight

And diſcended, of ſo worthy blood
That they nold, for none yearthly good
For all Thebes with the regality
Put his body in ſuch ieopardy
But al this thing, auaileth him right nought
For he wil forth, how deare that it be bought
Taking leaue, firſt of all theſtates
And armed him in maill, and ſure plates
And ſhope him forth, vpon his iournie
Who made then ſorrow, but Deiphile.

The ſorrow of Deiphile, when Tideus went toward Thebes the city.

With bitter teares, dewed all her face
Ful oft ſithes, ſwouning in the place
Triſt and mourning, in her blacke wede
And when ſhe ſaw, that he tooke his ſtede
So inwardly, encreaſe gan her mone
Seeing her Lord, ſo riding forth alone
Upon his way, this worthy Tideus
And in all haſt, the ſtory telleth vs
He ſpeedeth him ſo, making no delaies
That in the ſpace, of few daies
The high toures of Thebes, he gan ſee
And entred is into that citee
Wiſely enquiring, where the palace ſtode
And like a knight, thider ſtreight he rode
Marked ful wel, in many a mans ſight
Like Mars himſelfe, in ſtele armed bright
Til he attained hath, the chiefe dongeon
Where as the king held his manſion
And through the palace, with a knightly look
Into the hall, the right way he took
From his ſtede, when he light adoun
Not aferd, but hardy as Lioun
Where as the king, with lords a great rout
In the hall ſitting, round about
He eyed in, moſt manfull of courage
To execute the fine of his meſſage
And as him thought, conuenient and due
Ful cunningly, he gan the king ſalue
Requiring him of kingly excellence
In goodly wiſe, to yeue him audience
And not diſdaine, neither in part ne there
Sith he was come, as a meſſagere
From Polimite, his owne brother deare
Ginning his tale, thus as ye ſhal heare.

How wiſely and how knightly Tideus did his meſſage.

Quod he, vnto your worthineſſe
My purpoſe is, briefly to expreſſe
The effect wholly, as in ſentement
Of the meſſage, why that I am ſent
It were in vain, long proceſſe to make
But of my matter, the very ground to take
In eſchewing, of prolixity
And void away, all ſuperfluity
Sith your ſelfe, beſt ought to vnderſtond
The cauſe fully, that we haue on hond
And eke conceiue, thentent of my meaning
Of right wiſeneſſe, longing to a king
Firſt conſidred, if that ye take hede
When Edippus, the old king was dede
How that your ſelfe, and your brother blinde
For the crowne, contagiouſly gan ſtriue
As mortal foen, by ful great hatrede
Which of you two, ſhould firſt ſucceede
Til that ye were, by meanes reconſiled
Ye to raigne, and he to ben exiled
Out of this towne, for a yeares ſpace
And then ayen, reſort into his place
To raigne as king, and ye to voiden out
So as your tourn, by proceſſe commeth about
Euerich of you, patiently tendure
Thenterchaunging, of his auenture
Who were put out, or ſtood in his eſtate
Therevpon, to make no debate
Liche the couenaunt, and conuencioun
Enrolled vp, by lords of the toun
Which of reaſon, may not be denied
Sithen ye haue, a yeare occupied

The requeſt that Tideus made, in the name of Polimite, vnder the title of conuencion.

Polimite requireth, you of right
To acquite you, as a true knight
In eſchewing, of mortall war and ſtrife
Sith ye had a prerogatife
As eldeſt brother, for to raigne alone
And thinketh how, that ye arne ſworne
Your oth to keepe, and make no tarrying
Wholly aduerting, liche a prudent king
That trouth is more, in compariſon
Then all the treaſour, of your region
More acceptable, vnto God and man
Then all the richeſſe, that ye reckon can
Wherfore in haſt, and let there be no ſlouth
Quiteth your ſelfe, iuſtly in your trouth
Vnto your brother, auoiding this citee
And let him raigne, in his rotall See
The crowne of Thebes, a yeare to occupy
Then will all Greece, praiſe and magnify
Your high renoun, and may ſay none other
But ye acquite you, iuſtly to your brother
This whole theffect, of all that I will ſain

Anſwere

Answer expectant what ye will send ayain.
When Tideus had told his tale
Ethiocles triste and wonder pale
His conceit first in maner hath refreined
Dissimuling, vnder colour feined
Shewing a chere in maner debonaire
To his intent wonderly contraire
Inward in hart, wood and furious
Tourning his face toward Tideus
He gan abreid, and at last out spake
And euen thus vnto him he spake,

The answere of king Ethiocles.

I haue great marual (qd. he) in my thought
Of the message, which that thou hast brought
That my brother, as thou hast expouned
Desireth so, in Thebes to be crouned
Hauing reward to thabundance
The great plentie and the sufficaunce
That he hath now with the king of Arge
That me semeth he should little charge
To haue Lordship, or dominioun
In the bounds of this little toun
Sith he reigneth so freshly in his floures
Surmounting all his predecessours
By new encrease, through fortunes might
Wherfore in hart I am right glad and light
Fully trusting if I had nede
To his helpe, that without drede
Like a brother that I should him finde
To me ward faithfull true, and kinde
Supposing plainly, euermore
Of this reigne he set but little store
Nor casteth him not for so shorte a while
As for a yere his brother to exile
To liue in pouertee and in great distresse
He will not suffer it of his high noblesse
It were no token of no brotherhed
But a signe rather of hatred
To interrupt my possession
Of this little poore Region.
All that he spake. who so could aduart
Of very scorne rooted in his hart
As hem semyte, the storie can you teach
By the surplus sothly of his speach
He might no lenger him restreine
But plainly said, as betwene vs tweine
I meane thus, Polimite and me
There is no bond nor surete
Ne faith imade that may him auaile
As he claimeth to yeue the gouernaile
Of this citie, neither yere ne day
For I shall let him sothly if I may
That he shall not by title of his bond
Reioyce in Thebes, halfe a foote of lond
Let him kepe that he hath wonne
For I purpose as I haue begonne
To reign in Thebes henceforth all my line
Maugre all hem that therayen striue
And in despite of his frends all
Or the counsaile that him list to call
Let him be sure and know this right well
His menacing I drede neuer a dell
And likerly as to my deuise
It sheweth well that thou art not wise
But suppressed with a manner of rage
To take on thee this surquedous message
And presumest to doe so high offence
So boldly to speake in my presence
But all in fere auaile shall right nought
For the tydings that thou hast brought
Shall vnto him be disencrease
He better were to haue beene in peace
Then of folly and presumption
Ayenst me to seche occasion
For as I liue, and thereto here mine hond
As I said earst, he winneth here no lond
While the wall of this toun may stande
For plainly I do the vnderstand
That they shall first be beat doun full lowe
And all the toures to the ground ithrow
Ere he in Thebes haue any thing ado
Lo here is all, returne and say him so
When Tideus saw the feruent ire
Of the king, with anger set on fire
Full of despite and of melancholy
Conceiuing eke the great felonie
In his apport like as he were wood
This worthy knight, a little while stoode
Sad and demure, ere he would ought sain
But at last, thus he said ayen.

The knightly answer that Tideus yaue ayein to the king.

Certes (qd. he) I conceiue of new
About thee thy counsaile is vntrew
I dare it sain, and vow it at best
Ne thou art not faithfull of thy behest
Stable of thy worde, ỹ thou hast said tofore
But deceiueable, falsly eke forsworne
And eke periurate of thine assured othe
But whether so be that thou belefe or wroth
I say thee shortly, hold it for no fage
All this shall tourne vnto thy damage
Triste it well, and in full cruell wise
All Greekes lond, shall vpon thee arise

To be auenged, and manly to redreſſe
The great vntrouth, and the high falſneſſe
Which that thou haſt ayen thy brother wrozt
It ſhall full deare, after this be bought
And verily indede as thou ſhalt lere
King Adraſtus will meddle in this matere
And all the Lozds about him enuiron
That bounden be to his ſubiection
Princes, Dukes, and many a noble knight
In ſuſteyning of thy brothers right
Shall on a day, with ſpeare and with ſhield
Ayenſt thee be gadred in a field
Knightly to preue all by one aſſent
That thou art falſe and double of intent
Of thy promes atteint, and eke outraied
And leue me well, it ſhall not be delaied
But in all haſt execute indede
Like thy deſert thou ſhalt haue thy mede
For God aboue, and his rightwiſeneſſe
Such open wrong ſhall in haſt redreſſe
And of his might all ſuch colluſion
Reformе ayein, and all extorcion
For this the fine, falſhod ſhall not vaile
Ayens trouth in field, to holden battaile
Wrong is crooked, both halt and lame
And here anon in my brothers name
As I that am his next allie
At his quarell ſhortly I defie
Fully aniled with all mine whole intent
And ye Lozds that been here preſent
I you require of your worthines
To ſay trouth, and beare witneſſe
When time commeth, and iuſtly to recozd
How your king falſly can diſcozd
From his heſte, of falſe variance
And thinke on how ye of faith and ligeance
Are bound echone, ye may not go therefro
For to obey, and ſerue both two
This next yere now anon following
As to your Lozd and to your true king
Polimite, though he be now abſent
By iuſt accozd made in parlement
At your deuiſe, which ſitten here a row
Engroſſed was vp, as it is well know
And enrolled onely for witnes
In your Regiſters, to void all falſenes
That none of you vary may of new
From that I ſay, but if he be vntrew
For which I rede, your ſelfe to acquite
Let no time lenger lie in reſpite
But at ones without more tarrying
Of manly force fet home your king
Maugre his foue, like as ye are bound
And let in you no ſloth be found
To put him iuſtly in poſſeſſion
This is my counſaile, in concluſion

How manly Tideus departed from the King.

When Tideus had his meſſage ſaid
Like to the charge that was on him laid
As he that liſt no lenger there ſoiourne
From the king he gan his face tourne
Not aſtonied, nor in his hert aferde
But full proudly, laid hond on his ſwerd
And in deſpite, who that was liefor loth
A ſterne pace through the hall he goth
Through the court, and manly toke his ſtede
And out of Thebes faſt gan him ſpede
Enhaſting him till he was at large
And ſped him forth, toward the lond of Arge
Thus leue I him, riding forth a while
Whiles that I returne ayen my ſtile
Unto the king, which in the hall ſtood
Emong his Lozds furious and wood
And his hart wroth and euill apaied
Of the wozds that Tideus had ſaied
Specially hauing remembraunce
On the proud diſputous defiance
Whiles that he ſate in his riall See
Upon which he would auenged be
Full cruelly, what that euer befall
And in his ire, he gan to him call
Chiefe Conſtable of his Thiualrie
Charging him faſt for to hie
With all the worthy choiſe of his houſhold
Such as he knew moſt manfull and bold
In all haſt Tideus for to ſue
Tofore or he, out of his lond remue
Up paine of life, and leſing of her head
Without mercy, anon that he be dead.

How falſely Ethiocles laid a buſhment in the way to haue ſlaine Tideus, in his repaire.

And of knights fiftie were in nomber
Mine auther ſaith, vnwarily him to comber
Armed echone in maile and thicke ſtele
And therewithall ihorſed wonder wele
At o poſterne forth they gonne to ride
By a ſein path that lay out aſide
Secretly, that no man hem eſpie
Onely of treaſon and of felony
They haſt hem forth all the long day
Of cruell malice for to ſtoppe his way
Through a foreſt, all of one aſſent

Full

Full couertly, for to lay a bushment
Under an hill at a strait passage
To fallen on him at a more auantage
The same way that Tideus gan draw
At thilke mount, where ꝑ Sphinx was slawe
He nothing ware, in his opinion
Of the compassed conspiracion
But innocent, like a gentill knight
Rode aye forth till it drow to night
Sole by him selfe without companie
Hauing no man him to wise or gie
But at last lifting vp his hede
Toward eue, he gan to take hede
Wid of his way right as any line
Thought he saw ayenst the Moone shine
Shields fresh, and plates burned bright
The which enuiron cast a great light
Imagining in his fantasie
There was treason or conspiracie
Wrought by the king his iourney for to let
And of all that he nothing set
But well assured in his manly hert
List not once aside to diuert
But kept his way, his shield vpon his brest
And cast his speare manly in the rest

VVhen worthy Tideus outraied fiftie knights, lying in awaite for to slaen him.

And the first, platly that he met
Through the body, proudly he him smet
That he fell dead chiefe master of hem all
And then at ones they vpon him fall
On euery paas, by compas enuiron
But Tideus through his high renoun
His bloody sword let about him glide
He sleeth and killeth vpon euery side
In his ire and his mortall tene
That maruail it was how he might so sustene
Ayenst hem all, in euery halfe beset
But his sword was so sharpe whet
That his fomen found it full vnsoote
But he alas was made light on foot
By force grounded, in full great distresse
But of knighthood and of high prowesse
Up he rose, maugre all his foue
And as they came he slew hem one by one
Like a Lion rampant in his rage
And on this hill he fond a narow passage
Which that he tooke of full high prudence
And like a Bore standing at his defence
As his fomen proudly him assaile
Upon the plain her blood he made to raile
Al enuiron, that the soile ware redde
Now here now there as they fellen dedde
That here lay one, and there lay two or three
So merciless in his cruelte
Thilke day he was, vpon hem found
And at ones, his enemy did confound
Where as he stood, this mighty champion
Beside he saw with water turned doun
An huge stone, large, round, and square
And sodainly ere that they were ware
As it had lien there for the nones
Upon his foen he rolled it at ones
That ten of hem wenten vnto wracke
And the remnaunt amased drew aback
For one by one they went to mischaunce
Thus finally he brought to outrance
Hem euerichone, Tideus as bliue
That none but one left of hem aliue
Himselfe ihurt and iwounded kene
Through his harneis bleding on the grene
The Theban knyts in compas round about
In the valley slaine, all the whole rout
Which pitously again the Moone gape
For none of hem shortly might escape
But dead echone as they haue deserued
Sauf one except, the which was reserued
By Tideus, of this intencion
To the king to make relacion
How his knights haue on her iourney spedde
Euerich of hem his life left for a wedde
And at meting how they haue hem borne
To tellen all, he assured was and sworne
To Tideus, full lowly on his knee
By which enlample, openly ye may see.

How trouth with little multitude, hath euer in the fine, victorie of falshood.

Ayens trouth, falshed hath no might
Fie on quarels not grounded vpon right
Without which, may be no victorie
For euery man, haue this in memorie
That great power, shortly to conclude
Plenty of good, or great multitude
Sleight or engine, force or felony
Arne to feble to hold a champerty
Ayenst trouth, who that list take hede
For at end falshode may not spede
Endure long, ye shall find it thus
Record I take of worthy Tideus
That acted his bond through troths excelẽce
Fiftie knights slough, in his defence
But one except, as I late told

Sworne

Swozne and assured with his hand vpholde
The king tenfozme how they were attaint
And Tideus of bleding was wonder faint
Mate and weary, and in great distresse
And ouerlaid of very feblenesse
But as he might tho himselfe susteine
He tooke his hozse, stonding on the grene
Wozthed vp, and fozth he gan to ride
In easie pace, with his wounds wide
And sothly yet in his opinion
He was alway aferd of treason
But anguishous and full of paine
He rode hym fozth, till he did attaine
Into the bounds of Ligurgus lond
A wozthy king, and manly of his hond

How Tideus all to wounded, came into Ligurgus lond.

And he full pale, onely foz lacke of blood
Tideus saw where a Castell stood
Strong and mightie built vpon a roche
Toward which fast he gan appzoche
Conueyed thider, by clerenesse of the stone
That by night ayens the moone shone
On high toures, with crestes Marciall
And toyning almost to the wall
Was a garden, little out beside
Into which Tideus gan to ride
Of auenture by a gate small
And there he fond, foz to recken all
A lustie Erber, vnto his deuise
Swete and fresh like a paradise
Very heauenly of inspeccioun
And first of all he alight adoun
The goodly place, when that he beheld
And from his necke he voided hath his sheld
Dzew the bzidell, from his hozse hede
Let him go, and tooke no manner hede
Thzough the garden that enclosed was
Him to pasture on the soote grasse
And Tideus moze heauy then is Ledde
Upon the hearbs, grene white and redde
As him thought that time foz the best
He laied him doune foz to take his rest
Of wearinesse, desirous to slepe
And none await his body foz to kepe
And with dzeames, grudged euer emong
There he lay till the Larke song
With notes new high vp in the aire
The glad mozow rodie and right faire
Phebus also casting vp his beames
The high hilles gilt with his streames
The siluer dew vpon the hearbs round
There Tideus lay vpon the cold grounde
At vpzise of the shene Sunne
And stoundemell, his grene wounds runne
Round about, that the soile depeint
Was of the grene, with the redde meint

How Ligurgus doughter found Tideus sleeping in the herber, all forwounded.

And euery mozow, foz holsomnes of aire
Ligurgus doughter did make her repaire
Of custome aye emong the floures newe
In the garden, of many a diuers hew
Such ioy had she, foz to take hede
On her stalkes foz to seen hem spzede
In the alures walking to and fro
And when she had a litle while go
Her selfe alone, casting vp her sight
She beheld where an armed knight
Lay to rest him on the herbes cold
And him beside she gan eke behold
His mightie steed, walking here and there
And she anon fell in a maner fere
Specially when she saw the blood
Spzad on the grene, about there he stood
But at last she caught hardinesse
And womanly gan her foz to dzesse
Toward the knight, hauing a maner dzed
And great doubt least that he were dede
And of her will soothly this was chief
That she thought foz to make a pzief
How that it stood, of this man full oft
And fozth she goeth and toucheth him soft
Where as he lay, with her honds smale
And with a face dedly bleike and pale
Liche as a man, a dawed in a swough
He vpstert and swerde dzough
Not fully out, but put it vp ayein
Anon as he hath the Lady sein
Besechyng her onely, of her grace
To haue pity on his trespace
And rew on him of her womanhede
Foz of a fray he was fall in dzede
Least he had bene assailed of new
Of the Thebans pzeued full vntrue
Foz dzed of which he was so reckles
Full humbly him yeelding to the pees
Trist in himselfe, ỹ he passed had his boundes
And when that she saw his moztall woundes
She had routh, of very gentillesse
Of his disease and his distresse
And bad he should be nothing dismaied
Noz in heart sozifull noz affraied

Wiscom-

Diſcomfort him in no manner thing
For I (qd.ſhe) am doughter to the king
Called Ligurge, which greatly me delite
Euery morowe this garden to viſite
It is to me ſo paſſingly diſport
Wherefore (qd.ſhe) beth of good comfort.

How womanly the Ladie aquite her to Tideus in his diſeaſe.

For no wight here touching your vyage
Shall hinder you, ne doe you no damage
And if ye liſt, of all your auenture
The plaine trouth vnto me diſcure
I will in ſothe, doe my buſineſſe
To reforme your grieuous heauineſſe
With all my might, and whol my diligence
That I hope of your great offence
Ye ſhall haue helpe in your aduerſitee
And as ferforth as it lieth in me
Truſteth right well ye ſhall no faut find
And when he ſaw that ſhe was ſo kind
So womanly, ſo goodly and benigne
In all her port by many a diuers ſigne
He vnto her by order will not ſpare
His auentures fully to declare
In Thebes firſt touching his meſſage
And at hil, of the woody rage
Of his wounds and of his hurts fore
It were but vaine to rehearſe it more
By and by he told it euery deale
The which in ſooth ſhe liked neuer a dele
But had routh and compaſſion
Of his miſchiefe, wrought by falſe treaſon
Riding in haſt that he ſhould her ſue
And womanly, as her thought due
To a chamber ſhe ledde him vp aloft
Full well beſein, there in a bed right ſoft
Richly abouten apparailed
With cloth of gold, all the floure trailed
Of the ſame, both in length and brede
And firſt this Lady of her womanhede
Her women did bid, as goodly as they can
To be attendant vnto this wounded man
And when he was vnarmed to his ſhert
She made firſt waſh his wounds ſmert.

How Tideus was refreſhed in the Caſtle of the Ladie.

And ſerch hem well with diuers inſtruments
And made ſette ſondry ointments
And Leches eke, the beſt ſhe could find
Full craftily, to ſtaunch him and to bind
And euery thing that may done him eaſe
To aſſwage his paine or his wo tapeſe
Was in the Court and in the Caſtell ſought
And by her bidding to her chamber brought
And for his ſake ſhe hath after ſent
For ſuch dainties as were conuenient
Moſt nutritife by Philikes lore
Hem that were ſicke or wounded to reſtore
Making her women eke to taken kepe
And await on him on nights when he ſlepe
And be well ware that nothing aſtart
That was or might be luſtie to his hart
And with all this ſhe prayed him abide
Till he were ſtrong and luſtie for to ride
In the Caſtell to play him and diſport
And at leyſer home ayen reſort
When he might by weld him at his large
But all for nought he will home to Arge
Tooke his leaue on the next day
Without abode to haſt him on his way
Lowly thanking vnto her goodnes
Of her fredome and bountcous largeſſe
So womanly, that her liſt take heed
Him to refreſh in his great need
Byhoting her with all his full might
He would be her ſeruant & her true knight
While he liueth, of what ſhe will him charge
And forth he rode till he come to Arge

How Tideus repaired is home to Arge.

In full great haſt, & would no where dwell
But what ſhould I rehearſe either tell
Of his repaire, the coaſts or the plaines
The great rockes, or the high mountaines
Or all the maner of his home comming
Of the meting, nor the welcomming
Nor the ioy that Adraſtus made
Nor how his ſuſter or his wife were glade
Nor how that they (whereto ſhould I write)
Embraced him in her armes white
Nor the gadering about him, or the preeſs
Nor the ſorow that Polimites
Made in himſelfe to ſee him ſore wounded
His greuous hurtes, his ſores eke vnſounded
His deadly looke, and his face pale
Of all this to ginne a new tale
It were in ſoth a manner idlenes
Nor how himſelfe in order did expreſſe
Firſt how that he in Thebes hath him borne
Ne how the kyng falſely was forſworne
Nor of thawait and treaſon that he ſet
When ſixtie knights on the way him met
As ye haue heard all the maner how
Without which my tale is long enow
But Adraſtus made men to ſeach

In

In euery coast for many a diuers Leech
To come in hast, and make no tarying
Upon a pain, by bidding of the king
To doen her craft, that he were recured
And of his force in euery part assured
And they echone to her cunning shewe
That in space of a daies fewe
He was all whole made of his sickness
There was tho ioy, & then was ther gladness
Throughout the court, & through all the toun
For euery man hath such opinion
In Tideus for his gentilesse
For his manhood and his lowlinesse
That he was held the most famous knight
And best beloued in euery mans sight
Throughout Greece, in euery region
But now must I make a digression
To tell shortly, as in sentement
Of thilke knight that Tideus hath sent
Into Thebes, onely to declare
Of the great mischiefe and the cruell fare
Unto the king, how it is befall
The open trouth of his knights all
How Tideus hath slain hem euerichone
That saue himselfe there escaped none
Which was reserued frō shedding of his blood
The king to tell plainly how it stood
And when he had rehearsed euery point
Ethiocles stood in such disioynt

Of our vnhap, I wot wel, and none other
With thine vntrouth done vnto thy brother
And that thou were so openly forsworne
And perecll cause why that we were lorne
Was false breaking of thine assured oth
And tho the king mad almost for wroth
In purpose was for to slea this knight
Onely for he said vnto him right
The which alas both at eue and morow
Suppressed was with a deadly sorrow
Running aye in his remembraunce
With the pitous and vnhappy chance
Of the great mischief and misauenture
Touching the death and discomfiture
Of his fieres, and of himselfe also
That the shamefast inportable wo
So was on him with such a mortall strife
That he was weary of his owne life
Hent he hath a sword, and aside start
And roue himselfe, euen to the heart
The king himselfe being tho present
And the rumour and the noise is went
Through Thebes, of the wood rage
By such as weren ioyned by linage
To the knightes, flame at hill
That all at once of one heart and will
They would haue arisen throughout the citee
Upon the king auenged for to be
Which of her death was chiefe occasioun
But the Barons and Lords of the toun,
Full busie were, this rumour and disease
Of high prudence to stint and appease
In quiet euery thing to set
And after that, the bodies home they fet
Of the knights, like as ye haue herd
Afore yslain with the bloody sword
Of Tideus, full sharpe whet and ground
And in the field, so as they hem found
Only of loue and of affection
Solempnly they brought hem to the toun
And like the maner of the rites old
They were first brent into ashes cold
And echone yburied like to his degree
Lo here the kalends of aduersitee
Sorow vpon sorow, and destruccion
First of the king and all the region
For lacke onely, like as I you told
That beheests truly were not hold
The first ground and root of this ruine
As the story clearely shall determine
And my tale hereafter shall you lere
If that you list the remnaunt for to here.

How Ethiocles was astonied when he herd of the death of his knights.

Of hatefull ire, he were nigh wood
And in his tene and in his fell mood
Of cruell malice to the knight he spake
And scilly said, that it was for lake
Only of manhode, and through her cowardise
That they were slain in so mortall wise
And hanged be he, high by the neck
That of your death or of your slaughter recke
Or you complaine either one or all
Of the misehcefe that is you befall
I do no force, that none of you alert
But fie vpon your false toward hert
That o knight through his renoun
Brought you all to confusioun
Full graceleſſe and full vnhappy to
Nay (qd. this knight) it is nothing so
It is thine vnhap plainly, and not ours
That so many worthy warriours
Which all her like neuer had shame
Except this quarell taken in thy name
That grounded was and rooted on falsnesse
This was cause in very sothnesse

Finitur pars secunda, sequitur
pars tertia.

O Cruell Mars, full of Melancoly
And of thy kind, whote, combust, and dry
As the sparcles, shewen from so ferre
By the streames, of the redde sterre
In thy Sphere, as it about goth
What was cause, that thou were so wroth
With hem of Thebes, through whose feruent ire
The City brent, and was set on fire
As bookes old, wel rehearse con
Of cruell hart, rofed and begon
And engendred, the story maketh mind
Only of blood corrupt and vnkind
By infection, called originall
Causing a strife, dreadful and mortall
Of which the mischiefe through all Grece ran
And king Adrastus, alderfirst began
Which hath him cast, a conquest for to make
Upon Thebes, for Polimites sake
In knightly wise, there to preue his might
Of full entent, to recure his right
And first of all, he set a parliament
And hath his letters, and messagers sent
Through Greece, to many sondry kings
Hem to enhast, and make no lettings
And round about, as made is mencion
He sent also, to many a region
For Princes, Dukes, Earles, and Barons
To taken vp, in Cities and in Tounes
And to chesen out, the most likeliest
And such as weren preued for the best
As of manhood, and send hem vp echone
And in her hond, receiue her pay anone
With Adrastus, to Thebes for to ride
And tho lords, that with him abide

The great purueiaunce of King Adrastus toward the city of Thebes.

In household still, haue her leaue take
To riden home, her returne to make
In her countries, as they were of degre
To sustene hem, to take vp meine
And to make hem strōg with knyzts & squeres
With speares, boughes, and Arblasteres
In all the hast possible, that they may
And to returne, in her best array
At tearme set, ful manly to be sein
To forne Arge mousteren in a plein

The Kings and Princes that come to Adrastus.

And as I rede, ful worthy of degre
Thider come first, Prothonolope
The which was by record of writing
Of Archade, sonne vnto the king
And ful prudent, found in warre and pees
There came also, the king Gilmicheues
As I find, ful famous of renoun
Thider come eke, the king Ipomedoun
And passing all, of knighthood and of name
And excelling, by worthinesse of fame
The noble king, called Campaneus
Came eke to Arge, the story telleth thus
Proued ful wele, and had riden fer
And thider come, the king Meleager
King Genor eke, that held his roiall se
Mine auctour saith, in the lond of Grece
King Locris, and king Pirrus
And eke the king, called Tortolonus
And renowned, in many a region
There come the king, called Patenon
Oft assaied, and found a manly knight
That with him brouzt, in stele armed bright
Ful many worthy, out of his countree
And Tideus most knightly for to see
That noble man, that worthy werriour
As he that was, of worthinesse the flour
Maister and Mirrour, by proues of his hond
Hath sent also, unto the mighty lond
Of Calcedoine, of which he was heire
That is kingdome, both rich and feire
Charging his counsaile, and officers also
In all the hast, that it may be do
To seken out, the best werriours
Of famous knights, and proued souldiours
through al the lond, & laid on hem this charge
Without abode, for to come to Arge
And they obay, ful lowly his bidding
Enhasting hem, and made no letting
But sped hem fast, vpon her iourny
And from Thebes, the mighty strong city
Came doun knights, with many another mā
Maugre the king, to helpe what they can
Considred first, his falshood and treason
Ymeued only, of trouth and of reason
Polimites, as they were sworn of yore
To his Croune, iustly him restore
And whan they were at large out of the town
Unto Arge, they be descended down
And like her oth, and her assurance
As they were bound, only of ligeaunce
To him they come, in ful lowly wise
Lowly to doen, what him list deuise
And whan he had, her trouth full conceiued
He hath to grace, goodly hem receiued
Assigning hem, her place amid the host

Assembled there, for many a diuerse cost
That finally, in this company
Ygadred was, the floure of Cheualry
Yholsen out, of all Greekes lond
The most knightly, and manful of her hond
That as I trow, sith the world began
There was not seen, so many a manly man
So wele horsed, with speare and with shield
Togider sembled, sothly in a field
There men might see many straunge giles
Of arming new, and vncouth deuises
Euery man, after his fantasie
That if I should, in order specifie
Euery peece, longing to armure
And therevpon do my busie cure
It were in soth, almost a daies werke
And the tearmes, also ben so derke
To rehearse hem clearely, and to rime
I passe ouer, for lacke of time
And tel I wil, forth of her lodging
How Adrastus, the noble worthy king
Hath euery lord, like to his degree
Receiued wele, within the citee
And there they had, like to her pleasaunce
Of what needeth, fulsome habundaunce
For men and horse, plenty of vitaile
Commaunding, that nothing ne faile
That all these noble worthy werriours
Both high and low, and poore soudiours
Ycrued were, of what they haue need
For Adrastus, presently tooke heed

What it auaileth a King, to pay his people truly her lond.

Ful liche a king, touching her tearme day
That they toforne, were serued to her pay
He was so free, he list nothing restraine
And no man had cause, to complaine
For hunger, thrust, ne for indigence
But all thing ready was, vnto her presence
And in a prince, it is ful great repriefe
To suffer his people, liue at mischiefe
It is ful heauy, and grcuous in her thought
If he habound, and they haue right nought
He may not both, possced body and hart
He to be rich, and seen his people smart
He may the body, of power wel constraine
But her heart, hath a ful long raigne
Maugre his might, to louen at her large
There may no king, on hearts set a charge
Ne hem coarten, from her libertee
Men saine full often, how that thought is free
For which ech prince, lord and gouernour
And specially, ech conquerour
Let him beware, for all his high noblesse
That bounty, freedome, plenty, and largesse
By one accord, that they his bridle lede
Least of his people, whan he hath most nede
He be defrauded, whan he is but alone
Than is to late, for to make his mone
But in his Court, let him first deuise
To exile Scarcehead, and Couetise
Than is likely, with freedome if he gin
Loue of his people, euermore to win
To raigne long, in honour and contune
Ate to encrease, by fauour of Fortune
And his enemies, manly to oppresse
For loue is more, than great richesse

How loue auaileth more to a King, than gold or richesse.

Gold faileth oft, but loue wil abide
For life or death, by a lords side
And the Tresour shortly, of a king
Stondeth in loue, aboue all thing
Farewel lordship, both morrow and eue
Specially, whan loue taketh his leue
And who so list it, Mirrour for to make
Of knightly freedome, let him ensample take
Of Adrastus, the manly king famous
So liberal, and so bounteous
Vnto his people, at all times found
Which made him strong, his fomē to cōfound
And loue only, his enemies to werrey
All Greece made, his bidding to obey
Of one accord, to knightly by his side
All at ones to Thebes for to ride
For tauenge, sith they were so strong
The great iniure, and importable wrong
Vnto his sonne, and to his next ally
As ye toforne, haue heard me specify
But whiles Greekes, rest a time in pees
I wil resort, vnto Ethiocles
Which in Thebes, warely hath espied
By his friends, as he was certified
Of the Greekes, wholly the ordinaunce
Her purpose eke, and her purueiaunce
And thereof had in heart a maner drede
And first he tooke, his counsaile and his rede

How Ethiocles made him strong, ayenst the comming of the Greekes.

Of the lords and Barons of the town
And of the wisest of his regioun
How he might maken resistence
Manly to stonden, at defence

To

To be so strong, that there were no dout
And in the countries, adiacent about
And eke also, in forrame regions
He hath withhold, all the champions
And therevpon, he sent out his espies
And his frendes, and his next allies
And all the worthy, dwelling environ
Yong, fresh, and lusty, he gadred to the toun
Maskewed his wals, and his toures
And stuffed hem, with manly soudeoures
Round about, he set many gonnes
Great and smal, and some large as tonnes
In his hasty, passing feruent heat
He spent his treasour, and yaue yefts great
Unto knights, and worthy men of name
And euermore, to encrease his fame
He yaue to lords Iuels manifold
Clothes of Ueluet, Damaske and of gold
To get him hearts, soothly as I rede
To helpe him now, in his great nede
And prudently, purueied him tofore
Of flesh, of fish, of wine and of corne
Set his Captains, early and late
With ful great stuffe, standing at euery gate
And made also, by werkmen that were trew
Barbicans and Bulwerkes strong and new
Barreres, chaines, and ditches wonder deepe
Making his auow, the city for to keepe
While he liueth despite of all his fone
And by his gods, of Metal and of stone
Ful oft he swore, both of heart and thought
That it shal first, ful deare ben ybought
And many a man, with polax sword and knife
Before this towne, shal first lese his life
And there shal eke, many sides bleed
Er that his brother, possibly posseed
The toun in pees, like as Greekes wene
But at end, the trouth it shal be sene
Let him beware, and wele tofore prouide
For Adrastus, on that other side
For his party was not negligent
But on a day, held his parliment
All his lords, sitting environ
To driue shortly, a plaine conclusion
And vp tapount, the fine of her entent
But some thought, it ful expedient
Er they proceed, to werke by thauise
Of one that was, ful prudent and wise
And circumspect, in his werkes all
A worthy Bishop, into age fall
And called was, soothly by his name
Amphiorax, of whom the great fame

How the Bishop Amphiorax was sent for to come vnto the Greekes.

Through all ỹ lands, both East and South
Among the Greekes, passingly was couth
A man in soth, of old antiquity
And most accept, of auctority
First by reason, of his high estate
And eke for he was so fortunate
And in his werkes, was also secree
With the gods, knowing her pruitee
By graunt of whom, as bookes specify
He had a spirit, of trew prophecy
And coud afore, ful openly diuine
Things begun, how they should fine
And eke by craft of calculacion
Yeue a dome, of euery question
And had in Magicke, great experience
And fine coud, by heauenly influence
And by meuing, of the high sterres
A final dome, of conteke and of werres

The prophecy, of Amphiorax the Bishop.

And wist wel, as his goddes told
That if Greekes, forth her tourney hold
It turne shal platly, this is no fage
To great mischiefe, and great damage
Of hem echone, and in especiall
The most blood, right of the blood roiall
Through all Greece, it may not be withdraw
In this voiage, shortly shal be slaw
And of him, why the Greekes went
Who that euer, wept him or bement
This is the fine, and may not be succoured
Of the earth, he should be deuoured
Quicke as he was, he knew it in certain
And for he saw, there nas none other gain
To saue his life, nor no bet defence
Than vtterly, to withdraw his presence
Praying his wife, for him to prouide
If he were sought, that she would him hide
And womanly, for to keepe him close
And of trouth concealing his purpose
For all his trust, touching his greuance
Was ful set, in her purueiaunce
I hope to God, that he there not dread
Of no deceit, in her womanhead
She was so trew, as women ben echone
And also close, and muet as a stone
That she ne would, as the mill stood
Discuren him, for no worlds good
But finally, the Greekes of entent
In all his dread, haue for this Bishop sent

How the wife of Amphiorax of conscience to saue her oth discured her husbond.

And soughte so long, er they might him find
For cause his wife was to him so kind
That so surely, hath locked vp his corps
But for she had, a maner remors.
In her selfe, giuing her conscience
Dreading to fal, in great offence
Least her soule, were in peril lorne
Whan she by oth, compelled was and sworne
They requiring, if she coud tell
Where her lord, the Bishop should dwell
Which to discure, her heart was ful loth
Til time she gan remember on her oth
And coud a trouth, of custome nat denie
And had also, great conscience to lie
Wonder heauy, with a sorrowful face
Maugre her ful, raught hem to the place
Where as he was, shut vp in a toure
All alone, hauing no succour
They fell on hem, er that he was ware
And set him vp, in a ful rich chaire
A foole he was, to accepted his life
For to discure, his counsaile to his wife
And yet she was, full sory for his sake
And specially, whan she saw him take
But I hope, that her beautie
Gan talwage ful soone by processe
In short time, whan that he was gone
There is no tempest, may lest euer in one
But this Bishop, by very force and might
Unto Greekes, conuied was ful right
On his hore grey, in his Chaire sitting
And they ful glad, weren of his comming
Hauing a trist, and ful opinion
Through the cause and occasion
Of his wisdome, and his sapience
And by vertue of his high prescience
They should eschew, all aduersity
Possible to fal, as in her iourny
And as the story, fully hath deuised
Ful circumspect, and right wele auised
He hath pronounced, in the parliament
Before the lords, and the President
His cleare conceit, in very sikernesse
Not entriked, with no doublenesse
Her dismall daies, and her fatal houres
Her auentures, and her sharpe shoures
The froward sort, and vnhappy stounds
The complaint, of her deadly wounds
The woful wrath, and the contrariously
Of fell Mars, and his cruelty
And how by meane of his grey mood
There shal be shed, all the worthy blood
Of the Greekes, it may not ben eschewed
If her purpose, be executed and sued
There is no more, this shal be the fine
The high noblesse, shal draw to decline
Of Greekes blood, in mischiefe, sorow and wo
And with all this, I my selfe also
As my fate hath, before disposed
Deepe in the ground, I shal be enclosed
And locked vp, in the derke vale
Of cruel death, lo this was the tale
That the Bishop, to Adrastus told
Him counsailing, his purpose to withhold
In eschewing, of more mischiefe and sorow
For all his goddes, he tooke to borow
If the Thebans, and the Greekes meet
The fine thereof, shal be so vnsweet
That all Greece, after shal it rew
Warning hem, if they the mischiefe knew
That shal follow, which no man may let
They would absteine, a siege for to set
Unto Thebes, and her purpose leue
With whose words, ỳ lords gan hem greue
And therein had, but ful smal delite
And euerich, of heartily high dispite
They abraid, and said he was vntrew
And a contrefeter, of prophecies new
And eke also, for all his long berd
An old dotard, a Coward and aferd
And of rancour, gone to dote
Both his calcling, and his Astronomie
And shortly said, they tooke therof none hede
Ne wil no thing, gouerne hem by his rede
This was the clamour, and noise in euery coste
Of high and low, throughout all the host
And specially, of the poore Soudeoures
And of lords, raigning in her floures
And of the estates, effectually I meane
Which of age, were but tender and grene
That haue not had, of Mars es influence
Of the werre, great experience
Here if ye list, ye may consider and see
Of coueiting, great aduersitee
How that youth, no peril cast afore
Til he in mischiefe, sodainly be lorne
There as age, prouideth euery thing
Er he begin, to casten the ending

How Age and youth ben of diuerse opinions.

Youth is gouerned by a large raine
To sterte forth, and can him not refraine
But of head, set on all at ones
As he that hurtleth, ayenst hard stones
Broketh himselfe, and vnwarely perbraketh
But Age expert, nothing vndertaketh,
But he tofore, by good discretion
Make a due examination

How

How it wil turne, either to bad or good
But youth as fast, as stirred is the blood
Taketh empryses, of hasty wilfulnesse
Joy at gimmug, the end is wretchednesse
The old prudent, in all his gouernaunce
Ful long afore, maketh puruciaunce
But youth alas, by counsaile wil not werke
For which ful oft, he stumbleth in the derke
Thus seld is seen, the trouth to termine
That age and youth draw by o line
And where that eyther hath domination
Wisedome is put in subiection

How that wisdome without supportation, auaileth little or nought.

Like as this Bishop, with al his high prudēce
For cause he might haue none audience
All his wisdome, and his prophecy
Of the Greekes was holden but foly
For though Plato and wise Socrates
Horall Senecke, and Diogenes
Anaxagoras, and prudent Theolonce
And Tullius, that had soueraunte
Whilom in Rome, as of eloquence
Though all these, shortly in sentence
Were alue, most cunning and expert
And no man lift, her counsel to aduert
Nor of her sawes, for to taken heed
What might auaile, and it come to need
For where as prudence, can find no succour
And prouidence hath no fauour
Farwell wisdome, and farwel discrecion
For lacke onely, of supportacion
For vnsupported, with his lockes hore
Amphiorax, sighen gan full sore
With head enclined, & many an heuy thought
Whan ỹ he saw, his counsell stood for nought
For vtterly, the Greekes as I told
Haue fully cast her iourney for to yhold
Made hem ready, and gone for to hosty
Toward Thebes, the city for to werrey
And in Greece, wil no lenger tary
And forth with hem, Amphiorax they cary
Set in his chaire with a dolcful hert
Whan he wist, he might not astert
Of his fate the disposicion
And hosteyng, into the region
Of Ligurge, Greekes gan approch
A sundry lond, with many a craggy roch
But all the way, sothly that they gone
For horse ne man, water was there none
So dry were the valleies and the pleynes
For all that yeare, they had had no reynes
But ful great drought, as made is mencion
And all the lond, searching environ

The great mischiefe that the Greekes had for defaut of water.

They nother found well ne riuere
Hem to refresh, nor water that was clere
That they alas, no refute ne con
So importable, was the sheue son
So whote on hem, in folds where they ley
That for mischiefe, men and horse they dey
Gaping ful dry, vpward into the South
And some putten, her swerds in her mouth
And speare heads, in story as it is told
Tallwage her thirst, with the yron cold
And of his life, ful many one despeired
In this mischiefe, is home agame repeired
Til on a day, worthy Tideus
And with him eke, the king Campaneus
Of purpose rode, throughout the Countree
If they might any water see
From coast to coast, both ferre and nere
Til of fortune, they entred an herbere
With trees shadowed, fro the son shene
Ful of floures, and of herbs grene
Wonder wholsome, of sight and aire
Therein a lady, that passingly was faire
Sitting as tho, vnder a Laurer tre
And in her armes, a little child had she
Ful gracious of looke, and of visage
And was also, wonder tender of age
Some of the king, borne to succede
Called Ligurgus, in story as we rede
Whose harts ioy, and worldly eke disport
All his murth eke, pleasaunce and comfort
Was in this Child, of excellent fairenesse
And this lady, Mirrour of semelinesse
All sodenly, as she cast vp her sight
Upon his stede, saw an armed knight
Greatly abashed, gan her anon remue
But Tideus, gan after fast to sue

How Tideus complained to the lady in the herber for water.

And said fuster, beth nothing dismaid
In your seike, displeased nor affraid
For we are come, only to this place
You to beseech, of mercy and of grace
Us to succour, in our great need
Declaring you, how it stand in deed
Here fast by, almost at hond
The worthiest, of all Greekes lond
Kings, Princes, be lodged in the field
And many other, with polax and with shield
Which in mischiefe, peril and great dread

For want of water, are likely to be dead
For there was none, of high ne low degree
In all our host, now passed daies three
That drank alas, I except no estate
Our fate, is so infortunate
Praying you, of womanly pitee
Benignely, and graciously to see
How of Greece, all the Chevalry
Of her lives, stonds in icopardy
That ye would, of womanhood tell
If ye know any river, spring, or well
Specially now, in our care
Of gentillesse, vnto vs declare
Lo here is all, if ye list to here
That I wil tame, mine owne sufferere
And whan this lady, inly vertuous
The complaint heard, of worthy Tideus
Of very pity, chaunged cheare and hew
And in her hart, vpon his wo gan rew
And ful goodly, seeing his distresse
Said vnto him, in all his heauinesse

How the lady curteously taught Tideus to the well.

Certes (qd. she) if I were at large
Touching this child, which I haue in charge
I should in hast, of all that doth you greue
To my power, helpe you and releue
Only of routh, and of compassion
And leaue all other occupacion
Conuey you, and be your trew guide
To a river, but little here beside
But I dare not, so much me assure
This little Child, to put in aduenture
I am so fearful, from it to depart
But for your sake, yet I shal do part
My life, my death, of true affection
To provide for your saluacion
Tooke the Child, and laid it in her lap
And richely, in clothes gan it wrap
And couched it, among the herbes sote
And laid about, many an wholsome rote
And floures eke, both blew and red
And suppriced, with a maner of dred
With Tideus forth anon she went
As she in trouth, that no treason ment
And on her way, would neuer dwell
Til she him brought, to a right faire well
And to a river, of water ful habound
But who was glad, & who was tho iocound
But Tideus seeing the river
Which in all hast, sent his messager
To Adrastus, and bad him not abide
But down descend, to the River side
Withth all his host, licour for to haue
At this River, her liues for to saue
And they enhasted hem, making none abode
All at ones, to the River rode
For to drinke, they had so great lust
Of appetite, for to staunch her thrust
And some drank, and found it did hem good
And some were, so feruent and so wood
Upon the water, that in sikernesse
Through vndiscreet, and hasty gredinesse
Out of measure, the water so they drinke
That they fell dead, euen vpon the brinke
And some naked, into the River ronne
Only for heat, of the Sommer Sonne
To bathen hem, the water was so cold
And some also, as I haue you told
I meane tho, that prudent were and wise
The water drank, in measurable wise
That of the thrust, they haue before endured
They were refreshed, fully and recured
And Greekes than, of high and low degree
For her profite, and her commoditee
Compasse the river, Cristalin of sight
Of one accord, they her tents pight
To rest hem there, in release of her paine
Only the space, of a day or twaine
And whiles Greekes, vpon the river lay
This Tideus, vpon the same day
Ful knightly, hath done his diligence
This yong lady, with great reuerence
To Adrastus, goodly to present
At whose comming, the King himselfe went
Againe her, she falling down on knees
All the estates, tho present and degrees
Of Greekes lond, absent was not one
And in his Armes, tooke her vp anone
Thanking her, of her businesse
Of her labour, and her kindnesse
Behoting her, like as he was hold
If any thing, plainly that she wold
That he may done, she should it ready find
And also Greekes all, the story maketh mind
Of the estates, being tho present
Thanked her, with all her whole entent
For the freshing, done to many a Greeke
And for her part, they behight her eke
With her bodies, and goods both two
What her list, commaund him for to do
To be ready platly, and not faile
And here my Auctour, maketh rehearsaile
That this lady, so faire vpon to see
Of whom the name, was Isiphilee
To Adrastus told, as ye may rede
Lineally, the stock of her kinrede
Sometime how she, a Kings doughter was

Rehear-

Rehersing to him all the whole caas
First how that she out of her country went
Shortly, for she would not assent
To execute a conspiracion
Made by the women of that Region
A thing contraire agein all right
That ech of hem vpon a certain night
By one accord shall warly take kepe
Father, brother, and husbands in her slepe
With knives sharp and raisours kene
Kitte her throtes in that mortall tene
Unto this fine, as Bochas tell can
In all that lond be not found a man
But slain echone, to this conclusion
That women might haue dominacion
In that kingdome, and raigne at liberty
And on no parties interrupted be
But for this lady passing debonair
To this matter was froward and contrair
Kept her fader that he was not slaw
But from the death preserued and withdraw
For which alas she fled the contree
And of a Pirat taken in the See
To King Ligurgus, brought in all her drede
And for her trouth and her womanhede
To her he tooke his yong child to kepe
Which in the herber she left alone to slepe
Whan Tideus she brought to the well
And by Jason some bookes tell
That this lady had sonnes two
Whan that he and Hercules also
Toward Colchos, by her country came
For taccomplish the conquest of the Ram
But who that list by and by to se
The story whole of Isophile
Her fathers name, of which also I write
Though some saun, he named was Thorite
And some bookes Uermos eke him call
But to know the auentures all
Of this lady Isophile the faire
So faithfull aye and inly debonaire
Looke on the booke that John Bochas made
Whilom of women with Rhetorikes glade
And direct by full soueraigne stile
To faire Jane, the Quene of Cecile
Rede there the Rubrike of Isophile
Of her trouth, and of her bounte
Full craftily compiled for her sake
And whan that she her leaue hath take
Of Adrastus, homeward in her way
Tideus gan her to conuay
To the Gardin, till she is repeired
But now alas my matter is dispeired
Of all ioy, and of all wilfulnesse
And destitute of all mirth and gladnesse
For now of wo begin the sharp shoures.
For this lady hath found among the flowres

How the child was slaine of a foule ser-
pent in the herber.

Her little child turned vp the face
Slain of a serpent in the selfe place
Her taile burled, with scales siluer shene
The venime was so pearsing and so kene
So mortall eke the perilous violence
Cansed alas through her long absence
She was to slow homeward for to hie
But now can she but weepe, waile, and crie
Now can she nought but sigh and complaine
And wofully wring her honds twaine
Deadly of looke, pale of face and chere
And gan to rend her gilt tresses clere
And oft sithe, gan to say alas
I wofull wretch, vnhappy in this caas
What shall I doe, or whider shall I tourne
For this is the fine, if I here soiourne
I wote right well I may it not escape
The pitous fate that is for me shape
Socour is there none, ne none other rede
Liche to my desert, but that I mote be dede
For through my slouth and my negligence
I haue alas done to great offence
That my gilt I may it not excuse
Shall to the king of treason me accuse
Through my default, and slouth both two
His sonne is dead and his heire also
Which he loued more than all his good
For trefour none so nigh his heart stood
Nor was so depe graue in his corage
That he is likely to fallen in a rage
When it is so, mine odious offence
Reported be vnto his audience
So importable shall be his heauines
And well wote I in very sothfastnes
That when the quene hath this thing aspied
To mine excuse it may not be denied
I doubt it nat, there gaineth no pite
Without respite she will auenged be
On me alas as I haue deserued
That from the death I may not be preserued
Nother by bill nor by supplication
For the rage of my transgression
Requireth death and none other mede
And thus alas, she quaking in her drede
None other help ne remedy can
But dreint in sorow, to the Grekes ran
Of heartily wo, face and chere distrained

And her chekes with weping al bereined
In high affray distraught and furious
Tofore all thoste she came to Tideus
Fill on knees, and gan her complaint make
And told plainely that for the Grekes sake
She must be dead, and shortly in substance
Reherling him the ground of her grcuance
First how by traines of a falle serpent
The child was slain, while she was absent
And whan that he her mischicke vnderstood
In what disioynt and perill that she stood
Unto her full knightly he behight
To help and further all that euer he might
Her pitous wo to stinten and appeale
And for to find vnto her disease
Hastie comfort, he went a ful great pace
To Adrastus, and told him all the case
Of this vnhappy wofull auenture
Beseeching him to done his busie cure
As he was bound of equitie and right
And eke aduertise, and to haue a sight
How she quit her to Grekes here tofore
That they were likely to haue ben lore
The socour void, of her womanhede
For which he must of knighthood take hede
To remedien this vnhappy thing
And Adrastus like a worthy king
Taquite himselfe, the story maketh mind
To this Lady will not be found vnkind
Neither for cost, ne for no trauaile
But busie was in all that might auaile
To her socour, considered all things
And by thauise of all the worthy kings
Of Grekes lond, they been accorded thus
Princes, Dukes, and with hem Tideus
To hold her way, and all at ones ride
To Ligurgus, dwelling there beside
Of one intent, if they may purchace
In any wise for to get grace
For this lady called Isophilee
They would assay, if it might be
And to his pallace full ryally built of stone
The worthy Grekes came riding euerichone
Euery Lord full freshly on his steed
And Ligurgus example of manlyhede
Anon as he knew of her comming
Taquite himselfe, like a gentill king
Agein hem went, to meet hem on the way
Full well beseen and in good aray
Receiuing hem with a full knightly chere
And to Adrastus said, as ye shall here
Cousin (qd. he) and gan him to embrace
Ye be welcome to your owne place
Thanking hartily to your high noblesse
That so goodly of your gentillesse
Towards me ye list you to acquite
Your selfe this day your cousin to visite
In this castell to take your lodging
That neuer yet I was so glad of thing
In all my life, and thereto here my trouth
And euermore there shall be no slouth
That the chambers and the large toures
Shall be deliuered to your herberiours
That euery lord as he is of degre
Unto his lodging assigned shall be
Your officers let hemselfe deuise
If the housing largely may suffise
To you and yours, stretchen and attain
That none estate haue cause to complain
And all your host lodged here beside
Which ententifely vpon you abide
Let hem fet by my auctoritie
Uttaile ynough here in my citie
And all that may hem socour or saue
And at o word, all that euer I haue
Is full and whole at your commaundement.

How Adrastus and all the estates of Grekes preiden Ligurgus for the life of Isophile.

(Qd. Adrastus) that is not our intent
Nor no part cause of our comming
For we be come all for another thing
A certaine gift of you to requere
Benignely if ye list to here
Which may Grekes passingly auaile
Of our request if we doe not faile
Which we dare not openly expresse
Withouten that ye will of your gentillesse
Your graunt, affirme, confirme, and ratifie
Than wele be bold, it to specifie.
(Qd. Ligurgus) what thing euer it be
Not excepted, but only things thre:
The first is this, it touch not my life,
My yong sonne plainly, and my wife
Take all my good, and what ye list prouide
Of my treasour, and set these three aside
All the surplus I count nat a myte
Than Adrastus astonied was a lite
Whan Ligurgus, in conclusion
Of his sonne made exception
And whiles they treat thus in fere
There came forth one with a wofull chere
Of face and looke, pale and nothing red
And loud crieth, the Kings sonne is dead
Alas the while that whilom was so feire
After Ligurgus borne to ben his heire

The

The which alas hath yolden vp the dreathy
Of a Serpent stong vnto the death
And with his wound, new fresh and greene
In the herber lieth that pitie is to seen
And hath so lien almost all this day
But when Ligurgus heard this affray
And wist his child was dead and had no mo
Little wonder though that he was wo
For sodainly the importable smart
Ran anon, and hent him by the hart

The sorow that king Ligurgus made for the death of his childe, and the lamentation of the Queene.

That for constreint of his deadly peine
Throughout he felt, corsen euery veine
The rage gan mine on him so depe
That he could not but sobbe, sigh, and wepe
And with the noise and lamentacioun
The Quene distraught, is descended doun
And whan she knew the ground of al this sor-
It neded her no teares for to borow (row
But twenty time vpon a row
A swound she fell to the earth low
And stoundmell for this mischaunce
Still as a stone she lieth in a traunce
But whan the childe into court was brought
Toforе Ligurgus, alas I wite him nought
Vpon the corps with a mortall face
He fell at ones, and gan it to embrace
Sore to grisne, and again vpstert
That whan Adrastus this thing can aduert
Of kingly routh and compassioun
From his yen the teares fell adoun
Eke kings, Dukes, that about stood
Onely of pity that is in gentle blood
No power had the teres to restraine
That on her chekes doune began to raine
But all a day would not suffise
All her sorowes in order to deuise
First of the king and the quene also
To tellen all I should neuer haue do
Not in the space almost of an houre
But when the stormes and the teary shoure
Of her weping, was somwhat ouergone
The litle corps was grauen vnder stone
And Adrastus in the same tide
Ligurgus toke a little out aside
And full wisely with his prudent speech
The Quene present, gan him for to teach
That so to sorow auaile may right nought
To murder himselfe with his owne thought
Ayeinst death may be no recure
Though we in wo perpetually indure
All helpeth not whan the soule is go
And our life here thus taketh hede therto
Is but an exile and a pilgrimage
Full of torment and of bitter rage
Liche See renning to and fro
Suing an ebbe whan the flood is do
Litle space abiding at full
Of whose sojourne, the pope yeueth no bull
For king is none, Duke ne Emperour
That may him shroud ayenst his fatall shour
Of cruell death whan him list manace
To marke a man with his mortall mace
Than geineth not to his saluacion
Neither franchise ne protection
And little or nought may helpen in this caas
Saufcondit, either Supersedeas
For in this world who so loketh aright
Is none so great of power nor of might
None so rich, shortly nor so bold
That he must die, either yong or old
And who in youth passeth this passage
He escaped is all the wood rage
All sorow, all trouble of this present life
Replenished with contek, werre, and strife
Which seld or neuer stondeth in surety
Wherfore best is as it semeth me
No man grutch, but of high prudence
The sonde of god he taketh in patience
And ye that ben so wise and manly to
Your selfe to drowne in torment and in wo
For losse of thing, and ye list to see
That in no wise may recured be
Is great folly and vndiscrecioun
And thus Adrastus hath conuied doun
The substance whole of that he would say
Till that he fond a time for to pray
Conuenient for Isophile
Beseching him for to haue pitie
Of that she hath offended his highnes
Not wilfully but of rechlesnes
First that he would his domes so deuide
Mercy preferre, and set right aside
At request and praier of hem all
Of this vnhappe and mischiefe that is fall
By hasty rigour not to do vengeance
But thinke afore in his puruiance
Who to wretches doth mercy in her drede
Shall mercie find whan he hath most nede
And sith he hath power, might, and space
Let him take this lady into his grace
For lack of routh that she not thus die
But tho the Quene gan againe reply

How

How the Queene will algate haue the Serpent dead.

And platly ſaid, as in this matter
Auaileth neither requeſt nor prayer
Pity, mercie, nor remiſſion
But if it be by this condicion
That the Serpent, cauſe of all ſorowe
Through his labour, lay his head to borowe
This is finall and vtter recompence
To find grace for her great offence
Or els ſhortly ſhed blood for blood
And whan Grekes her anſwer vnderſtood
Of one accord, in her beſt wiſe
Toke on hem this auenturous empriſe
For loue onely of Iſophile
And gon to ride enuiron the contre
By hilles, valeis, roches and caues
In ditches darke, and in old graues
By euery coſt ſearching vp and doun
Till at laſt, full famous of renoun
The worthy knight Parthonolope
Was the firſt that happed for to ſe
This hidous Serpent by a riuers ſide
Great and horrible, ſterne and full of pride
Under a roch by a banke low
And in all haſt he bent a ſturdie bow
And therein ſet an arow filed kene
And through the body ſpotted blew and grene

How Parthonolope ſlewe the Serpent.

Full mightily he made it for to glide
And hent out a ſword hanging by his ſide
Smote off his head, and anon it hent
And therewithall gan the Quene preſent
Wherethrough perceil ſhe gan tallwage
And thus of proweſſe and of high corage
This manly man, this Parthonolope
Hath reconſiled faire Iſiphile
Unto grace, fully of the Quene
Her ire voided and her old tene
And by Adraſtus mediacion
King Ligurgus, graunted a pardon
To this lady, from all danger fre
She was reſtored to her libertie
In his pallace all her life to dwell
Though John Bochas the contraire tell
For this aucthor affirmeth out of drede
That whan the child was by the ſerpent dede
She durſt not for her great offence
Neuer after come in preſence
Of Ligurgus, but of intencion
Fled anon out of that region
At heart ſhe tooke the childs death ſo ſore
What fell of her find I can no more
Than ye haue heard afore me ſpecifie
And the kingdome, but if bookes lie

Nota, de Ligurgo Rege Tracie.

Of Ligurgus called was Trace
And as I read in another place
He was the ſame mighty Champion
To Athens that came with Palamon
Againſt his brother that called was Arcite
Red in his chare, with foure Bolles white
Upon his head a wrethe of gold full fine
And I find eke, how Bacchus god of wine

Baccus, deus Vini.

With this King, was whilom at debate
Onely for he, pompous and elate
Deſtruccion did to his vines
And for the firſt, ſet alay on wines
Meint with water when they were to ſtrong
And this Bachus for the great wrong
Brake his limmes, and dreint him in the ſee
Of Ligurgus ye get no more of me
But the trouth if ye liſt verifie
Rede of Goddes the genealogie

Nota, de duodecim arboribus in libro Bocha-cij de genealogia Deorum;

Lineally her kintede by degrees
Ybraunched out vpon twelue trees
Made by Bochas, Decertaldo called
Among poets in Italie ſtalled
Next Francois Petrarke, ſuing in certaine
Now vnto Grekes, I will returne againe
To tell forth ſhortly, if I con
Of her iourney that they haue begon
Here Adraſtus hath his leue take
Of Ligurgus, with his browes blake
And departing with ſaint John to borowe
Made his wardes on the next morowe
So well beſeen, ſo mighty and ſo ſtrong
Wonder early whan the larke ſong
With a trompet warned euery man
To be ready in all the haſt they can
For to remue and no letting make
And ſo they haue the right way take
Toward Thebes, the Grekes euerichone
That ſoche a number gadred into one

Of worthy knights never afore was seen
When they in fere, were mustred in a plein
And they ne stint by none occasioun
Till they be comen euen afore the toun
And pight her tents, proudly as I rede
Under the walles, in a grene mede
And when the Thebans were beset about
The manly knights would haue priked out
And haue scarmished in her hasty pride
With her fomen on that other side
But by bidding of Ethiocles
At thilke night, they kepht hemself in pees
Because only that it was so late
With great wait set at euery gate
Men of armes all the night walking
On the walles, by bidding of the king
Lest there were traine or treason
And on the toures, and in the chief dongeon
He set vp men to make mortall sounes
With brasen hornes and loud Clariounes
Of full intent the watches for to kepe
In his ward that no man ne slepe
And Grekes proudly all the long night
Kindled fires, and made full great light
Set vp lodging vpon euery side
Like as they should euer there abide
Compas the toun, ther was no void space
But all beset her fomen to manace
And whiles they tofore the citie leye
On euery cost they sent out to forreie

The forreye that the Greekes made in the countrey about Thebes.

Brent townes, Thorpes and vilages
With great rauing making her pillages
Spoile and rob, and brought home vittail
And all manner sorts of bestail
Shepe and Nete in her cruell rage
With hounds slain all that were sauage
Hart and Hynd, both Buck and Do
The black Beare, and the wild Ro
The fatte swine, and the tusky Bore
Carrying all home for the Grekes store
Whete and wine for her auauntage
Hay and Otes fodder and forage
With the kalends as hem thought due
The Grekes gan the Thebans salue
Ministring hem, occasions fell
The siege set, shortly for to tell
Of full intent in her hatefull pride
For life or death therupon tabide
Whosoeuer therat be agreued
Till they fully her purpose haue atchieued
There may therof be made no reles
And of all this, full ware Ethiocles
Gan in party greatly to maruaile
When he saw the great apparaile
Of the Grekes, the city round about
And in hemselfe had a maner doubt
Now at point what was best to do
For thilke time it stood with him so
That to some abiding in the toun
He had in heart a great suspeccioun
Lest toward him, that they were vnstable
And to his brother in party fauourable.

The variaunce in Thebes among hemselfe.

For in the city there was variance
That vnto him was a great mischance
For in his nede, shortly he ne wist
Upon whome that he might trist
For they were not all of one intent
Wherefore he hath for his counsaile sent
All his lords and the old Quene
Soch as he dempt that were pure and clene
Whole of one heart, and not variable
Of old expert and alway found stable
Requering hem because they were wise
All openly to tellen her auise
Where it were better plainly in her sight
With his brother to treaten or to fight
And some gaue a full blunt sentence
Which had of warre none experience
Said it was best, and not ben afeerd
To try his right manly with the sword
And some also that were more prudent
Spake vnto him by good auisement
And list not spare but her conceit tolde
How it was best his couenant to holde
And to performe his hest made tofore
To his brother, liche as he was swore
So ỹ his word, the worse make him to spede
Be not found variant from the dede
For none hatred, rancour ne pride
And tho the Quene tooke him out aside

The wordes of the worthy Queene Iocasta vnto Ethiocles.

Told him plainly, it was full vnfitting
Soch doublenes to finden in a king
And said him eke, although he were strong
Unto his brother he did wrong
As all the toun will record in dede
And beare witnes if it come to nede

Wher-

Wherefore let vs shape another mene
In this matter, while that it is grene
Ere this quarell thus gon of volunte
Tourne in the fine to more aduersite
For if it be darreyned by battaile
Who trusteth most may full lightly faile
And it is folly by short auisement
To put a strife in Martes iudgement
For hard it is whan a iudge is wood
To treat aforn him without losse of blood
And if we put our matter whole in Marte
Which with his sword his lawes doth coarte
Than may it hap, where ye be glad or wroth
Thou and thy brother shull repent both
And many another that is here present
Of your trespas that ben very innocent
And many a thousand peeras shall complaine
For the debate onely of you twaine
And for your strife shall find full vnsoote
And for thou art ginner, ground, and roote
Of this iniury and this great vnright
To the goddes that hereof han a sight
Thou shal accomptes and a reckening make
For all tho that perisben for thy sake
And now the cause driuen is so far
So dainly peace, either hasty war
Mot follow anon, for the fatall chance
Of life and death dependeth in balance
And thou ne maist by no craft restraine
That vpon one platly of you twaine
The sorte mot fall like as it doth tourne
Whosoeuer therat either laugh or mourne
And thou art driuen so narow to the stake
That thou maist not mo delaies make
But fight or treat, this is the vtter fine
By none engin thou canst it not decline
An hasty case, as folke sain that ben wise
Redresse requireth by full short auise
For to treat long now auaileth nought
For to the point sothly thou art brought
Either to kepe thy possession
Or in all hast deuoid out of this toun
Wher thou therwith be wroth or well apaid
Now note well all that I haue said
And by my counsaile wisely condiscend
Wrong wrought of old newly to amend
The time is come it may be none other
Wherefore in hast treat with thy brother
And again him make no resistence
But to thy lords fully yeue credence
By whose counsaile sith they be so sage
Let Polimite reioyce his heritage
And that shal tourne most to thine auaile
Lo here is whole the fine of our counsaile

The treatie that Ethiocles sent vnto his brother.

And shortly tho for ire wroth
Though he hereto froward was and loth
Accordyng is, hearyng all the pres
If he algate shall treat for a pees
It must be by this condicion
That he will haue the dominacion
First in chief to himselfe reserued
As him thought he had it well deserued
And saue to him whole the soueraintie
And vnder him in Thebes the city
He to graunt with a right good chere
Polimite the raigne for a yere
Than tauoid, and not resort again
For more to claime was all but in vain
This would he doen only for her sake
And otherwise he will none end make
With Grekes, what fortune euer befall
And finally emong his lords all
There nas not one of high or low estate
That would gone on this Ambassiat
Out of the towne, ne for bet ne worse
Till Iocasta made saddle her horse
And cast her selfe to gon on this treate
To make an end if it would be
And this was done the morrow right betime
Upon the houre when it drew to prime
And with her went her yong douzters tweine
Antigone, and the faire Imeine
Of her meine full many one about
At gate she was conueied out
And of purpose she made first her went
On horseback to king Adrastus tent
He and his lords being all in fere
And they receiue her with a right glad chere
Shewing her, like to her degre
On euery halfe full great humanite
Polimite riding from his place
And humbly his moder can embrace
Kissed her, and than Antigone
And eke Imein excellent of beaute
And for that they passingly were faire
Great was the pres, concours, and repaire
Of the ladies for to haue a sight
And Iocasta procedeth anon right
To Adrastus the matter to purpose
And gan to him openly to disclose
The entent and will of Ethiocles
And by what mean he desireth pees
To him reserue as he gan specifie
The honour whole and the Regalie

with

With Scepter & crowne, frō him not deuided
But whole to him, as he hath prouided
And Polimite, by this condicioun
Under him to reigne in the toun
As a soget, by sufferance of his Brother
But the Greekes thoughten all another

The knightly answere of worthy Tideus.

And specially, worthy Tideus
Pleinly affirming, it should nat be thus
For he wil haue no condicions
But set aside, all exepcions
Nothing reserue, as in speciall
But whole the lordship, regaly and all
By Polimites, it fully to possed
In Thebes, crowned verily indeed
And rightful King, put in possession
Like the couenaunts and conuencion
Ymade of old, assured and enseled
That shal not now, of new be repealed
But stable and whole, in his strength stond
And let him platly, so vnderstond
And first that he, deuoid him out of towne
And deliuer the Scepter and the crowne
To his Brother, and make therof no more
And shortly els, it shal be bought ful sore
Or this matter, brought be to an end
For Greekes be there none, ꝑ shul hence wend
Er that our right, that is vs denied
With life and death, darreined be and tried
We wil not erst, from this towne remue
And if him list, all this thing eschue
And all mischiefe, stinten and appease
To either part, he may doe great ease
Thus I meane, for his auauntage
Deliuer vp whole, the true heritage
To his brother, for heire to endure
And Greekes shal fully him assure
By what bond, that him list deuise
The peare complete, in our best wise
To him deliuer, ayen possession
Without strife, or contradiction
And to this fine, iustly hold vs to
And if it fal, that he wil not so do
Let him not wait, but only after werre
The houre is come, we wil it not deferre
Lo here is all, and thus ye may report
To him ayein, whan that ye resort
Fro which appointmēt we cast vs not to bary
And yet to him, Amphiorax the contrary
Ful pleinly said in conclusion
This fine shal cause a destruction
Of hem echone, if it forth proceed
To be performed, and execute in deed
But thilke time, for all his eloquence
He had in sooth, but litle audience
For whether so he ment good or ill
King Adrastus, bad him to be still

And tho Iocasta, as wisdome did her teach
Humble of her port, with ful soft speech
Gan seech meanes, in her fantasy
If she might the ire modify
Of the Greekes, to make hem to encline
In any wise, her rancour for to fine
She did her deuoir, and her busie cure
But than befel, a wonder auenture
Cause and ground of great confusioun
Greekes pertourbing, and eke the toun
And it to tell, I may not astert
For which a while, my stile I mote aduert

Of a rame Tygre dwelling in Thebes.

And shortly tel by descripcioun
Of a Tygre, dwelling in the toun
Which from a kingdome, besident adiacent
Out of Egipt, was to Thebes sent
Which beast, by record of scripture
Is most swift, as of his nature
And of kind, also most sauage
And most cruell, whan he is in his rage
And as clerkes maken mention
He of body resembleth the Lion
And like a greyhound the mosel and the hed
And of eyen, as any fire red
Eke of his skin, written as I finde
Like a Panter, conuersant in Inde
With all maner hues and colours
And is ful oft, deceiued with Mirrours
By fraud of hunts, and false apparence
Shewed in glasse, without en existence
Whan his kindeles, are by sleights take
And he destreined, may no rescues make
And like a lambe, was this Tygre tame
Ayenst kind, mine Auctour writ the same
And this beast, marueilous to see
Was sent to Ismeine, and Antigonee
That vnto hem, did great comfort
And could play, and make good disport
Like a whelp, that is but yong of age
And to no wight, did no damage
No more in sooth, than doth a little hound
And it was worth, many an hundred pound
Vnto the King, for aie in his greuance
There was nothing, ꝑ did him more plesance
That for no tresour, it might not be bought
For whan that he was, pensife or in thought

It put him out of his heuinesse
And thilke time, the story doth expresse
That Jocaste treted for a pees
This tame Tygre, in party rebeles
Out at gates, in sight of many a man
Into the field, wilfully out ran,
And cassedly running to and fro
In and out, as doth the tame Ro
Greekes wening, that were yong of age
That this Tygre had be sauage
And cruelly, beetting all the place
Roundabout, gan him to enchace
Til he was dead, and slaine in the feld
The slaughter of whom, whan they beheld
The proud Thebans, which on y wals stood
They ran downe, furious and wood
Wening he had be slain, of despite
Taking her horse, without more respite
Fully purposed, with Greekes for to fight
The Tygres death, to auenge if they might
And forth they rode without gouernaile
And ful prowdly, Greekes gan assaile
And of hatred, and ful high disdain
Felien on hem, that han the Tygre slain
And cruelly quitten hem her mede
That many a Greeke in the greene mede
By the force, and the great might
Of her foemen, lay slaine in the fight
The Tygres death, so sore they abought
So mortally Thebans on hem wrought
That all the host, in the feld ligging
Was astonied of this sodain thing

And in this wise, of rancour rekeles
Out of Thebes, rode Ethiocles
And with him eke, the worthy king Tremour
Of his hond, a noble warriour
That made Greekes to forsake her place
And to her tents gan hem to enchace
And mid the feld, as they togider met
On horsebacke, with speres sharpely whet
Of very hate, and enuious pride
Ful many one, was dead on either side
The which thing, whan Tideus espieth
Wood as a Lion, to horsebacke he hieth
As he that was neuer adele aferd
But ran on hem, and met hem in the berd
And maugre hem, in his cruelty
He made hem flee home to her city
Hem pursuing, of ful deadly hate
That many one, lay slain at the gate
Gaping vpright, with her wounds wide
That vtterly, they durst not abide
Tofore the swerd of Tideus
He was on hem, so passing furious
So many Thebans, he rofe to the hert
That whan Jocasta, the slaughter can aduert
Polimite she pray gan ful faire
To make Greeks home again repaire
And that they woulden stint to assaile
For thilke time, and ceasen her battaile
At whose request pleinly and praire
And at reuerence of his moder dere
Polimite her hart to comfort
Greeks made home ayein resort
And Tideus, to stinten of his chace
And they of Thebes, hasting a great pace
Ful trist and heuy, ben entred into the toun
And for the Tygre in conclusioun
As ye haue herd, first began the strife
But many a Theban, that day lost his life
And recurcelesse, hath yeuen vp the breath
Of thauenging, of the Tygres death
And all this while, ducly as she ought
The Queen Jocaste, humbly besought
King Adrastus, wholly of his grace
Some meane way, wisely to purchace
To make a pees, between the brethren tweim
And the treaty, so prudently ordein
On either part, that no blood be shad
And thus Adrastus, auised and right sad
For Greekes party, answere gaue anone
That other end, shortly gat she none
Liche as the lords, fully ben auised

Than Tideus tofore hath deuised
And whan she saw, it may none other be
She leue tooke, and home to the cite
She is repeired, hauing to her guide
Polimite riding, by her side
And Tideus led Antigone
And of Achade, Protonolope
The worthy king, did his busie peine
To be attendant, vpon faire Ismeine
Whose heart she hath, to her seruice lured
And he ayein hath portraied and figured
Wid of his brest, which lightly may not passe
Wholly the features of her freshly face
Him thought she was so faire a creature
And thought that he durst him not discure
Yet in his heart as ferforth as he can
He hath auowed to be her true man
Unwist to her, plainly and vnknow
How he was marked with Cupides bow
With his arrow, sodainly wercied
And to the gates, the Ladies conueied
Ben entred in, for it drew to eue
Greeks of hem, taking tho her leue
Though some of hem, were loth to depart
Yet of wisdome, they durst not departe

Under

Under a conduit, to enter into the toun
Least it tourned, to her confusioun
Though some bookes, the contraire sain
But mine auctheur, is plain thereagain
And affirmeth in this opinion
That Tideus, of high discrecion
Of wilfulnesse, nor of foly
He would as tho put in iopardy
Neither himselfe, ne none of his feres
And the Ladies, with her heuenly cheres
Angelike of looke, and countenaunce
Liche as it is put, in remembraunce
At her entring from Greekes into the toun
Polunite, of great affection
The Queen besought, ỳ thilke night not fine
For tallay, if she might encline
Ethiocles, of conscience and right
To keepe couenaunt, as he hath behight
Ful yore agone, with surplusage
Least the contraire, come to damage
First of himselfe, and many another mo
And thus from Thebes, the Greekes ben ago
To her Tentes, and rest hem all that night
And Lucina, the Moone shone ful bright
Within Thebes, on the deepe dungeon
When Iocasta, made relation
Unto the King, and told him all the gise
How that Greekes, vtterly dispise
His power made, by false conclusion
Only except, the conuention
Of old engrossed, by great purueiaunce
Which is enrolled, and put in remembraunce
Upon which, they finally wil rest
Him counsailing, her thought for the best
To conforme him, to that he was bound
Least in the fine, falsenesse him confound
But all her counsaile, he set it at no price
He dempt himselfe so prudent and so wise
For he was wilful, and he was indurate
And in his hart, of malice obstinate
And vtterly, auised in his thought
Within Thebes, his brother get right nought
And in his errour, thus I let him dwell
And of the Greekes, forth I wil you tell
Which all that night, kept hemselfe close
And on the morrow, when Titan vp arose
They armed hem, and gan hem ready make
And of assent, haue the field ytake
With the Thebans, that day without doubt
For to fighten, if they yssue out
And Adrastus, in ful thrifty wise
In the field, his wards can deuise
As he that was, of all deceits ware
And richely armed in his chaire

Amphiorax, came with his meine
Ful renowned, of antiquite
And wel expert, because he was old
And while that Greekes, as I haue you told
Were besiet, her wards to ordaine
Mid of the field, befell a case sodaine
Ful vnhappy, lothsome, and odible
For liche a thing, that were inuisible
This old bishop, with horse and chare ferrein
Disapered, and no more was sein
Only of fate, which no man can repell
The yearth opened, and he fell down to hell

How the Bishop Amphiorax, fell downe into hell.

With all his folke, that vpon him abode
And sodainly, the ground that he on rode
Closed ayein, and together shet
That neuer after, the Greekes with him met
And thus the deuill, for his old outrages
Liche his desert, paied him his wages
For he ful low, is descended doun
Into the derke, and blacke Regioun
Where that Pluto, is crowned and ystalled
With his Queene, Proserpine yealled
With whō this bishop, hath made his mānion
Perpetuelly, as for his guerdon
Lo here the mede of Idolatry
Of Rites old, and false Maumetry
Lo what auailen, incantacions
Of exorcisms, and conturations
What stood in stede, his Nigromancy
Calculacion, or Astronomy
What vailed him, the heauenly mansions
Diuerse aspects, or constellacions
The end is not, but sorrow and mischaunce
Of hem that setten, her vtter affiaunce
In such werkes, superstitious
Or trist on hem, he is vngracious
Record I take, shortly for to tell
Of this bishop, sonken downe to hell
Whose woful end, downe in euery coste
Such a rumour, hath made in the hoste
That the noise, of this vncouth thing
Is yronne, and come vnto the King
How this vengeaunce, is vnwarely fall
And he anon, made a Trumpet call
All his people, out of the field again
And euerichone, assembled vpon a plain
For the King, and also round him about
Euerich man, of his life in dout
Ful pitously, gan to sorow and loure
Least that ỳ ground, hem all would deuoure
And swolwen hem, in his derke caue

And they ne conne, no recure hem to saue
For neither force, nor manhood doth auaile
In such mischiefe, the value of a maile
For he that wisest, and could most
To search and seeke, throughout the host
Amphiorax, when he lest wend
To hell is sonken, and coud him not defend
To him the time, vnknowen and vnwist
In whom whilom, was all the Greekes trist
Her whole comfort, and whole affiaunce
But all at ones, for this sodaine chance
And this mischiefe, they gan hem to dispeire
Home to Greece, that they will repeire
This was the purpose, of hem euerichone
And on the wals of Thebes, lay her fone
Reioycing hem, of this vnhappy vze
Downing thereby, greatly to recure
And on her toures, as they looken out
They on Greekes, enuiously gan to shout
And of despite, and great enmity
Bad hem fooles, gon home to her country
Sith they han lost her comfort and succour
Her false Prophet, and her Diuinour
Wherthrough her party, greatly is empeired
And in this wise, the Greekes despeired
Dempt plainly, by tokens euident
This case was fal, by some Enchantment
By Witchcraft, and by Sorcery
Again which, may be no remedy
Truly defence, help ne succour
And when Adrastus, herd this clamour
He bete was againe this perturbance
To prouide some mancre cheuisance
And to him calleth, such counsaile as he wist
For life or death, that he might trist
Requiring hem, but in words few
In this mischiefe her motion to shew
And declare, by good auisement
What to Greekes, were most expedient
To remedien, and make no delay
The vncouth noise, and the great affray
That Greeks made, with clamor importune
And now and now, euer in one contune
And they that were, most manly and wise
Shortly said, it were a cowardise
The high empryse, that they haue vndertake
For drede of death, so sodainly to forsake
It were to hem, a perpetuell shame
And after hindring, to the Greekes name
And better it were, to euery warriour
Manly to die, with worship and honour
Then like a coward, with the life endure
For ones shamed, hard is to recure.
His name aycin, of what estate he bee
And sith that Greekes, of old antiquitee
As of knighthood, who so list take heed
Ben so famous, and so worthy of deed
If now of new, the shining of her fame
Eclipsed were, with any spot of blame
It were a thing vncouth for to here
Of whose renoun, the beames yet ben clere
Through al the world, where that they haue
And be not yet derked, ne defaced (paced
By no report, neither on sea nor lond
Thing to forsake, that they tooke on hond
And by ensample, of our progenitours
That sometime were, so manly conquerours
Tofore that we, into Greece wend
Of thing begun, let vs make an end
And part not, nor seuere from this toun
Til it be brought to destruction
Wals, toures, and crestes enbattailed
And for war, strongly apparailed
Be first downe beat, that nothing be sein
But all togider with the yearth plein
Be low laid, er that we resort
That afterward, men may of vs report
That we began, we knightly haue acheued
Upon our fone, with worship vnrepreued
This was the counsaile, shortly and thauile
Of the Greeks that manly were and wise
That neuer afore, marked were with blame
And specially such, as drede shame
And fully cast, what fortune euer tide
On her purpose, to the end abide
That on no part, her honor not appall
And to this counsaile, Greekes one and all
Be condescended, and after best red
In stead of him, that was so late ded
Amphiorax, buried deepe in hell
That coud whilom to the Greekes tell
Of things hid, how it should fine afore
In stede of whom, now they haue him lore
They casten hem, wisely to purchace
Some prudent man, to occupy his place
That in such thing, might hem most auaile
Through mistery of his diuinaile
By craft of sort, or of Prophecy
If any such, they couden out espy
Emong hem all, her purpose to attaine
As I find, they haue chosen twaine

How the Greekes chosen a new Diuinour in stead of Amphiorax.

Most renowned, of hem euerichone
And Menalippus, called was that one
And Tredimus, eke that other hight

And

And for he had, most fauour in her sight
This Tredimus was chosen and preferred
And in her choise, Greekes haue not erred
For whilom, he learned his empryse
Of his Maister, Amphiorax the wise
And was disciple, vnder his doctrine
And of entent, that he shall termine
Vnto Grecks, things that shall fall
As a bishop, mitred in his stall
They doen for him, many an vncouth wise
In the temple, to Gods Sacrifice
And thus confirmed, and stabled in his See
A few daies, stood in his degree
After her Maister, with ful great honour
Of Greekes chose, to be successour.
And all this time, in story as it is told
Ful great mischiefe, of hunger, thurst, and cold
And of Thebans, as they issue out
Lay many one, slain in the rout
On either part, of fortune as they met
Her mortall swerds, were so sharpe whet
And Tideus, emong hem of the toun
From day to day, plaieth the Lioun
So cruelly, where so that he rode
That Theban none, afore his face abode
He made of hem, through his high renoun
So great slaughter, and occision
That as the death, from his swerd they fled
For who came next, layd his life to wed
He quit himselfe, so like a manly knight
That where he went, he put hem to the flight
And maugre hem in his cruelty
He drove hem home, into her city
Hem pursuing, proudly to the gate
That vnto him, they beare so deadly hate
That they hem cast, by sleight or some engine
To bring him vnwarely, vnto his fine
And laid await, for him day and night
But alas, this noble manly knight

How pitously this worthy Tideus was slaine with a quarell.

Upon a day, as he gan hem chace
And mortally, made hem lese her place
And sued hem, almost to the toun
That cause was, of his destruction
For one alas, that on the wals stode
Which all that day, vpon him abode
With a quarell, sharpe hoded for his sake
Marked him with a bow of brake
So cruelly making none arest
Till it was passed, both backe and brest
Wherthrough alas, there was none other red
Ne Lechecraft, that he mote be ded
There may thereof, be maked no delaies
And yet he was holden in his daies
The best knight, and most manly man
As mine aucthour, wel rehearse can
But for all that, was there no defence
Ayenst the stroke of deaths violence
But Bochas write, er he were fully dead
He was by Greeks, presented with the head
Of him that yaue, his last fatall wound
And he was called, like as it is found
Menalippus, I can none other tell
But thilk day, Thebans ware so fell
Upon Greeks, that vnder her cite
The manly king, Parthonope
Vslain was, euen afore the gates
And there also, armed bright in plates
The famous king, called Ipomedon
The same day, as made is mencion
On horseback, manly as he faught
At bridge, euen vpon the draught
Beset with preace, casuelly was drowned
And thus fortune hath on Greeks frowned
On euery side, thilke vnhappy day
But all the manner, tellen I ne may
Of her fighting, nor her slaughter in soth
More to declare, then mine aucthour doth
But thilke day, I find as ye may sene
When Phebus, was passed Meridine
And fro the South, West ward can him draw
His gilt tresses, to bathen in the waw
The Theban king, fell Ethiocles
Root and vnrest, and causer of vnpees
The slaughter of Grecks, whē that he beheld
Armed in steele, he came out into the field
Ful desirous, in that sodain heat
Polimite in the field to mete
Singularly, with him to haue a do
For in this world, he hated no man so
He sat so nigh printed in his hert
Whose comming out, his brother gan aduert
Upon his steed in the opposite
And had againward, also great delite
To meeten him, if fortune will assent
The enuious fire, so her herts brent
Which hate was cancred, of vnkind blood
And like two Tygres, in her rage wood
With speres sharpe, ground for the nones
So as they ran, and met both at ones
Polimite, through plate, maile, and shield
Rofe him throughout, & smote him into ỹ field
But when he saw, the streames of his blood
Raile about, in manner of a flood
All sodainly, of compassioun
From his coursour, he light adoun

How ech of the Theban brethren, slough other, euen tofore the city.

And brotherly, with a pitous face
To saue his life, gan him to vnbrace
And from his wound, of new affection
Ful busie was, to pul out the trunchon
Of loue only, handling him right soft
But out alas, while he lay aloft
Ful prously, Ethiocles the fell
Of all this sorow, very course and well
With a daggere, in all his paines smart
His brother rofe, vnwarely to the hart
Which all her life, had be so wroth
And thus the Thebans, were ylaw both
At entre, euen before the toun
But Greekes tho, ben anailed doun
In the field, the worthy knights all
In Thebes land, as such thing shall
The cry arose, when her king was dead
And to the gates, armed foot and head
Out of the toun, came many a proud Theban
And some of hem, vpon the wals ran
And gan to shout, that pity was to here
And they without, of her life in werre
Without comfort, or consellacioun
Dispeired, run home to the toun
And Greekes followen after at backe
That many one, that day goeth to wracke
And as her fomen, proudly hem assaile
Ful many Greks, both through plate & maile
Was shet throughout, prcing at wals
And beaten of, with great round bals
That here lay one, and another yonder
And the noise more hidous then thunder
Of gonnesbot, and of Arblates eke
So loud outrong, ỹ many a worthy Grcke
There lost his life, they were on hem so fell
And at gates shortly for to tell
As Grekes prcasen, to enter the city.
They of Thebes, in her cruelty
With hem met, ful furious and wood
And mortally, as they again hem stood
Men might see speares shiuer asunder
That to behold, it was a very wonder
How they foine, with daggers & with swerds
Through the viser, auming at berds
Pearsing also, through the round mailes
Rent out perces, of her auentailes
That nought anatleth, the mighty Gesseran
Through neck and brest, that the speares ran
Her weapons were, so sharpe ground & whet
In their armour, that they were not let
For there lay one, troden vnder foot
And yonder one pierced to the hart root
Here lieth one dead, and there another lame
This was the play, and the mortall game
Atween Thebans, and the Greekes proud
That the swoughes, and the cries loud
Of hem that lay, and yolden vp the ghost
Was heard ful fer, about in many a cost

How all the roiall blood, both of Greekes side and on the City side, yslaine were vpon a day.

And at gates, and falling of the wall
Yslaine was, all the blood rotall
Both of the towne, and of the Grekes land
And all the worthy knightes of her hand
And of Lords, if I shal not faine
On Greekes side, a liue were but twaine
King Adrastus, and Campaneus
That day to hem, was so vngracious
And for Titan, Westred was so low
That no man might, vnnethes other know
Of the towne, they shut her gates fast
With barrers round ymade for to last
In which no wight, kerue may ne hew
And Adrastus, with a Grekes few
Repeired is, home to his tent
And all that night, he waried hath and spent
For his vnhap, in sorow complaining
And they in Thebes, the next day sung
Her dewoire did, and her busie cure
To ordaine, and make a sepulture
For her King, yslaine in the field
And offer vp, his banner and his shield
His helme, his swerd, and also his penon
Therein of gold, ybeaten a Dragon
High in the temple, that men might seen
And Iocasta, the infortunate Queen
Her sonnes death, sore gan complaine
And also eke, her yong doughters twaine
Both Imeine, and Antigonee
Crien and weepe, that pity was to see
But to her sorows, there was no refute
And thus the city, bare and destitute
Hauing no wight, to gouerne hem ne guy
For dead and slaine, was all her chcualry
And no wight left, almost in the toun
To raigne on hem, by succession
But for they saw, and tooken also hede
Without this, that they had an hedde
In the city, they may not dure long
For though it so be, that commons be strong
With multitude, and haue no gouernaile

Of

Of an head, full lite it may auaile
Therefore they haue vnto her socour
Ichosen hem a new gouernour.

How Creon the old tiraunt, ichosen was to be king of Thebes.

An old tyrant that called was Creon
Full acceptable to hem euerichon
And crouned him without more letting
To reigne in Thebes, and to ben her king
Although he had no title by descent
But by free choise made a Parlement
And there to him like as it is found
By her ligeance of new they were bound
For to be true, while the city stood
To him only with body and with good
Thus they were sworn and sured euerichone
And he againward to saue hem fro her fone
And hem defend with all his full might
And mantaine him in all manner right
This was thaccord, as in sentement
And in this while hath Adrastus sent
From the siege of Thebes the city
A wounded knight home to his countre
Through all Greece, plainly to declare
All the slaughter and the euill fare
Of which Greckes right as it is fall
And how that he hath lost his lords all
At more mischief then any man can mouth
And when this thing was in Greece couth
First to Argiue and to Deiphile
And to the Ladies eke in the countre
And of Prouinces abouten adiacent
They came doun all by one assent
Worthy Queues, and with hem Dutchesses
And other eke that called were Countesses

How all the Ladies of Greece, arraied hem toward Thebes.

And all the Ladies and women of degre
Ben assembled in Arge the city
Like as I rede, and all in clothes blake
That to behold the sorow that they make
It were a death to any man aliue
And if I should by and by discriue
Her tender weping and her wofull sounes
Her complaints and lamentacions
Her oft swouning, with faces dead and pale
Thereof I might make a new tale
Almost a day you to occupy
And as mine author doeth clearely certifie
Throughout all Greece from al Regions
Out of cities and riall tounes
Came all the ladies and women of estate
Full heauy chered and disconsolate
To this assemble to sorne as I you told
In purpose fully her tourney for to hold
Toward Thebes, they sorrowfull creatures
There to bewaile her wofull auentures
Tacquite hemself of trouth and womanhede
To her Lords which in field lay dead
And as the story liketh to declare
All this iourney they went on foot bare
Like as they had gone on pilgrimage
In token of mourning barbed the visage
Wimpled echone in burnet weeds
Not in chaires drawen forth with steedes
Nor on palfreys, blacke neither white
Like as mine auctor liketh to endite
To holden her way, but barefoote forth they
So faithfully euerichone they went (went
Through heaumelle, defaced of her hue
And as I find they weren all true
Now was not that a wonder for to see
So many true out of o countree
At ones gadred in a company
And faithfull all, bookes can not lye
Both in her port, and inward in meuing
Unto my dome, it was an uncouth thing
Emong a thousand women or tweine
Not to find one that coud in hart feine
It was a maruaile not oft seen toforne
For seld in fields groweth any corne
But if some weede spring up there emong
Men allay wines when they be to strong
But her trouth was meint with none allayes
They were so true found at all assayes
And they ne stint upon her iourney
Till that they come there they would be
Where Adrastus, wrtten as I find
Lay in his tent, all of colour inde
And greatly maruelled, when that he beheld
The nomber of hem spred through all the feld
Clad all in blacke, and barefoot euerichone
Out of his tent he dressed him anone
Upon his hand the king Campaneus
Full trist in heart and face right pitous
Again the woman forth they went in fere
And to behold the wofull heauy chere
The dolefull cries also when they met
The sorowfull sighes in her breasts shet
The teares new distilling on her faces
And so swouning in many sondry places
When they her Lords aliue not ne found
But in field through girt with many a wound
Lay straught upright, plainly to endite

With deadly yen turned vp the white
Who made sorrow, or felt her hart rive
For her Lord, but the faire Argive
Who can now wepe but Deiphylee
Tideus for she ne might see
Whose constraints were so fell and kene
That Adrastus might not sustene
To behold, the Ladies so complaine
Wishing his heart coruen were in twaine.

How the old cursed Creon, will not suffer the bodies neither to be brent ne buried.

And yet alas both euen and morrow
O thing there was ỳ doubled all her sorow
That old Creon fader of fellony
Ne would suffer through his tiranny
The dead bodies be buried neither brent
But with beasts and hounds to be rent
He made hem all vpon an heape be laid
Wherof the women thrist and euill apaid
For very dole as it was no wonder
Her hartes felt almost rive asunder
And as my master Chaucer list to endite
All clad in blacke with her wimples white
With great honour and due reuerence
In the Temple of the goddesse Clemence
They bode the space of a fourtnight
Till Theseus the noble worthy knight
Duke of Athens with his Chiualry
Repeired hem out of Feminie
And with him ledde, full faire vpon to seen
Through his manhood, Ipolita the Queen
And her sister called Emelie
And when these women first gan espie
The worthy Duke as he came riding
King Adrastus, hem all conueying
The women brought vnto his presence
Which him besought to yeue him audience
And all at ones swouning in the place
Full humbly besoughten him of grace
To rew on hem her harmes to redresse
But if ye list to see the gentillesse
Of Theseus and how he hath hem borne
If ye remember as ye haue heard toforne
Well rehearsed, at Depford in the vale
In the beginning of the knights tale.

How the finall destruction of Thebes, is compendiously rehearsed in the knights tale.

First how that he when he herd hem speke
For very routh he felt his heart breke
And her sorowes when he gan aduert
From his courser down anon he start
Hem comforting in full good intent
And in his armes he hem all vp hent
The knights tale rehearsen euery deale
From point to point if ye looke it wele
And how this Duke, without more abode
The same day toward Thebes rode
Full like in sooth, a worthy conquerour
And in his coast of chiualry the flour
And finally to speaken of this thing
With old Creon, that was of Thebes king
How ỳ he fought & slough him like a knight
And all his host put vnto the flight
Yet as some authors make mencion
Or Theseus entred into the toun
The women fell with pekois & with malles
With great labour beat down the walles
And in her writing also as they sain
Campaneus was in the walles slaine
With cast of stones he was so ouerlade
For whome Adrastus such a sorow made
That no man may release him of his paine
And Iocasta with her doughters twaine
Full wilfully oppressed of her cheres
To Athens were sent as prisoners
What fell of hem more can I not saine
But Theseus mine authour write certaine
Out of the field ere he from Thebes went
He beat it down, and the houses brent
The people slough for all her crying loud
He made her walles and her towres proud
Round about, euen vpon a row
With the soile to be laid full low
That nought was left but the soile bare
And to the women in release of her care

How that Duke Theseus, deliuered to the Ladies the bodies of her Lords.

The bodies of her Lords that were slaine
This worthy Duke restored hath againe
But what should I any lenger dwell
The old rites by and by to tell
Nor the obsequies in order to deuise
Nor declare the manner and the gise
How the bodies were to ashes brent
Nor of the gommes in the flaume spent
To make the aire sweter of reles
Of Frankincense, Mirre, and Aloes
Nor how the women round about stood
Some with milke, and some also with blood
And some of hem with vrnes made of gold
When the ashes fully were made cold

To

To enclose hem of great affection
And beare hem home vnto her region
And how that other full deadly of her looke
For loue onely of the bones tooke
Hem to keepe for a remembraunce
That to rehearse euery obseruance
That was done in the fires bright
The wake plates during all the night
Nor of the wrastling telling point by point
Of hem that were naked and anoint
How euerich other lugge can and shake
Ne how the women haue her leaue take
Of Theseus, with full great humblesse
Thanking him of his high worthinesse
That him list vpon her wo to rew
And how that he his freedome to renew
With the women, of his high largesse
Iparted hath eke of his richesse
And how this Duke Theseus hem forlooke
And to Athens the right way tooke
With Laurer crouned in signe of victory
And the palme of conquest and of glory
Did his honour duely vnto Marte
And how the women wept when they parte

How king Adrastus with the Ladies, repeired home ayein to Arge.

With king Adrastus home ayein to Arge
To tellen all, it were to great a charge
And eke also as ye shall vnderstand
At ginning I tooke no more on hand
By my promise, in conclusion
But to rehearse the destruccion
Of mightie Thebes, and no more
And thus Adrastus with his lockes hore
Still abode in Arge his citie
Unto his end, ye get no more of me
Sauf as mine authour liketh to compile
After that he liued but a while
For he was old ere the siege began
And thought and sorow so vpon him ran
The which in soth shorted hath his daies
And time set death maketh no delaies
And all his ioy passed was and gone
For of his lords aliue was not one
But slain at Thebes, ye knowen all the caas
And when this King in Arge buried was
Full rially, with great solemnitee
It was accompted in bookes ye may see

Foure hundred yeere, tofore the foundation of Rome, was the city of Thebes destroied.

Four hundred yere, as made is mencion
Tofore the building and foundation
Of great Rome, so roiall and so large
When the Ladies departed from Arge
To her countries, full trist and desolate
Lo here the fine of conteke and debate
Lo here the might of Mars the froward fier
Lo what it is to beginne a werre
How it concludeth, ensample ye may see
First of the Grekes, & sith of the Thebans cite
For either part hath matter to complain
And in her strife, ye may se things twain.

How all the worthy blood of Greece destroied was at siege, and the citie brought to nought, to final losse of both parties.

The worthy blood of all Greece spilt
And Thebes eke, of Amphion first bilt
Without recure brought to ruine
And with the soile made plain as any line
To wilderness tourned and deserte
And Grekes eke fall into pouerte
Both of her men and also of her good
For finally all the gentill blood
Was shed out there her wounds wer so wide
To losse finall vnto either side
For in the warre is none exception
Of high estate, ne low condicion
But as fate and fortune both in fere
List to dispose with her double chere

Bellona, Goddesse is of battaile.

And Bellona the goddesse in her chare
Aforn prouideth, wherfore euery man beware
Vnaused a warre to beginne
For no man wot who shall lese or winne
And hard it is, when either part leseth
And doubtlesse neither of hem eheseth
That they must in all such mortall rage
Maugre her list feien great damage
It may not be by mans might restrained
And warre in soth, was neuer ordained
But for sinfull folkes to chastise
And as the Bible truely can deuise

How that warre first began in heauen, by the high pride and surquedy of Lucifer.

High in heauen, of pride and surquedie
Lucifer fader of Enuie
The old Serpent he Leuiathan
Was the first that euer warre began

When

When Michael, the heauenly champion
With his feres, vanquished the Dragon
And to hell, cast him downe full low
The which Serpent, hath the Coccle sow
Through all the yearth, of enuy and debate
That runeth yis there none estate
Without strife, can liue in charitee
For euery man, of high and low degree
Enuieth now, that other should thriue
And ground cause, why that men so striue
Is couetise, and false Ambicion
That euerich would, haue domination
Ouer other, and tread him vnder foot
Which of all sorow, ginning is and root
And Christ recordeth, rede, looke, & ye may see
For lack of loue, what mischiefe there shal be.

Surget gens contra gentum. Luce. xxi.

For o people, as he doth deuise
Ayenst another, of hate shal arise
And after telleth, what diuisions
There shal be, betweene regions
Euerich busie other to oppresse
And all such strife, as he beareth witnesse
Kalends ben, I take his word to borow
And a ginning of mischiefe and of sorow
Men haue it found, by experience
But the venim, and the violence
Of strife, of warre, of contecke, and debate,
That maketh londs, bare and desolate
Shall be proscript, and voided out of place
And Marts swords, shal no more manace
Nor his sphere, greuous to sustene
Shal now no more, whetted be so kene
For he no more, shall his hanberke shake
But loue and peace, shal in harts awake
And Charity, both in length and bread
Of new shal, her bright beames spread
Through grace only, in diuers nations
For to reforme, atweene Regions
Peace and quiete, concord, and vnitee
And he that is both one, two, and three
Eke three in one, and soueraine lord of pees
Which in this exile, for our sake chees
For loue only our troubles to termine
For to be borne, of a pure virgine
And let vs pray, to him that is most good
That for mankind, shad his heart blood
Through beseching, of that heauenly Quene
Wife and moder, and maiden clene
To send vs peace, in this life here present
And of our sinnes, parfite amendement
And ioy eternall, when we hence wend
And of my tale, this I make an end.

Here now endeth, as ye may see,
The destruction of Thebes, the Citee.

A Catalogue of translations and Poeticall deuises, in English mitre, or verse, done by Iohn Lidgate Monke of Bury, whereof some are extant in Print, the residue in the custodie of him that first caused this *Siege of Thebes* to be added to these works of *G. Chaucer*.

BOcchas vpon the fall of Princes: at the commandement of Humfrey Duke of Gloucester.
The history, siege, and destruction of Troy, at commandement of K. Henry the fifth, 1412.
Pilgrimage of the world, by commandement of the Earle of Salisbury, 1426.
The secrets of Aristotle to king Alexander.
Play at the Chesse betweene Reason and Sensualitie.
Banker of Gods and goddesses, with a discourse of Reason and Sensualitie.
The Covrt of Sapience in heauen for redemption of mankind.
The kalender of the whole yere, made in balade as a praier.
Petigree of the Emperours, from Iulius Cesar to Dacian the 28. Emperour.
Kings of England since the conquest to Edward the fourth.
Daunce of Machabray, Daunce of death, or Daunce of powles.
Meditation on Christs passion.
Psalmes of the passion.
Of Christs passion.
Of the mercies of God eternally to sing.
Magnificense of the Church.
Verses of the psalter in mitre for H. the 5. to be by him vsed in his chappell.
The pater noster in English mitre.
The Auemarie in English mitre.
Gaudite iusti in domino, English mitre.
Ab inimicis nostris defendi nos Christi.
Conditor alme siderum.
Glorioſa dicta sunt de te, for the B. of Excester.
Deprofundis, in mitre.
Deus in nomine tuo, in mitre.
Letabundus, in mitre.
The name of Iesus, and bowing of the knee.
Bene anima mea domino.
Epistle of king Amasias to king Iohas.
Fifteene Oes to Iesu in mitre.
Magnificat in mitre.
Aue Iesse virgula.
Fifteene ioyes and xv. sorowes of our Ladie.
The life of our Lady.
The life of S. Anne.
The Ladie of pitie, and Christs passion.
The image of our Ladie.
The life and passion of S. Albone, and of Amphabli his instructor.
How the plague was ceased in Rome.
The life of S. Margaret, for the Countesse of Huntington, the 8. of H. the 6.
The life of S. Denis.
The life of S. Barbara.
The life of S. Sithe.
The life of S. George, for the armorers of London.
Exhortation to putaway the 7. deadly sinnes.
A praier to bedward, and another at thine vprising.
The seuen graces for seuen estates.
Offices of all estates.
The seuen partes of wisdome.
Founders of the seuen Sciences artificiall.
Seuen Sciences called Liberall.
Authours of the 7. Sciences.
Disposition of the 7. planets.
Disposition of the 12. signes.
Disposition of the 4. elements.
Disposition of the 4. complections.
Disposition of the 4. seasons of the yere.
Disposition of the world.
Mercy and truth, righteousnes and peace.
A diatory of health.
Man in vertue to be stable as a stone.
A procession of pageants from the creation.
A ballad Royall against lechery.
A dying of the nightingale, signifying Christ.
Coronation of Henry the sixt.
Tragedie of Rome come vnto ruine.
How all things must be done by iust measure.
All is right as a Rams horne.
Properties of wine, 9. in number.
Amor vincit omnia, mentiris quod pecunia.
That now is hay, somtime was grasse: for queen Katharine.
Foure things maketh man a foole.
A wicked tongue will alway deme amisse.
This world is a throughfare full of woe.
All stant on change like a Midsomer rose.
The disposition of women.
The order of Fooles.
What maketh the world so variable.
How euery thing draweth to his semblable.
Complaint of the Duke of Gloucester, for lacke of coinage.
Epitaph on Humfrey Duke of Gloucester.
Stella cœli extercauit.
Like to thine audience, so vtter thy language.
Against the high attire of womens heads.

Exhortation

Exhortation to auoid haſt, and to work by good aduiſement.
Epiſtle of vartuous buſines, eſchewing idleneſſe.
A Ballad to the Sheriffes and Aldermen of London on a May morning.
A diſguiſing before the Mayor of London by the Mercers.
A diſguiſing before the Mayor by the Goldeſmithes.
A mumming before the king at Eltham.
A diſguiſing before the king in the caſtle of Hartford.
A diſguiſing before the great eſtates of the land.
A mumming before the king at Windſore.
A balad giuen to Hen. the 6. and his mother, on Newyeres day at Hartford.
All thinges are right, ſo as the Crab goeth forward.
Chuſing loues of S. Valentines day.
Of an Eſquire that ſerued in Loues court.
Of a gentlewoman that loued a man of great eſtate.
Of the ladie of Holland, and Duke of Glocester, before their marriage.
Of Iacke Wat that could pluck the lining out of a blacke boll.
Gallaunts, England may waile that euer they came here.
Æſops Fables moraliſed in mitre.
The churle and the bird.
The horſe, ſheepe, and gooſe.
Gwy Earle of Warwick, & Colbrond the Dane.
Prouerbs of Lidgate.
Complaint for departing of T. Chaucer into France embaſſadour.
Of two mõſtrous beaſts, Bicorn, & Chichefache.
The ſerpent of diuiſion.
The temple of Glaſſe.
The life and martyrdome of S. Edmond King of the Eaſt Angles.
The roiall receiuing of Hen. the 6. into his noble citie of London, after his returne out of France, Iohn Wells being Maior.
Lidgates Teſtament.

The old and obſcure words of Chaucer, explaned.

A Bawed, abaſhed, dãted.
abrayd, aroſe, recouered.
abrayd, breake off.
abandon, libertie.
abyme, from below.
abyt, dwelleth.
abydſt, ſuffered.
abent, a ſteepe place, a prominent or hanging hill.
abet, ſetting on.
abedge, abide.
abying, ſtate.
abode, receiued.
acale, cooled.
ackele, coole.
accelle, ague.
accoy, aſſwage.
acoyed, pampred.
acroke, awrie.
adaſhed, abaſhed.
adawed, awaked.
aduentaile, coate armour.
afare, a noiſe.
affray, aſſault.
affray, feare, ſtirre.
affray, ſturdines.
affy, haue truſt.
afine, fined.
agaſteth, fcarreth.
agilted, offended.
agilt, committed.
agipe, a coat full of pleights.
agiler, a marker of men.
agramed, greeued.
agryſe, aſtoniſhed.
agryſe, quaile.
agryſe, to be afraid.
agriſeth, cauſeth to quake.
agredge, aggrauate.
agroted, (*ingurgitatus*) cloyed.
agroſe, daunted.
agroſe, was agreued.
auſt, remoone.
alaies, waies, temperature.
a lay, a ſong.
aledgement, eaſe.
aledge, eaſe.
aledged, diminiſhed.
aledgement, releaſe.
all a bone, made requeſt.
algates, notwithſtanding.
algates, euer.
aleſtake, a maypole, or alebuſh.
aldrian, (*vide annot.*)
als, aſwell.
als, alſo.
alſwa, alſo.
algate, altogither.
algates, for all that.
algates, euen now.
alcali, Nightſhade.
almagiſt, a worke of Aſtronomie, written by *Ptolomie.*
alixer, Quinteſſence of golde.
alures, walkes.
allaunds, grayhounds.
ally, kinne.
Amadriades, Nymphes that die and liue with the trees.
Amalgaminge, (*mixtura ex hydrargyro cum metallis.*)
amenuſed, diminiſhed.
amettiſed, quenched.
anney, annoy.
anoy, forethink.
annueler, ſeculer.
any gate, occaſion.
appareil, prepare.
appall, decay.
appeteth, deſireth.
apies, medicines of Oppium.
appoſen, demaund.
aprentiſe, skill.
apriſe, aduenture.
aquite, match.
aquiler, needle caſe.
arace, (*conuellere*) to deface.
areſt, ſtay: **of**, durance.
arblaſters, croſſebowes.
aret, account.
arret, to charge.
areeſt, quietnes.
aretted, accounted.
aretteth, layeth blame.
arrere, apart, aſide.
ariſt, aroſe.
arite, areſt, or ſtay.
argoile, clay.
arſenecke, ratsbane.
arten, conſtraine.
arke, compaſſe.
aſcaunces, as who ſhould ſay, as though.
aſkaunce, if perchaunce.
aſkaunce, aſide.
aſkes, aſhes, (*cinis.*)
aſbate, buying.
aſure, blew.
aſwith, forthwith, by and by.
aſſiſed, ſure, firme.
aſſoyle, anſwere.
aſſoylen, declare.
aſſeth, aſſent.
aſſiſe, order.
aſſert, paſſed.
aſſert, let paſſe.
aſſerlagour, Aſtrolabe.
attaint, tried.
attaint, found out.
atained, ſet on broch.
atterly, extremely.
attenes, at ones.
at erſt, in earneſt, indeed.
atcheked, choked.
attoure, towards.
attoure, attire for women.
athamant, adamant.
athroted, cloied.
atwin, aſunder.
attwyte, to make blame worthy.
a baunt, a bragge.
auaunt, forward.
auaunt, a pace.
a bale, go downe.
auenant, agreeable.
auer, briberie.
auelace, (*vertinella*) the rings or gymewes of a bagge.
aureat, golden.
aumer, amber.
aumener, cubbard.
augrimſtones, to caſt account withall.
autentike, of antiquitie.

autem, ſong.
autremite, another attire.
auntreth, maketh aduenture.
awayte, watch, circumſpectiõ.
awayte, more adoe, tarrying.
awayts, (*inſidiæ*) ambuſhmẽts.
award, iudgement.
awhaped, amaſed.
awhere, a deſire.
awreketh, reuengeth.
ares, the ague.
ayle, euer.
ay, an egge.
babewyes, antiques.
barbicans, watch towers.
bayne, bathe.
bath, both.
barkefat, a tanners tubbe.
barme, lap.
bargaret, a ſonnet or ballad.
bawſin, bigge.
baulke, to croſſe.
baudrycke, a ſword girdle.
baggingly, (*tumide*) ſwellingly.
baggeth, diſdaineth.
baggingly, diſdainfully.
baude, braue.
bane, deſtruction.
baudrycke, furniture.
barmecloth, an apron or ſafegard. (*limas*)
bandon, cuſtody.
balais of Entaile, precious ſtones ingraued.
bandon, company, ſect.
battailed, walled with battlements.
baudry, brauerie.
baſelards, (*pugio, ſica*) daggers.
bay, ſtake.
bailly, gouernment.
barbe, maske or viſard.
bede, offer.
beed, continued.
bete, abate. **bete**, make.
bet, better. **bet**, quickely.
bede, put.
beten, to kindle.
bete, boote, helpe.
berne, conuay or beare.
beſet, ſet packing.
beſant, a ducket.
beſyen, trouble.
beſey, become thee.
belt, a girdle.
belchoſe, faire thing.
belchier, good countenaunce.
belamy, faire friend.
bement, lamented.
bemes, trumpettes. or inſtruments of muſicke.
benſon, bleſſing.
bend, a muffler, kercher, or cawle.
benes, bones.
benimmeth, bereaueth.
beknew, learned out.
bewared, ſpent.
bewrecke, reuenged.
bewrycen, bewray.
bewry, declare.
betreint, ſprinkled.
betraſſed, deceiued.
bey, buy. **bey**, obey.
bends, bonds.
bearing, behauiour.
behight, promiſed.
beauſir, faire ſir.
bialacoyl, faire welcoming.
bid a boone, deſire a requeſt.
bigin, bigot, ſuperſtitious hypocrite.
bigami, twiſe married.
bineme, bereaue.
bint, bound.
biſmare, curioſitie.
bittor, a certaine fenne foule.
bitreſſed, deceiued.
blaſours, praiſers.
blankers, white furniture.
blankemanger, a meat of Riſe and Almon milke: brawne of capons and ſugar.
blanch, white.
blackburied, to hell.
blend, (*cæcare*) to blind one.
blent, ſtaied.
blent, blind.
blent, turned backe, ceaſed.
ble, ſight, view.
blew ewage, of blew colour: in Greeke *Cyaneus*.
bliue, pleaſant, gladly.
bliue, readily, faſt.
blyn, ceaſe.
blythe, glad.
blo, blew.
boiſtous, haulting, lowly.
bollen, ſwelled.
bolne, to ſwell.
boles, bulles.
bone, requeſt.
boodeth, ſheweth.
boote, helpe.
boote of bale, eaſe of ſorrowe.
bordels, brothelhouſes.
borne, to burniſh.
borrowes, ſureties.
borace, ſolder.
borrow, pledge.
borrell, attire on the head.
bottom, a bud.
boun, ready.
bourd, ieſt.
brayd, a brunt.
brayd, to breake out.
brayd, tooke.
brayd, ſtrange fare.
brayd, aroſe, waked.
brake, ſtele
bracket and meeth, drinke made with water and hony.
brat, a ragge.
braid, reward.
brawdry, grauen worke.
brecke, (*ruptura*) a bruſe.
bren, bran.
brede, bredth.
bretfull, topfull.
brede, abroad.
bredgen, abridge.
breme, (*ferociter*) fiercely.
brige, breach.
bryke, ſtrait or narrow.
brocking, throbbing.
broken, brooke.
broke my treſſes, keepe ſafe the breids of my haire.
brocage, meanes.
brotell, brickle.
bronde, furie.
browded, embrodered.
browke, to enioy.
burly brand, a great ſword.
burnet, wollen.
burnets, hoodes, or attire for the head.
but my leſt, except I will.
buxumnes, lowlines.
burdon, the hũming of a Bee, a deepe baſe.
burdon, a ſtaffe.
burell and chriſtall, fine glaſſe.
burioning, budding.

burled, armed.
burned, bright filed.
bumbeth, ſoundeth.
bydding, abiding.
byker, a fray.
bydeth, praieth.
byg, build.
bywopen, made ſenſleſſe.
bytrent, catcheth about.

C

Cadence, proſe.
cautiſned, chained.
calot, a lewd woman.
caleweis, calure, as Salmon or other fiſh.
calked, caſt.
camuſed, flat noſed.
canceline, chamlet.
caroll, a long or daunce.
carectes, markes.
capell, an horſe.
catapuce, ſpurge.
canell, Synamon tree.
canidoyte, wofull caſe.
ccleret, (*promptuarius*) a butler.
cell, a ſtudie.
ceruſe, white ledde.
certiall, (*vide annot.*)
comaunce, communitie.
chaffare, buying and ſelling.
chaunters, ſingers.
chiche, niggardly.
chauntepleure, that ſingeth & weepeth togither.
chalons, blankets, couerings.
chaſtelayne, a gentlewoman of a great houſe.
champartie, maintaining a quarrell.
chapelet, garland.
charters, writings.
cheſt, (*ſubiectum*) ſubiect.
chert, loue.
cheuiſance, merchandiſe.
chelandri, a goldfinch.
cheyre, loue, iealouſie.
cheuelayle, gorget.
cheuice, redeeme.
cherles, merry folke.
cheriſaunce, comforts.
cheue, thriue.
chefe, chuſe.
chekelaton, a ſtuffe like motly.
chinchetl, niggardlines.
chiuauchie, cheualry, riding.
chimbe, the vttermoſt part of the barrell.
chirking, chattering, noiſe.
chirking, (*ſtridens*) craſhing.
chite, chideth.
churle, ſlaue.
cierges, waxe candles, lamps.
citrination,
citriale, (*ſamba*) a giterne.
clarions, trumpets.
clary, wine and hony mingled.
clepen, call.
clergion, a clarke.
clenched, faſtened.
clicket, a key.
clippeth, embraceth.
clipping, halſing, clipping, embracing.
clymbe, ſound.
clomben, aſcended.
clotlefe, (*perſonata*) a great bur.
clum, a note of ſilence.
cobions, ſtones.
coint, ſtraunge.
couth, knowen, knowe.
couth, perfitly.
couercle, couer or lidde.
courtpie, a ſhort gaberdine, or vpper garment.
coupegorge, cutthrote.
contreue, inuent.
couth, was able.
courtine, fine heart.
couine, deceit.
couenable, conuenient.
coulpe, fault.
coure, kneele, ſtoupe.
contecke, ſtrife.
conſaunce, knowledge.
controue, deuiſe.
conterpleted, controlled.
conuaile, recouer.
colfoxe, blacke foxe.
compinabel, fit for companie.
commoning, partaking.
commenſall, a table cõpanion.
compere, goſſip.
connen, can.
con, knowe.
cop, top.
cope, a cloke.
con, be able.
corrumpeth, ſtinketh.
cozuen, taken.
cardiacle, wringing at the heart.
cozdewane, dry leather.
cozbets, ſtones whereon Images ſtand.
coziged, corrected.
cozare, ouercome.
coſtrell, a wine pot.
coſtay, to walke.
coſtage, coſt.
coyſe, iolines.
coy, to flatter.
coy, quiet.
crallit, engrauen.
crampeth, gnaweth.
crull, ſmooth.
creſſe, a ruſh.
creance, faith or truſt.
cruke, a pot, a ſteane.
criſpe, curled.
croupe, buttocke.
crouched, bleſſed.
crockets, lockes of haire.
croſſelet, a melting pot.
crop, top.
crouch, croſſe or bleſſe.
crocke, earthen pot.
croudeſt, hurtleſt, thruſteſt.
crone, an old woman.
culleth, pulleth, enforceth.
culpons, heapes.
culpons, parts or ſtreakes. (*particula*)
curfew, (*vide annot.*)
cure bulli, tanned leather.
curreidew, currie tauour.
cytrin, yellow.

D

Dagon, (*fractura*) a pece.
dagged, digged.
Dan Burnell, (*vide annot.*)
darreigne, attempt.
dare, ſtare.
daſſe, daſtard.
dates, account.
dawes, dayes, times.
daw, ſpring or dawne.
deblis,
defended, forbad.
defended, forbidden.
deiden, dyed.
deignous, diſdainfull.
deis, ſeate.

Dey, dead.
Dey, a deyriwoman.
Deaurat, ſhining.
Defayted, decaied.
Deificate, deified.
Definished, proued.
Defowled, ſhamed.
Demene, dwell.
Demin, iudge.
Demeane, complaine.
Denwere, doubt.
Deme, to iudge.
Demeane, behaue.
Debonair, gentle, humble.
De pardeux, by god.
Depe loupe, (*tranſparens.*)
Dere, greeue.
Debonairly, meekely.
Decoped, peaked.
Denoire, dutie, labour.
Demaine, toll, cuſtome.
Dent, ſtrooke.
Dely, ſmall.
Dequace, daſh.
Deſtany, lecherous.
Deſtrer, horſe of armes.
Derne, (*dirus,*) cruel, hard, carefull.
Diapred, diuerſified.
Digne, worthy: **alſo**, diſdainfull **ſometime**, gentle.
Dight, made ready.
Dight, prouided.
Dight, appoint.
Dight, vſed.
Diſcure, ſhewe.
Diſioynt, hard caſe.
Diſtreineth, effecteth.
Diſtaunce, diſcord.
Diſheuiled, with haire hanging down.
Diſpended, waſted.
Diſmall, vnluckie.
Diſparage, diſgrace.
Diſſoned, diſſonant.
Diſioynt, ieopardie.
Diſcreuer, ſpend.
Diſeaſe, vexation.
Dite, a treatiſe.
Doleth, greeueth.
Doluen, buried.
Domeſman, iudge.
Donet, a booke, called a donat.
Docked, cut off.
Dozmant, vnremooued.
Doztour, a place to lie in.
Douced, a ſweet inſtrument.
Dowtremete, beyond the ſea.
Dow, giue.
Dzaſtie, irkeſome.
Dzey, drie.
Dzeint, drowned.
Dzenched, ouercome.
Dzetch, to dreame, to deceiue, to tarry.
Dzetch, ſtay.
Dzetching, delay.
Dzenching, taking in.
Dzonklew, giuen to drinke.
Dzough, drew.
Dzouy, troubled.
Dzury, ſobriety, modeſty.
Dzy, ſuffer.
Dulcarnon, (*vide annot.*)
Dwale, Nightſhade prouoking ſleepe, (*ſolanum ſoporiferum.*)
Dwyned, conſumed.

E

Ebzacke, Hebrew.
Eche, increaſe.
Eche, draw out.
Echeth, helpeth.
Echen, encreaſe.
Eft, againe.
Eggement, procurement.
Eld, old age, man or woman.
Eldeth, maketh old.
Ele, helpe.
Elenge, ſtrange.
Elth, old age.
Eluiſh, froward.
Emſozth, according.
Emboſed, did hang out his tongue with wearines.
Emmoiſed, comforted.
Emplede, ſue.
Empaired, much greeued.
Engyned, racked.
Engine, deuiſe.
Enbolned, ſwelled.
Entriked, deceiued.
Entriketh, entrappeth.
Enuelopt, wrapped.
Enpzice, facion.
Entalenten, ſtirre vp.
Enewed, renewed.
Entailed, carued.
Enterched, defiled.
Encheſon, occaſion.
Enchafeth, (*flagrat*) heateth.
Engluting, glued, ſtopped.
Encheſon, cauſe.
Endzy, endure.
Entreteden, handle.
Enchafed, heated.
Encontrewayle, preuent.
Entetched, qualified.
Enſiſe, qualitie, ſtampe.
Engine, wit.
Enhaunce, lift vp.
Enterd, buried.
Enhaunced, exalted.
Enlangozed, languiſhing.
Erre, way.
Erneg, promiſe.
Eſploit, perfection.
Eſters, waies, galleries, entries, walkes, walles, hedges.
Eſſoine, delay.
Eſperance, hope.
Eſcrite, a writing.
Eth, eaſie.
Enpited, delited.
Entremeg, entermingled.
Eum, equall.
Expleiten, make ſhew.
Eyth, eaſie.
Eye, an egge.
Eighteth mow, may graunt.

F

Fage, fable, or tale.
Fare, chere.
Fairie, a goodly ſight.
Fare, faire.
Fare, to goe.
Fare, gone.
Farce, paint.
Fatt freits, ful fraughted.
Fatted, ſtuffed.
Farden, fare.
Falſed, falſified.
Fay, truth.
Fatome, fancie.
Fantome, vaine viſion.
Faw, faine.
Faw, glad.
Famulers, helpers.
Falding, (*falinga*) a kinde of courſe cloth.

faytors, deceiuers.
feest, comfort, ioy.
feete, fine.
felle, endue.
feture, hanſomnes.
fethered, ſhaked his wings.
fere, a companion.
fers, the queene in cheſſeplay.
fele, many.
feltred, tangled.
fendly, vgly.
ferthing, a thinne skale.
fellon, deadly.
fele homages, faithfull ſubiection.
ferly, ſtraunge.
fele, knowledge.
fell, skinne.
fermaces, medicines.
ferth, the fourth.
fenne, (*vide Anno.*)
fermentation, dawbing.
fetiſe, hanſome.
fermerere, ouerſeer of cattell and husbandry.
finance, end.
fine, ceaſe.
flaw, yelow.
flash of flames, a ſheafe of arrowes.
flaming, red.
flemer, expeller.
flebring, ſlaunder.
fleeten, abound.
flemed, daunted.
flight, or flite, to chide.
flyd, flye.
flode, abounded.
flozeth, flouriſheth.
flone, an arrow.
flo, an arrow.
floyting, whiſtling.
foztuna maioz, *Iupiter.*
fozmel, his make.
fozge, worke.
fozdyd, killed.
fozward, courſe, promiſe, condition.
fozfare, forlorne.
fozleten, forlorne.
foze, fared or gone.
fozlete, forſake.
fozleten, erre, wander.
fozfraught, beſet.
fozth, theft.
fozeine, iaques,
fozleteth, giueth ouer.
fozrey, deſtroy.
fozleten, forſake.
fozde, kill.
fozeleten, neglected.
fozlyth, ſpoileth.
fozt, ſtrong.
fozrage, meate.
fozwyned, withered.
fozwelked, (*marcidus*) dried vp.
foyeten, let paſſe.
fozlaine, rechaſed, termes of hunting.
fozyede, ouerwent.
fozcer, a coffer or cheſt.
fozleten, giue ouer.
fozrage, fodder.
foz the nones, purpoſely.
fong, take.
fond, contend.
fonden, labour.
fond, to make a foole.
fond, make.
fonne, to be fooliſh.
fonne, foole.
fongeth, taketh.
foiſon, plentie.
foyterers, vagabonds.
foiſon, ſtore.
foiles, leaues.
foote hote, ſtraightway.
foumes, deuiſes.
fowlefaile, erre greatly.
fownd, framed.
folili, raſhly.
fomen, enemies.
frayned, asked.
franchiſe, freedome.
frayne, aske.
frayned, reſtrained.
frape, compan.e.
fret, turne.
fret, fraught.
fret full, ſet full.
fret, a circle.
fremeth, maketh ſtrage mone.
frened, ſtrange.
frote, to rubbe.
frend, ſtrange.
fremed, wilde.
fremd, ſtrange.
freelte, libertie.
freel, fraile.
froy, from you.

frounce, make a noiſe, wrinckling.
froyſe, (*frixura*) a pancake or tanſey.
frounce, a wrinkle.
frounces all play, plaine, unwrinkled.
froteth, rubbeth, chafeth.
fryth, wood.
furr, furie.
fulke, hollow place.
fyſh, the ſigne *Piſces.*
fyzeleun, lightning.

G

Gadling, ſtragler.
gawde, trifle.
gattere berries, (*virga ſanguinea*) Gayter tree, or pauke weede.
gab, prate or lie.
galiard, luſtie, frolike.
gale, chafe.
Galians, Galens workes.
galpeth, belcheth.
gale, flout.
galoch, a kind of ſhoe.
Ganilian, (*vide Annot.*)
gargoning, ſtrange ſpeaking.
garſon, to defend.
garniſon, ſeparation.
gaſtnes, terror.
Gawen, (*vide Annot.*)
gend, feemely.
gent, proper, hanſome.
gergon, chattering, prating.
gere, frenſie, ieſt.
gery gerifull, mutable: ſometime, cruell.
gefferam, breſtplate.
gigs, drabs.
gigges, (*garrulitas*) babling.
gigging, ſounding.
gigiotlike, like a ſtrumpet.
gippion, a dublet or light coat.
gipſere, a bag or pouch.
gite, a gowne.
glareth, gliſtereth.
glaſe, to gloſe.
gleden, gone.
gledes, imbers, flames.
glede, hote fire.
glede, puttocke.
gleire, white.
glent, glaunced.
gleue, a ſpeare or ſword.

glombe, frowne.
glose, flatter: also, perswade.
gloton, couering.
glowed, stared.
gnarre, a hard knotte, as in wood: or, a short thick grub.
gnast, gnash, vexe.
gnew, gnawed.
gnosse, chuffe, miser.
gods kichell, (*vide Annot.*)
gods sonne, that god sendeth.
gostly, sottish.
golit, throte.
golierdies, rauenously mouthed.
gonfennon, a little flagge.
gong, iaques.
goodnes, good time or mood.
goze, arbour: also a pleit or fold, (*lacinia.*)
gozget, throat.
gossamoz, things that flie in the aire in sommer like cobwebbes.
gourd, bottell.
gowzeth, stareth.
grach, behaue.
grame, punishment, sorowe.
grapewell, an instrumẽt with many hookes.
graspeth, catcheth.
grauen, buried.
graunt mercie, I thanke you.
grayeth, make trim.
graythed, deuised.
gre, estate.
greee, grey: Grey Amyse of Russie Squirrels.
grede, I cryed.
greith, remooue, bring.
grenhed, rashnes.
grete, weepe.
greues, trees, boughes.
gruues, grasse.
greined, made.
grint, grinded.
grith, agreement.
grisly, abominably.
grosly, flat on the ground.
groine, a froward looke.
growbed, digged.
growse, groucling.
gruell, potage.
gryll, cold.
guerdon them, reward them.
guerring, brawling.
guilet, throat.
gy, guide.
gyze, traunce, dumpe, sitte.
gyld, to strike.
gysarme, a certaine weapon, (*gasa.*)
gytes, gownes.

H

Habergion, a shirte of male, (*lorica.*)
hace, hath.
hafe, lifted.
halke or herne, (*angulus*) a corner.
haketon, a iacket without sleeues.
halpe, helped.
halowes, saintes.
halse, necke.
halt, account.
halt, perfourmeth.
halt, haue.
halt, iudged.
halt, holdeth, kept, or held.
halteth, (*trahit*) draweth.
halue, part.
hameled, abated.
hanten, vse.
hasard, dicing.
hardly, verily.
harlotrise, bawdry.
hat, was called.
hauberke, a gorget.
hancled, cut off.
hanselines, vpper sloppes.
haubacke, returne.
hauoyre, possession.
haw, haue.
haw, a yeard, or hedge.
haw, blacke.
haubergion, a cote of male.
hawkes, corners.
hawten, high minded.
hawtenly, solemnly.
hay, yeard or hedge.
hayse, charge.
hayne, hatred.
healed, couered.
heauen and to done, to heaue and shoue.
heckled, wrapped.
healed, heard.
heere and houne, hare and hound.
heep, helpe.
heere and hoer, hoarse and harsh.
heisugge, (*vide Annot.*)
held, account.
helded, holden downe.
hele, couer.
hele, hold.
heleft, did hold.
helmed in starke stowres, defended in sharpe assaults.
hend, feate, fine, gentle.
hent, catch.
henten, catch,
henters, snatchers.
herawdes, feates of actiuite, or, furious parts in a play.
herbigage, lodging.
herbozow, lodging.
hereid, praised, honoured.
hercos, (*vide Annot.*)
heroner, a certaine kinde of hawke.
herying, praise.
hete, benamed, was named.
het, promised.
hete, assure, vow.
hete, offer.
hestes, willes.
hethen, mockerie.
heuen, rise vp.
heyle, health.
heyne, hinde.
hew, welfare.
hew of Lincolne, (*vide Annot.*)
hews, to hoouer.
hewed, coloured.
hewmond, newe made, shining.
hoker, peuishnes.
hokerly, frowardly.
holoure, whoremonger.
holdeth your heft, kepe your promise.
holt, holdeth.
holt, a groue.
homager, subiect.
hostell, a towne house.
hostilements, necessaries.
hote, promise.

hote

hote, is called.
hote the knot, made fast.
hoten, promise.
hote, I bid.
hoten, make vnpleasant noise.
hoppesteres
hozrow, slaunderous.
hozow, beastly.
houe, houer.
houe, lifted.
holoure, whoremonger.
howgates, how.
houne, an houerer.
hoppen, leape.
hourd, heape.
houseled, receiue the sacrament.
houten, hallow.
houed, taried.
hurleth, (*obstrepit*) maketh a noise.
hurtell, skirmish.
hurtlen, thrust.
humbling, sounding (*clamans.*)
hurleth, talleth.
hurtelen, prouoke.
hulstred, hidden.
highest, maketh haste.
hipe, the red berry on the brier.
hidous, great, fearefull.
hildeth, giueth.
hith, make haste.
hight, promised.
hine, an hind.
hierd, heardman.
hild, poured.

I

Iambeux, armour for the legs.
iangerlesses, brablers.
iane, halfepence of Ianua, or Galey halfepence.
ibete, set forth.
icond, learned.
ido, vndone.
idolaster, idolater,
ier, deuise.
iewry, a Iewish Synagogue.
iewry, the Iewes street.
iewise, gibbet.
iewise, reward by reuenge.
ifere, together.
ifete, effect.
ifounded, suncke.
ifretten, deuoured.
igrauen, buried.
ihight, called.
ikend, knowne.
ilke, same.
limed, taken.
imped, grafted.
I mete, I might.
impetren, entreat.
imasked, wrapped.
imenit, mingled.
in tile, in his beautie.
in gree, in good part.
in stoure, in fight.
inecked, put in.
indulgence, pardon.
intresse, lining.
inneresst, inward.
intermeting, chaunging.
intermetteth, medleth.
inome, taken.
in hie, in hast.
inomen, obtained.
infild, infuse.
inde, azure colour
intermete, meddle.
interuall, distance of time.
incubus, the night mare.
ioyeux, pleasant, ioifull.
ioleyning, ioyfull.
iomber, ioine, or iomber.
iozdanes, double vrinals.
ipulled, smoothed.
ishad, scattered.
ishoue, set forth.
isped, (*expeditus*) dispatched.
ispended, considered.
isperi. orizon.
iswent, swenged.
ithee, thriue.
itwight, drawen.
itubbe, bottell.
Iubelt, ioy, gladnesse, a mirth day.
iwry, hidden.
iwry, couered.
iwimpled, mused.

K

Kalends, beginning.
kalender, chiefe and first,
kele, to coole.
kemeling, a brasse vessell.
kepen, to care.
kene, sharpe.
kenelme, (*vide Anhor*)
ken, teach.
kend, made me know.
kerse, (*nasturtium*) water cresses
kernels, corners, or holes in batilments.
kerueth, greueth.
ketked, stared.
keinard, mischeuous, hedgecreeper.
kempt. trimmed.
kempe, decke.
kitheth, sheweth.
kitteth, shew.
kuddes, knine.
knittest, setlest.
kid, knowne.
kinrest, quick rest.
kirked, turning vpward.
kith, make known.
kith, to acknowledge.
kith, shew.
kith, kinred.

L

Laas, (*laqueus*) net, or grin
lacke, to contemne.
lacking, discommending.
lacte, offence.
lache, lasie.
lachesse, lasines.
lacke, (*vitupero*) to dispraise,
lacken, exterminate.
lacert, a sinew.
lake, fine cloth like lawne.
lait, enclosed.
laft, left of.
languerth, languisheth.
largesse, liberalitie, reward.
larson, robberie.
laton, latoun, coppet.
laton, a box of latin.
latred, loitring.
lath, loth.
laund, a plaine between trees
laucn, draw empne
lauender, laundresse.
laued, drew.
laies, songs.
lay, a lamenting song.
lauers, (*corrigia*) thongs.
lease, praise.
ledge, laie.
lech, lurgian, or phisition.
lees, leasing.

lees, releaſe.
lectorne, a deske.
leden, language.
leth, like.
lefe, loth.
lefe, leuer, deare.
lefe, wont.
leſt, luſt.
leged, reſident.
legging, lodging.
legiſters, lawiers.
lefe, willing.
leit, light.
lele, right lawfull.
lemes, light, flames, ſhining, ſtreames.
lends, loines, (*lumbi.*)
lere, complexion, colour.
lere, skinne.
leſingour, liar.
leſſell, (*umbraculum*) buſh, or houell.
lete, ceaſe, leaue.
lete, to leaue of.
lethy, ſoft.
letargy, a diſeaſe cauſing forgetfulneſſe.
letarge, white lead.
leting, leauing.
leteſt fare, makeſt ſhew.
lettrure, booke learned.
leud, ignorant.
leue, let, or ſuffer.
leue, deare.
leue, belstue, releeue.
leue vs, grant vs.
leuer, better.
leueth, beareth.
leueth, releeueth.
leueth, remaineth.
leueth, taketh leaue.
leueſell, buſh.
lith, lieth.
lignes, liketh, yeeldeth.
liege, lawfull, true.
liſſe, a border, end, limite.
lodemanage, skill by ſtone and needle.
lodeſmen, guides.
lollards, londles, breakers of faſting daies & runnagates.
loppe, a ſpider.
lorne, loſt.
lore, knowledge, or learning.
lorrell, (*lurco*) a deuourer.
loſenger, flatterer.
looſe, praiſe.
loſengery, flattery.
loſinges, ſquare figures.
loſe, order.
loteby, companion, or loue.
louting, honouring.
louke, a fellow receiuer.
louedaies, arbitrements.
low, fire, heat.
lozenge, ſquare.
luſhburgh, a baſe coyne in the daies of Edward the third.
liard, nimble.
liart, gentle, lith.
liche, like.
licand, well liking.
liſſe, releaſe.
liſſe, to haue leſſe.
liſſed, bounded.
liſſe, eaſe.
liſſe, waxe leſſe.
lift haulke, on her left hand.
limaile, the duſt that cõmeth of filing.
litherly, ſlouthfully.
lith, (*membrum*) a lim.
lithy, humble.
lith, plaine.
lith, to make leſſe.
liuen, beleeue.

M

Magoncell, an inſtrument to caſt ſtones.
make his beard, deceiue him
make it, hinder it.
malebouch, wicked mouth.
maiure, miſchance.
maliſon, a curſe.
malt, melted.
malleable, abide the hammer
marke of Adam, mankind.
maſſeday, holiday.
maſſling, ſhining.
mate, mad.
mate, pined, conſumed.
mate, tame.
mate, daunted.
mate, abaſhed.
mattre, mauer.
mauger, deſpite.
many, madneſſe.
mauis, buſhell.
Maumet, a falſe god.
maint, mingled.
maiſondeu, an hoſpitall.
mazeline, mazer.
mede, reward.
medes, to boot.
mede, fauour, reward.
megre, leane.
meint, mingled.
meke, be meeke.
melite, power.
merke, darke.
mees, meddowes.
meſt, moſt.
meſell, leaper, lazerman.
meſſagry, diligence in doing a meſſage.
met, dreamed.
mete, deale.
mete, yeeld.
meth, a kind of ſweet drinke.
mewet, in ſecret.
miſbode, wrong by word or deed.
miſcreance, infidels.
miſqueme, diſpleaſe.
miſtaken, miſuſed our ſelues.
miſtere, trade, ſeruice, occupation, manner, faſhion.
miſter, nede, (*indigentia*)
miſtiheed, myſtery.
miſſat, became not.
mitches, manchets.
mineth, threatneth.
modeſte, moderate.
moeble, houſholdſtuffe.
mokell, bigne.
molles, Kiſtrels.
mollocke, earth, or dung.
momblishnesſe, tawke.
mon, might.
moneſt, admoniſh.
moniers, coyners.
mozmall, a canker.
mozter, a lampe.
mozterels, a meat made of boiled hens, crummed bread, yolkes of egs, and ſaffron, all boiled together.
moten, muſt doe.
mote, muſt go.
mourdant, the song of a buckle.
mouch, eat vp all.

mowlen, waxe mould.
mowen, (*posse*) be able.
moile, a dish made of marrow and grated bread.
moison, ripenesse.
mullocke, dust, dung.
musard, lingerer.
minting, endeuouring.
mirrour, a glasse.

N

Nad, had not.
nakoners, brasenhornes.
nale, the alehouse, or ale.
narcotise, stupefactiue, making senceless.
Narcotikes, medicines stupefactiue.
nas, ne was.
nat wilne, not desire.
nedely, of necessitie.
neded, businesse, request.
neded cost, of necessitie.
neders, adders.
neigh, touch.
neighed, touched.
neigheth, toucheth.
neighen, touch.
nempt, tell, or name.
nere, vntill.
nere, were it not.
nerfe, a sinew.
nerthes, heardmen.
neth, tender.
nest, next.
nemen, named.
neuen, name.
nice, foolish.
nigon, lowbie, dolt, or nigard.
nill, will not,
nigs, niggards.
nigh, to draw neare.
nigh, almost.
nightertale, by night.
nightspell, a praier against the night mare.
niterall, salt peter.
nome, taken, or nummed.
nommen, take.
nones, condition, purpose.
noze, comeforth, nourishing.
nozy, nurse.
nozriry, nurture.
note, businesse.
nowell, christmasse.
nowth, now.

O

Obay, abide.
occisier, murtherer.
of plat then edge, of ease, then griefe.
oft sithes, manie times.
onde, breath, (*anhelitus.*)
oned, vnited.
onis, once.
on knew, one kne.
on presse, adowne.
octogami, eight times married.
ozdall, (*vide Annot.*)
ozdainour, gouernor.
ozde, point.
ozfrayes, goldsmiths worke.
ozloge, a diall.
ozisant, the part of the firmament to vs seene.
ouche, a iewell.
out take, except.
ouerfret, spred.
ouerthrowing, hastie.
owonding, garding like waues
owndy and crispe, sliked, and curled.

P

Pad, bundell.
pace, appease.
paine mane, white bread.
pall, a robe.
pale, a spangle
paling, iagging
palmer, (*vide Annot.*)
panter, pitfall
panters, toiles to take deare
peraunter, perchance
paraments, robes of estate, or the place where robes are kept.
parage, parentage.
parfay, verily.
partner, by parts
purprise, enclosure, deuise
paramours, louers
pauade, (*pugio*) a dagger, or bastard.
paplardy, hipocrisie.
pease, stay.
peiure, costlie fur.
pennes fele, manie pence.
pencell, a peece.
pencell, banner.
penon, a long streamer.
penible, painfull.
pell, house.
peregrine, outlandish.
perienet, a yong peare tree.
peri, a peare tree.
pepir,
perre, a monument erected for remembrance.
perry, precious stones.
perre, brauerie with precious stones.
permagall, equall.
perse, skie colour.
peregall, equall.
perusse, bar, or railes.
perunke, hearbe periwincle.
perry wrigh, embrodered with pearle.
pierry, precious stone.
pight, propped.
pight, fell, did strike.
pight, cast.
pight, setled.
piment, (*pigmentum*) a drink of wine and honie.
pine, desire.
pine, sorrow.
pine, pitie.
pinant, a pined creature.
pine, a pit.
pithouelle, a witch.
play, goe.
plenere, fully.
plight, catched, pulled, turned.
plumage, feathers.
plumtuous, fruitfull.
pointell, a writing pin.
pomely grise, dapple grey.
pomell, round as a mans crowne.
popelet, puppet or young wench.
popere, a bodkin.
porraile, base, beggarly.
porpheri, marble.
portray, draw.
posted, tossed.

poſe, ſuppoſe.
poſſe, power.
poſtome, (*ſtruma*) a wenne or ſwelling.
potent, ſtaffe or cruch.
poudar marchant,
pounced, cut.
poudered, embrodered.
pꝛeſer, excell.
pꝛeſen, tread on.
pꝛegnant, full, thicke.
pꝛay, requeſt.
pꝛeued, hardy.
pꝛefect, magiſtrate.
pꝛien, looke.
pꝛickſoure, a rancke rider.
pꝛill and pointen, gore, and ſtrike.
pꝛeueth, reproueth.
pꝛow, honour.
pꝛow, good, or profit.
puella, (*vide Annot.*)
pullail, wild foule.
purfled, garded.
purfle, gard or fringe.
putre, fornication.
puruay, prouide.
puruayaunce, prouidence.

Q

Quad, bad.
quacketh, trembleth.
quake, daunt.
quarrels, arrow heads.
qualme, griefe.
qualme, calmeneſſe.
quappe, quaile, ſhake.
quappe, to quake
quaint gites, ſtrange fits
queint, quenched alſo ſtrange
queintiſe, pride
quientiſes, deuiſes
querrour, ſtoneminer
quintible, a treble
quiſtron, begger.

R

Raa, a Roe
rabiat, mad.
racine, roote
rade boꝛe, tapiſtry, or loome worke.
rackell, haſty.
raft, rent.
raffles, rifling.
ragounces, a kind of precious ſtone.
rakeſtele, the handle of a rake.
ramagious, wild.
ramage, wild.
rape, haſt.
rape, quickly.
raſkaile, traſh.
rath, quickly.
raught, went.
ranke as roke, hoarſe as a rouke.
rauiſh, take, cary.
rauiſhing ſweigh, a ſwift ſway.
rauenith, blacke as Rauen.
railed, ran.
rayues, fine cloth named of the place.
reare, (*rarus*) deuided.
rebecke, an old trot.
recke not, care not.
recreaunt, diſpaired.
recketh, careth.
recreant, out of hope.
recreance, againſt credit.
recreandiſe, Infidelity, treaſon.
redeleſſe, helpleſſe.
redoure, turning, doubling.
redeth, biddeth, auiſeth.
red, aduiſe.
rede, helpe.
red, the meaning.
refete, full.
refreide, refraine.
refuit, helpe.
refroiden, coole, ceaſe.
regrate, curteſie, or eſtimation.
reigne, kingdome.
reiue, take away.
reues, kinds of ſongs as roundels.
reketh, ſmoketh.
rekelneſſe, raſhneſſe.
relates and limers, ſlanders at aduantage with darts to kill deare.
remord, giue remorſe.
remuable, (*mobilis*) ready.
renably, readily.
renged, compaſſed about.
renkes, rankes, orders.
reny her lay, deny her faith, or law.
renlant, reuolter.
renouell, renue.
renouelen, newly returne.
renouelances, renuings.
renew, refuſe.
renne, pull, get.
repe, care.
reſcowes of our lay, defence of our law.
reſagoꝛ,
reue, pull away.
reues, rents, tithes.
reuers, contrary.
reue, ſpoile, rob.
reuell, ſport.
ribanings, borders.
ribaned, garded.
ribaud, (*leno*) a baud.
ribib, an old baud.
ribible, rebecke, fiddle, or Giterne.
rife, rifle.
rimpled, (*rugatus*) wrinckled.
riue, rend.
roche, rocke.
roſe, did rend or ſtrike.
rode, complection.
roggeth, ioggeth.
roignous, ruinous.
roine, skarre.
roile, range.
roket, a linnen garment.
romant, a briefe hiſtory.
romed, walked.
romer, wider.
ronges, the ſides of a ladder.
roſtail, red.
roſere, a roſe plat.
rote, courſe.
rote, an inſtrument of muſicke.
rouncy, a rude horſe.
rouncenall, a great iade.
roundell, ſong, or carroll.
routhleſſe, pitileſſe.
rought, cared.
roune, ceaſe.
rought, cared.
roune, to tell in ones eare.
row, frowardly.
rowned, ſpoken in the eare.

rowning, talking ſecretly.
rowning, ſilence.
rowketh, lieth.
row, vgly.
rowes, ſtreikes.
rubeus puella, (*vide Annot.*)
rucking, lying, lurking.
rubzicke, (*vide Annot.*)
rud, complexion, colour.
rue, lament.
ruell bone, buttocke.
ruſe, take pity.
riddeled, plaited.
riueling, turning in and out.
riuing, dropping.

S

Saint John to borrow, with good ſpeed.
ſalew, honour.
ſaleweth, ſaluteth.
ſamet, tartin.
ſangume, red.
ſang, long.
ſand, ſending.
ſatournade, yellow.
ſat me ſore, touched mee greatly.
ſarge, ſaycloth.
ſautry, an inſtrument of muſicke.
ſaunce dout, without doubt.
ſautry, muſicke on inſtruments.
ſaut, aſſault.
ſaugh, ſaw.
ſarpleſis or ſachels, packes, or tardles.
ſawes, ſayings.
ſaw, ſpeech, words.
ſawsſteme, redfaced.
ſaine alſe, ſeene alſo.
ſailors, dauncers.
ſcath, harme.
ſcathlike, harmefull.
ſcantilane, a meaſure.
ſciled, cloſed.
ſcholay, exhibition.
ſcriuenish, ſubtelly.
ſees, ſeats.
ſecre, ſecret.
ſegge, ſay.
ſewis, follow.
ſele, ſeale.
ſemicope, a ſhort cloke.
ſentement, feeling, ſence.
ſelely, happily.
ſenten, ſent.
ſenged, ſcorched.
ſend, ſcorched.
ſendall, a thinne ſtuffe like ciprelle.
ſenge, burne.
ſentement, ones owne deuiſe.
ſementing, daubing.
ſeker, in like ſort.
ſeignory, power.
ſerment, an oth.
ſered poketș,
ſere, diuerſe.
ſetron, bright of hue.
ſettles, grafts.
ſew, ſowen.
ſewen, ſow.
ſew, follow.
ſewen, follow.
ſewing, placed.
ſey, ſeene.
ſey, ſaw.
ſeint, girdle.
ſkwes, brothes.
ſhad, parted.
ſhaw, ſhaddow, a tuft of trees.
ſhend, ſpoile.
ſhete, ſhoot.
ſhent, troubled.
ſhenden, (*culpare*) to blame.
ſhend, rebuke.
ſhenden, hurt, ſpoile.
ſhenden, bring blame.
ſhent, infected.
ſhede, depart.
ſhene, ſhining.
ſhepen, ſimple, fearefull.
ſhepens, ſheepe cotes.
ſhemering, glimering
ſhetten, cloſed in.
ſheriffe, reue, or gouernor of a ſhire.
ſhoures, brunts.
ſhift, beſtow.
ſhildes, french crownes.
ſhoue, put.
ſhode, buſh of haire.
ſhode, head.
ſhoder, ſhoulder.
ſhond, harme.
ſhond, harme.
ſhouke, pull of
ſhoze, cleft, cranny.
ſhulleth, ſhall
ſhzight, crying out.
ſike, a ſigh.
ſikerly, truly.
ſikerd to ꝑ regals of Athens, allied to the nobles, &c.
ſikerer, certainer.
ſikenesſe, felicity.
ſit, fitteth.
ſithen, after.
ſkaffaunt, an engin of warre.
ſkarmoch, skirmiſh.
ſkere, fray.
ſkozchlith, ſcorcheth.
ſkleren, couer.
ſlew, ſleeue.
ſleucleſſe, vaine.
ſlite, rend, teare.
ſlittered, rent.
ſlight, cunning.
ſlider, (*labidoſa*) ſlery, falling.
ſliuer, pared.
ſlouthlich, ſlouenish.
ſlough, ditch.
ſlouth, ſonſlow.
ſmotcrlich, ſmoutfaire.
ſnewed, did ſnow.
ſonenelle, noiſe.
ſotell, ſubtile.
ſooth, truth.
ſond, will, or mind, commandement.
ſote, ſweet.
ſoigne, care, diligence.
ſoken, trade, or dealing.
ſoune, ſpeech, tune, ſound.
ſound, to make ſoũd or whole.
ſowned, ordained.
ſotoure, tarying, dwelling.
ſoget, ſubiect.
ſourd, riſing.
ſours, riſing.
ſontreſſe, heire.
ſouple, eaſie to be bent.
ſours, ſpring, riſing.
ſourd, proceed.
ſow and plite, ſeale, and fold.
ſouke, ſpend.
ſould him, enſpired him.
ſond, ſand.
ſoupen, ſup.

ſowne, ſpeech.
ſparth, (*bipennis*) a double axe, a ſpeare.
ſpannithing, full breadth.
ſperd, ſhut vp.
ſpeces, parts.
ſpence, (*promptuarium*) a buttery.
ſpedefull, (*efficax*) earneſt.
ſperme, ſeed.
ſper, asked.
ſped, handled.
ſperkell, wandring.
ſpray, to ſpread.
ſpray, ſprig, or bough.
ſpringolds, yong men.
ſpinge, ſprinkle.
ſquireth, waiteth.
ſtad, combred.
ſtall, ſet.
ſtames, (*ſubtegmen*) warpe.
ſtamin, (*ſtamen*) hempe.
ſtatue, picture.
ſtede, place.
ſtere, maked a n[illegible]ge.
ſtereles, without [illegible]rne.
ſtenten, ſtay.
ſtew, a ſmall pond for fiſh.
ſterelich, earneſtly.
ſtrene, kinred.
ſtele, the handle.
ſtere, ſterne.
ſtered, dealt withall.
ſteuen, meeting.
ſteuen, ſound.
ſtedſhip, (*ſtabilitas*) aſſurance.
ſteire, (*gubernaculum*) a ſterne.
ſtedes, places.
ſtere, to make.
ſterne, to lay downe
ſtighed, aſcended.
ſtinten, ceaſeth.
ſtont, ſtood.
ſtound, ſodainly.
ſtot, yong horſe.
ſtole, a tippet.
ſtoundmeale, of ſmall continuance.
ſtoundmeale, in little time.
ſtopen, ſtepped.
ſtounds, (*vices*) courſes, orders.
ſtounds, ſorrowes, dumps.
ſtound ill, bad caſe.
ſtound, time.
ſturt, ſtrugle.
ſtraught, (*extentus*) extended.
ſtrake, to paſſe.
ſtrepe, rob, or ſtrip.
ſtre, ſtraw.
ſtripe, kinred.
ſubalter, and ſept, the ſtraites betweene Spaine and Barbary.
ſued, followed.
ſuppoſaile, beare vp.
ſuppriſe, ouercome.
ſupplien, make ſupplication.
ſurſanure, (*quaſi ſurſum ſana tum*) a ſore feſtered inward and whole without.
ſurcote, a gowne with a hood of the ſame.
ſurquedry, preſumption.
ſurkney, a white attire like a Rotchet.
ſwa, ſo.
ſwaine, ſeruant.
ſwcuen, a dreame.
ſwelt, ſounded.
ſwiche, ſuch.
ſwough, a ſound.
ſwoll, ſwelled.
ſwough, a ſound.
ſwelow, gulfe.
ſwow, a ſlumber.
ſwith, quickly.
ſwinke, labour.
ſwinker, labourer.
ſwire, necke.
ſwilke, ſuch.
ſib, a kin.
ſie, to fall.
ſiker, in aſſurance.
ſile, baniſhment.
ſith, afterward.
ſith, often, alſo, ſince.
ſithneſſe, ſeeing that.
ſith, times.

T

Taas, an heape.
taberd, an heralds coat.
tacoy, to plucke to.
taches, prancks.
takell, feather, or arrow.
talages, paiments.
talent, deſire.
tale, taile.
tane, take.
tapinage, ſecreſie, ſlilineſſe.
tapite, tapiſtry.
taſſay, to aſſay.
tatch, tetch, craft.
taylagiers, taxgatherers.
taylages, toll, cuſtome.
tech, touch.
temps, time.
teme, text.
temen, bind, or lay.
tenhaunce, ſet out.
teſters, skuls, ſallets.
teſtife, wild brained.
tetch, faſhion, alſo a ſtaine.
tetches, frowardneſſe.
tewell, chimney.
textele, well ſeene in the text.
teyne, ingot.
thanke, reward.
thare, there.
thanks, actes, enterpriſe, labour, reward.
thankeheld, thankeworthy.
thaſery, outcry.
thauentaile, coat of male.
thech, plaine, ſmooth.
theke, ſuch.
theu, although.
theiche, plaine, manifeſt,
thewes, qualities
thence, get, find, catch
thedome, thriuing
thirlled, *ingulauit*.
tho, thoſe.
tholed, ſuffered.
thoze, before
thozrucke, heape
thozpe, a towne, village
thzages, buſie matters
thzepe, affirme
thze mot, blaſt of and horne
thzeſt, oppreſſe
thzeke, thruſt
thzueth, ſpringeth
thzing, thruſt
thzingung, thruſting
thzilled, killed
thzow, time
thzow, a while
thzow, anger, haſt
thirled, pierced
timbeſteres, plaiers on ſounding inſtruments
tiſſue, a lace
tiflers, triflers

tid, happened.
tite, befalleth.
tiren, teare.
toder, the other.
tole, clout, toy.
tombleſteters, tumblers.
tombiſteres, tumblers, daun-
cers.
to mine, to entend.
tone, clawes.
tonne great, as great as a tun.
tozrecious, vſing extortion.
tozrets, rings.
tozt, extortion.
totoler, prating.
totty, diſſy.
tournet, a turret.
tout, hole.
tolitan, erpans, roots, collect,
Alnath, (*vide Annot.*)
tranſmew, change.
trauers, ouerthwart, a cur-
taine.
traile, an arbour.
traue, a treuis to ſhoe a wild
horſe in.
trete, to handle.
tretes, ſtreight.
tregit, deceit.
trete, handle.
trenchant, ſharp, well cutting,
(*vel verſatilis*) bowing.
trew, truce.
trepeget, a Ram to batter
wals.
treetes, ſtreight.
tregetor, iugler.
trice, conuay.
trip, a peece.
triſt, (*meta*) a marke.
trill, turne.
troce, a wreath, or wyth.
truandiſe, idleneſſe.
tul, lure.
tulſurelike, tilekil-like.
tway, two.
twettell, knife.
twyfold, double.
twy, two.
twytten, carued out.
twyn, ſeperate.
twyn, depart.
twyſt, thruſt.
twyſt, pinched.
twyn, to take away.
twynned, parted.
twyght, drawne, pulled.
twyereth, ſingeth.

V

Van, fan.
vaſſellage, ſubiection.
vaſſalage, villany, or ſeruice.
vauesoure, lord.
vechongs, hedgehogs.
vecke, an old woman.
venery, hunting.
vent, forepart.
ventoſing, cupping.
verge, a garden.
vermaile, red.
verre, glaſſe.
vermell, red.
vernage, ſweet wine.
vernacle, (*vide Annot.*)
via appia, an high way or cau-
ſey from Rome to Cam-
paigne.
vinari cruermailed, vineyard
made red.
vite, a vine.
vicnded, hauing plenty of
meat, eſpecially of fleſh.
vmple, fine lawne.
vnberd, laid open.
vncerriall, (*vide Anno.*)
vndermeles, afternoones.
vnderfonger, take in hand.
vndernoine, felt.
vnderu, the afternoone.
vnpliteth, ſheweth.
vnneth, tearſe.
vnpliten, make plaine.
vnſelincſſe, (*infortunium*) miſ-
fortune.
vnſperd, vnlocked.
vnſely, vnhappy.
vnſet ſteuen, vnapointed time
vnwiſt, vnknowne.
vnyolden, notyeelding.
volage, will, pleaſure.
volatili, wild foule.
volage, vnconſtant.
voluper, kercher.
volunde, will.
vomes, foming.
voundſtone, freeſtone.
vphap, ouercouer.
vpſwale, (*intumeſcebat*) ſtar-
ted vp or ſwelled.

vpplight, taken vp.
vre, chance, aduenture.
vttrance, extremity.

W

Wades boat, (*vide Annot.*)
wait, marke.
wartion, reward.
warble, a ſound.
warniſtore, fortifie.
warren, graunt.
warned, denied.
wardcorſe, a watcher ouer
one.
warrangles, (*vide Annot.*)
warilbed, eaſed, deliuered.
warith, ſaue, deliuer, driue a-
way.
ware, marke.
wary, conſume.
warenſtored, defended.
warned, denied.
waiſome, lothſome.
waſtle bread, fine cimnell.
wangs, (*molares*) great teeth.
wantruſt, miſtruſt.
waped, daunted.
wawes, waues, ſtreames.
way, to guide.
waymenting, lamenting.
wayned, put backe.
wayue, to turne from.
wayuen, forſake.
wayued, remoued.
wed, pledge.
wede, apparell.
weld, to haue in gouernment
welefull, wealthy.
wenen wiſely, thinketh verily.
welden, to moue.
welked, withered.
well, to ſpring.
welke, withered.
welbegone, in good plight.
welt, ruled.
welkneth, drieth, fainteth.
weldy, nimble.
welmeth, riſeth.
welked winers, withered
vine braunches.
wicker, (*vltor*) reuenger.
wend, by geſſe.
wend, thought.
wene, doubt.
went, wened.

The hard words of Chaucer, explaned.

went, a doubt.
wenden, thinke.
wemles, blameles.
wendeſt, goeſt: alſo ſuppoſeſt.
werne, denie.
weine, put aſide.
were, to defend.
werrey, deſtroy.
were, a maze or doubt.
werdes, guides.
werry, banne, curſe.
werbles, notes of muſick.
wernings, denials.
werryed, baniſhed.
werth, deſeruing.
werkes, aketh.
werre, griefe.
weſterne, to draw to Weſt.
weſtreth, ſetteth at Weſt.
wetten, knowe.
wex, encreaſe.
wexen, wiſh.
weyue, forſake, put backe.
weyued, put away.
weyueth, leaueth.
weyue, turne from.
wyche, an arke or cheſt.
wicke, ſtinking, noyſome.
whele, round.
whilke, which.
wight, ſwift.
wight, weight.
wyle, deceit.
wynt, windeth, draweth.
wynne, to complaine.
wyſſe, ſaue themſelues.
wyſly, euen.
wyſſe, knowe.
wyteſt, blameſt.
wyte, to blame.
wymple, a kercher or vaile.
wyt, know.
wyſhe, waſhed.
wyſt, knowen.
wythſtt, withſtand.
wite, blame.
wythkinds, after courſe of kind.
wyſſe, ſhew, make know.
wycke, counterfait.
wyuere,
wynder, to trim her.
wyſhen, waſh.
withſey, deny.
wyſſe, aduiſe.
wyerds, deſtinies.
wyne ape, (*vide annot.*)
wlate, ſlacken.
wood, mad.
wodſhaw, wood ſide.
won, ſtore, plentie.
wone, dwelling place.
wones, dwelling.
wonne, remedy.
wonne, a faſhion or wont.
wonde, turne backe.
wonning, dwelling.
wozth, aſcend.
woſt, knoweſt.
wozth vp, get vp.
wzale, beſtow in wrangling.
wzathed, moued to anger.
wzawnes, frowardnes.
wzeche, wrath.
wzeche, reuenge.
wzath him, anger him.
wzekery, reuenge.
wzeken, reuenge.
wzeme, compaſſe about.
wzene, couer.
wzenches, trappes.
wzo, griefe, anger.
wzoth, diſagreeing.
wzoth, ſorowfull.
wzy, couer.
wzyen, couered.
wzyne, couer.
wzyeth, getteth.
wzygh, couered.
wzytheth, caſteth out.
wzyen, chaunge.

Yalt, goeth.
yapes, ieſts.
yare, ready.
yate, a gate.
yaue, regarded.
ybet, made.
ycorven, cut.
yeraſed, broken.
yeden, went.
yede, went.
yedding, (*iurgandi*) brawling; ſome ſay, gadding vp and downe.
yelpe, prate, talke.
yerde, rod or plague.
yerne, earneſtly, quickly.
yerne, to deſerue, to deſire.
yerne, ſhrill.
yerning, profit.
yetten, lay vp.
yexing, ſobbing.
yfere, togither.
yfrounſed, frowning.
yhed, on high.
yle, (*inanis*) emptie.
ymeint, mingled.
ynde, blacke.
yode, went.
yold, yeelded.
yolden, yeelded.
yerd, gouernment.
yore, long agoe.
youe, gaue.
Ypocras, the workes of *Hippocrates*.
yren, diſpleaſure.
yreken, raked.
yſam, ſeene.
ythe, thriue.
yfter this, euen as.

— Si quid noviſti rectius iſtis
Candidus imperti. —

The French in Chaucer, tranſlated.

A Moy, qui voy, To me which ſee.
Bien moneſte, Well admoniſhed.
Bien & loialement, Well and dutifully.
C'eſt ſans dire, &c. It is without ſaying, &c.
Dont vient la deſtinie, From whome commeth deſtinie.
En dieu eſt, In God is.
Entierement voſtre, yours wholly.
eſtreignes moy de cœur ioyeux, Streine me with a ioyfull heart.
Et ie ſcay bien, que ce n'eſt pas mon tort, And I know well that it is not my hurt.

The names of the Authors cited by Chaucer.

I ay en vous toute ma fiance, I repose all my trust in you.
Ie vous dy, I say to you.
Ie vous dy sans doute, I say to you without doubt.
La belle dame sans mercy, The faire Lady without mercy.
L' ardant espoir en mon cœur point est mort. D' auoir l' amour de celle, que ie desire, The earnest hope within my heart is not dead, to haue the loue of her whome I desire.
Onques puis leuer, I can neuer vise.
Or à mon cœur, Now to my heart.
Or à mon cœur ce qui vouloy, Now to my heart that which I would.
Plourez pour moy, s' il vous plaist amoreux, Weepe for me if you please louely Lady.
Plus ne pourroy, I can doe no more.
Qui est là, Who is there.
Qui bien aime, tard oublie, He that loueth well, is slow to forget.
Sans que iamais, &c. Without euer, &c.
Sans ose ie, ni diray? But dare I, or shall I say?
Si donce est la marguerite, So sweet is the Daisie.
Son & mon ioly cœur endormi, Her liuely heart and mine fallen asleepe.
Sus la feville devers moy, Vpon the leafe towards me.
Soyes asseurè, Be ye assured.
Tant que ie puis, As much as I can.
Tant me fait mal departir de ma dame, It grieueth me so much to depart from my Lady.

Most of the Authours cited by G. Chaucer in his workes, by name declared.

A

Alhazen, an Arabian, wrote 7. bookes of Perspectiues.
Arnoldus de noua villa, did write the booke called *Rosarium philosopherum*.
Anselmus, Bishop of Canterburie, a great writer in Diuinitie, 1061.
Agathon, a Philosopher of Samos, did write Histories.
Augustine, that famous Doctour and Bishoppe, wrote moe bookes then euer did any in the Church of the Latines.
Auicen, a Phisitian of Ciuill, wrote a multitude of bookes.
Auerroys, a Phisitian of Cordubа *floruit*, 1149.

B

Bernardus de Gordonio, a Frenchman borne, reader of Phisicke at Mount Pelier.
Bernardus Abbas Clarevallensis, a Burgonian and a singular diuine set forth many things, 1140.
Basilius Magnus, bishop of Cæsarea, 367.

C

Caer Iuda Zansis, and diuers other alledged by *Chaucer*, haue none or few of their workes extant.
Claudianus, borne in Alexandria in Egypt, amõg many things wrote a booke of the stealing away of *Proserpina*.
Crisippus did write a booke against the pleasure of the bodie.
Constantine the Monke did translate and write many things in Phisicke, and among other, *Lib. de coitu, quibus modis augeatur & diminuatur.*

D

Dantes Aligerius, an Italian, and borne in Florence, liued 1341.
Dares Phrigius, did write the Troian warre in Greeke where he himselfe was a souldier.
Ditis Historicus did write a booke of the Troian warre, found in a certaine sepulchre.
Damascenus presbiter, did write many things in the Greeke tongue.
Dioscorides, a worshipfull knight of Egypt wrote in Greeke of the natures of diuers hearbes: He liued vnder *Cleopatra* and *Antonius*.

E

Æsculapius did write a booke of the originall, cause, and descriptions of diseases.

F

Franciscus Petrarcha, an Italian borne, did write when *Chaucer* was a young man. *floruit* 1374.

G

Gatisden and *Gilbertin*, Englishmen borne, and writers in Phisicke.
Guido de Columna, a Sicilian did write of the Troian warre, 1287.
Galfride Vinesause was a Norman by his parents, but borne in England: hee did write a Complaint for the death of Richard the first, who was slain with an arow as he was in hunting.
Galenus, a most singular Phisitian, did write a multitude of bookes, 160.

The names of the authors cited by Chaucer.

Hali wrote a booke of the Compoſition of medecines.

Hieronimus Stridonenſis, did write among other things, a defence of virginitie in two bookes againſt *Iouinian.*

Hippocrates Cous, a moſt auncient Phiſitian and Prince of all others liued in the daies of *Artaxerxes.*

Hermes, an Egyptian, diſciple to Plato, did write of many ſtrange things.

I

Iohannes Damaſcenus, a writer in Phiſicke, 1158.

Innocentius Papa, borne in Campanie, wrote a booke of the happie ſtate of mankind.

Iuvenalis a Poet, which wrote Satyres.

L

Lollius, an Italian Hiſtoriographer, borne in the citie of Vrbine.

Lucanus, a famous Poet, that wrote the battaile betweene Cæſar and Pompey.

M

Macrobius Aurelius wrote a Commentarie on Scipio his dreame.

Marcus Aurelius Caſſiodorus, a Monke, among many things wrote of the eſtate of the ſoule.

Marcianus Capella did write of the Liberall ſciences: and alſo of the marriage of Philologi and Mercurie.

P

Petrus Alfonſus a Iew, turned to the faith, before called Moſes, was baptiſed by King Alphonſus, and bare his name: he did write many bookes, 1100.

Pithagoras, a Philoſopher of Samos.

Pamphilus Presbiter, kinſman to Euſebius, after much paines in writing, ſuffred martyrdome in Cæſarea vnder the perſecution of Maximinus.

Papinius Statius a Neopolitan, wrote of the deſtruction of Thebes. He liued vnder Domitian.

Ptolomeus liued in the time of Anthony the Emperour: he wrote diuers workes, and reſtored out of darkeneſſe the Mathematicall ſciences.

Petrus Caſſiodorus an Italian, a Noble man and learned, did write to the Church of England, and perſwaded them to caſt off their obedience to the Romane Biſhops, and to beware of their tyrannie, 1302.

R

Raſis, an Arabian Phiſitian.

Rufus, a Phiſitian of Epheſus in the time of Traiane the Emperour.

S

Seneca a Spaniard borne in Corduba, a ſingular Philoſopher, did write many things: hee liued in the time of Nero, by whome hee was put to death.

Serapion an Arabian, did write of the compoſition of medicines.

Suetonius wrote the liues of the Romane Emperours.

Strode, a man of great learning, fellow of Merton Colledge in Oxford.

T

Tertullian did write a booke of the attire of women.

Tho. Bradwarden was Biſhop of Canterburie, who did write a booke *De cauſa Dei contra Pelagianos*, and dedicated it to the Societie of Merton Colledge in Oxford. Hee did write many other bookes: One of the Trinititie; one of Predeſtination; one of all Sciences; one of the principles of Geometrie: Alſo a booke of the rewarde of them which ſhall be ſaued: and another called the Summe of diuinity. He floriſhed in the yere of grace, 1270.

Trotula ſet forth a booke of the cure of diſeaſes, in and after childbirth.

Theophraſtus Ereſius, diſciple to Ariſtotle, writing a great number of bookes, hath one *De frugalitate.*

V

Vitellio did write 10. bookes of Perſpectiues.

W

William S. Aymour a Frenchman, did write a Cõmentarie on the Apocalypſe, much inueighing againſt the Pope: and was therefore baniſhed, and his bookes burned.

Corrections of ſome faults, and Annotations vpon ſome places.

And Palmers to ſeeken ſtrange ſtrondes) A Pilgrime and a Palmer did differ thus: The Pilgrime had ſome dwelling place, the Palmer had none: the Pilgrime trauailed to ſome certaine place, the Palmer to all and not to any one: the Pilgrime might goe at his owne charge, the Palmer muſt profeſſe wilfull pouertie: the Pilgrime might giue ouer his profeſſion, the Palmer muſt be conſtant vntill hee had obtained the Palme: that is, victorie ouer his ghoſtly enemies, and life by death.

Full often time he had the bourd begon aboue all nations in Pruce) That is, being often among the Knights of the Dutch order, called *Ordo Teutonicus* in Pruſſia, he was for his worthineſſe placed by them at the table, before any of what nation ſoeuer. If any deſire to knowe the profeſſion of theſe Knights called *Teutonici*, it was thus: They hauing their dwelling at Ieruſalem were bound to entertaine Pilgrims, and at occaſions to ſerue in warre againſt the Saracens. They were apparailed in white, and vppon their vppermoſt garment did weare a blacke croſſe. And for that this order was firſt begun by a certaine rich Almaine, none were receiued into the ſame, ſaue onely gentlemen of the Dutch nation. After Ieruſalem was laſt taken by the Saracens, *Anno* 1184. theſe Knights retired to Tolemaida: and that being taken, into Germanie their owne countrey. And when as there alſo the people of Pruſsia vſed incurſions vpon their confines, they went vnto *Fredericke* the ſecond then Emperor, *Ann.* 1220. who granted them leaue to make warres vpon them, and to turne the ſpoile to the maintenance of their order. After this conqueſt of Pruſsia, theſe knights grew rich, and builded there many Temples, and places of reſidence for Biſhops, who alſo were enioyned to weare the habite of the Order. *Chaucer* will haue his Knight of ſuch fame, that he was both knowne and honoured of this Order.

Aliſandre) *Alexandria* in Egypt, now called Scanderia.

Pruce) *Pruſsia*, a countrey by Almaine and Ruſsie.

Garnade) *Granata* in Spaine.

Algezer) *Algezira*, a citie in Spaine neere the ſtreights of Gibralter.

Lettow) *Lituania*, part of Sarmatia ioyning to Polonia.

Leyes) Taken to be *Leviſſa* vpon the continent not farre from Rhodes.

Belmari) Taken to be that countrey in Barbarie called by Vaſſeus, *Benamarin.*

Great ſee) *Mar maggiore*: aunciently *Pontus Euxinus.*

Satali) A citie in Anatolia, called ſometime Atalia.

Tramiſſene) A citie in Barbarie in the Prouince, ſometime called Mauritania Tingitana.

Palathi) *Palathia* in Anatolia.

In all the orders fower is none, &c.) The foure orders of Fryers were theſe:

1. Friers Minors or gray fryers, *Franciſcanes.*
2. Friers preachers or blacke friers, *Dominicanes.*
3. Friers *Carmelites*, or white friers.
4. Friers *Auguſtines.*

In exchange ſhildes ſell) Shieldes in French called *eſcus*, are French crownes, wherein this Merchant did deale by returne.

And gone to Vigils all before, and haue a mantill, &c.) It was the maner in times paſt, vpon feſtiuall Euens called *Vigiliæ*, for pariſhioners to meete in their Church-houſes or Churchyards, and there to haue a drinking fit for the time. Here they vſed to end many quarels between neighbour and neighbour. Hither came the wiues in comely manner, and they which were of the better ſort, had their mantles caried with them, as well for ſhow, as to keepe them from cold at the table. Theſe mantles alſo many did vſe in the Church at morrow Maſſes and other times.

For he was grounded in Aſtronomie) He that will be a Phiſitian according to *Homers* preſcri-

ption. [illegible] (that is, equiualent to any, ought to be skilfull in Aſtronomie and Magicke naturall. For if by Aſtronomie he be not able to iudge in what ſtate the heauens ſtood, and what their Aſpects were, when his patient ſickned: And by Magick naturall to calculate his natiuitie, thereby to know which of the heauenly bodies ruled moſt in his birth, he ſhall hardly or but by chaunce coniecture to what end his ſicknes will ſort.

In howers by his Magicke naturell &c.) He meaneth this Phiſitian was skilfull in Aſtrologie, and could make his election of fortunate houres, wherein to miniſter his potions to his patient: and likewiſe that he was practiſed in Magicke naturall, as in making of Sigills or Caracters ſtamped in mettall in their due times, fitted to that ſigne that gouerned that part of the bodie, wherein the maladie was: as the ſtampe of *Aries* for the diſeaſe in the head, and of *Leo* for the reynes, &c. Hereof he ſpeaketh in the third booke of Fame.

And clerkes eke which conne well
All this Magicke naturell:
That craftily doe her entents
To maken in certaine aſcendents
Images lo, through which Magick
They maken a man be whole or ſick.

A Vernacle had he ſowed vpon his cappe) A brooch or figure wherein was ſet the inſtruments wherewith Chriſt was crucified, and withall a napkin, wherein was the print of his face.

The Canterburie tales.

Fol.	*Pag.*	
1	2	**Campaneus**, *read*, Capaneus.
2	2	**Who ſhall giue a louer any lawe)** Out of Boetius, *Lib.* 3. *Quis legem dat amantibus? Maior lex amor eſt ſibi.*
3	2	**many**, *read*, Manie, *that is*, frenſie.
3	2	**Nought comely like to louers maladie of Hereos)** Read *Eros*, i. Cupide; for ſo it ſeemeth rather to be: which I gather thus. *Lucian* in his ſecond Dialogue bringeth in Cupid teaching Iupiter how to become amiable, and in him how louers may be made acceptable to their Ladies; not by weeping, watching, and faſting, nor by furious melancholike fittes, but by comely behauiour. The words in the Greeke are thus much in Latine: *Si vules amabilis eſſe neque concutias Ægida, neque fulmen geras: ſed ſuaviſſimum teipſum exhibe: & veſtem ſume purpuream, crepidas ſubliga auratas: ad tibiam & ad Timpana compoſito greſſu incede, & videbis quòd plures te ſequentur, quam Bacchum Manades.* So that the Louers of *Eros*, that is, Cupides ſeruants, doe carry themſelues comely in all their paſſions; & their maladies are ſuch, as ſhew no open diſtemperature of bodie or mind: which mediocritie this *Arcite* was farre from keeping.
4	2	**Full ſooth is ſaid that loue ne lordſhip, &c.)** Out of Seneca: *Nec regna ſocium ferre, nec teda ſolent.* And Ouid: *Non bene cum ſocijs regna Venuſq; manent.*
5	1	**Fie vpon a Lord that will haue no mercy, &c.)** He blameth a prince that will rule by rigour, and not by diſcretion and gentlenes: as him in Homer. [illegible] I am a king and bear a ſcepter, but I know not what is meet to be done. And in the 19. of the Iliads he giueth this precept to a king [illegible] Carrie a gentle heart within thee.

who

Annotations, with ſome Corrections.

Fol. *Pag.*

5 1 **Who may be a foole but if he loue, &c.)** Seneca: *Amare & ſapere vix Deo conceditur.* Item, *Amans quid cupiat, ſcit, quid ſapiat non videt.*

5 2 **That coſt of gold largely a fother, &c.)** A fother is twentie hundred weight, which is a cart or a wayne load.

6 2 **Certres,** *read,* Starres.

6 2 **Puella and Rubeus)** The names of two figures in Geomancie, repreſenting two conſtellations in heauen. *Puella* ſignifieth Mars retrograde, and *Rubeus* Mars direct.

6 2 **Atheon,** *read,* Actæon.

6 2 **Many a flozeyne)** A floreine is two ſhillings French, a Gilder is the ſame in Dutch.

7 2 **Unſeriall,** *read,* Cerriall: Cerrus is a kind of tree like an Oke, and beareth maſte. *vide Plinium.*

8 1 **When Vulcanus had caught thee in his laas, &c.)** Homer Odyſſ. 8. ſheweth how Vulcane made a nette of yron wherewith he entrapped Mars and Venus: δῆσεν δ' ἀῤῥηκτοισι δόλοις καὶ μήχανα πάσαν ἀπυστον: He compaſſed their bedde round about with chaines or gynnes.

8 2 **While I dwell in the ſigne of the Lyon, &c.)** For then is Saturne in his detriment, and in oppoſition to his owne houſe.

9 1 **Euery,** *read,* Either.

9 2 **Expulſed,** *read,* Expulſiue.

10 1 **Saue onely,** *read,* And alſo.

10 2 **Armes ſtraught,** *read,* It haught.

11 1 **He mote be dedde a king as well as a page)** Like to Horace Odyſſ. 4. *Pallida mors æquo pulſat pede pauperum tabernas, regumq; turres.* And in another place: *Æqua tellus pauperi recluditur, regumq; pueris.* And Seneca: *Pares naſcimur, pares morimur.* Homer alſo: μοῖρα δ' οὔ τιν' ἀνθρώπων ἐφυγεν κακὸν οὐδὲ καὶ ἐσθλόν: No mortall man can eſcape death.

11 1 **For all forgotten is his baſſelage,** *read,* For halfe forgotten is then his viſage.

12 1 **That bad men wed her ſimilitude)** According to the Greek prouerbe, ὁμοῖον ὁμοῖῳ ἀεὶ παρατίθεσθαι καλόν. For, *pari iugo dulcis tractus.* And Horace ſaith, *Diſparem vites.* And Ouid counſailing the woman: *Siqua voles apte nubere, nube pari.*

13 1 **Loth,** *read,* Leſe.

13 1 **Ye bleſſed be alway the leude man, &c.)** To this purpoſe ſaith Aiax in Sophocles: ὡς τὸ μηδὲν εἶναι κέρδος ἐστὶ τοῖς βροτοῖς: To know nothing is the beſt life.

13 2 **Curfew)** William Conquerour in the firſt yeere of his raigne, commaunded that in euery towne and village a bell ſhould be rong euery night at eight of the clocke, & that all people ſhould then put forth their fire and candle and go to bed. The ringing of this bell was called *Curfew*, that is, Couer fire.

14 1 **Knocked,** *read,* Coughed.

14 2 **On the beritote,** *read,* On her to dote.

15 2 **Sollar hall,** *read,* Schollars hall, or Vniuerſitie hall, founded by the Chauncellour and Maſters of the Vniuerſitie, *Anno* 1326. but ſince vnited to the foundation of the Lady Elizabeth *de Burgo*, Counteſſe of Clare, and called Clare hall.

17 2 **Degrees wes foztie, &c.)** Here the Aſcenſion of the Sunne is miſprinted: For whereas he ſaith 40. degrees, it muſt be 45. for then euerry body perpendicularly erected, hath the length of his ſhadow.

Annotations, with ſome Corrections.

Fol. Pag.

19 1 **O infortunate aſcendent Tortuous)** Tortuous the ſignes are, which are called *obliquè aſcendentia*: that is, all from Capricorne to Cancer. So he calleth the *Aſcendent* vnfortunate, becauſe it is one of thoſe Signes, and had at the ſame time the Lorde of that Signe in his fall, which is in the Signe contrarie to his exaltation.

21 2 **There dronkennes raigneth in any rout, &c.)** Horace. *Quid non ebrietas deſignat? operta recludit.* Agreeing with Homer Odyſſ. 14. *Vinum impellit hominem, vt nonnulla loquatur, quæ tacuiſſe præſtitiſſet.*

22 2 **Renegate)** A Renegate is properly a Chriſtian turned Turke.

23 1 **That all was ready he looked buſily,** *read,* And already he came and looked buſily.

23 2 **Surrey,** *read,* Ruſſie.

24 1 **That Gawyn with his old curteſie, &c.)** This *Gawyn* was ſiſters ſonne to *Arthure* the great king of the Brytaines, a moſt famous man in warre, and in all manner of ciuilitie: As in the actes of the Britaines wee may reade. In the yeere 1082. in a prouince of Wales called Roſe was his ſepulchre found, and his body affirmed by many to haue bin of the length of fourteene foot.

25 1 **Saue that Moſes and king Salomon, &c.)** Out of *Ioſephus* and *Petrus Comeſtor, magiſter hiſtoriarum, qui claruit, Anno* 1260.

25 1 **For in the Fyſh her Ladie ſate full high)** *Piſces* the exaltation of Venus.

25 2 **Cheriſheth blood natures frend)** A precept giuen by moſt Phiſitians. *Ariſtotle* in his 2. booke *De partibus animalium* ſheweth the reaſon why: ὑγρὸν ἀναμφιλαβὲς ἡ φθορὰ, &c. Decay of blood (ſaith hee) bringeth corruption, for what is in waſting, eaſily ſuffereth detriment either by cold or heat. And *Galen* ſaith, *Qui paucum habent ſanguinem ſenium accelerare.*

27 2 **Theophraſt is one of tho, &c.)** In his booke *de frugalitate*: els in his treatiſe *De loquacitate mulierum.*

28 1 **They connen ſo much craft in Wades bote, &c.)** Concerning *Wade* and his bote called Guingelot, as alſo his ſtrange exploits in the ſame, becauſe the matter is long and fabulous, I paſſe it ouer.

28 1 **If thou wilt wiſely wyuen, loue thy wife)** Agreeable to *Homer* Iliad. 9. ἔστι δ' ἀνδρὸς ἀγαθοῦ ἐπιεικέα καὶ φρένα πύκνην ἄμφι γυναικὶ σέθεν, καὶ μή τι νοήσῃς, who ſo is a wiſe and diſcrete man loueth and hath a care of his wife.

28 2 **Certen I find it but coſt and care)** To this effect ſaith *Menander* ὁ μὴ γήμας ἀνὴρ ἀπράγμων ἐστὶ καὶ ἄνευ κακῶν. He which hath no wife, hath no care: whereas the married man is neuer in quiet, as ſaith Iuuenal: *Semper habet lites, alternaq; iurgia lectus, in quo nupta iacet.*

29 2 **Eumenius,** *read,* Hymenæus.

31 2 **That may not ſay nay,** *read,* There may no wight ſay nay.

31 2 **Slippe,** *read,* Sippe.

33 2 **Ye know what I meane, &c.)** An *Apoſiopeſis* often vſed by Chaucer: as that, which he is ſaid to haue writuen with his diamond ſomtime in glaſſe windowes, expounded by his man Wat, which was thus: **A maried man and yet, qd. Chaucer. A merry man, qd. Wat. He is a knaue that wrote me that, qd. Chaucer.**

34 1 **After the text, ne after the rubriche, &c.)** In the Canon law the Arguments of euery Chapter was written with redde letters, which was called the Rubricke, and the Text with blacke.

Mine

Pag.

2 **Mine ascendent was Taure and Mars therein)** Taurus being properly Venus house, vnder the which Signe this woman was borne, Mars then ruling in the same, prognosticateth great incontinencie.

2 **Yet haue I Martes marke vpon my face, &c.)** A skarre or cut which the children borne in his regiment haue, and that in some part of their face: but this good wife of Bathe will needes haue two: one for the Caracter of her principall Planet, and the other, &c.

2 **Open heed,** *read,* Open headed.

2 **He cleped it Valerie and Theophrast)** Some will haue vs read *Valerie and his Paraphrast.* This Valerie wrote a booke *De non ducenda vxore,* with a Paraphrase vpon it, which I haue seene in the studie of Master Allen of Oxford, a man of as rare learning as he is stored with rare bookes. His name was Gualterus Maape, Archdeacon of Oxford in the dayes of King Henry the second, but chaunged his name because he would not haue the Authour knowen, and termed it *Valerius ad Rufinum.* But yet there was one called Valerius, who wrote a booke of the same Argument printed among S. Ieromes workes. And likewise one called *Theophrastus Eresius,* who among many things did write of such matters. Let the Reader iudge.

1 **Of Pasiphae that was Queene of Crete, &c.)** Wife of Minos King of Crete, who hauing companie with a bull, but rather as Festus saith, with a man called Taurus: brought forth Minotaurus, who was halfe a man and halfe a bull.

1 **Glad pouerte is an honest thing certain, &c.)** Seneca *lib. 2. epist. Honesta res est læta paupertas.* This is not vnlike to that of Plutarch in his booke περὶ ἀρετῆς καὶ κακίας where hee saith: If thou wilt learne what is honest and good, and liue contentedly, thou shalt haue delites in the midst of pouertie.

1 **A great amender eke of sapience, &c.)** Out of Theocritus, πενία μοὶ τᾶς τέχνας γλυκεῖα, &c. Pouertie letteth vp Artes, and is the mistresse of labour. And Seneca: *Melius in malis sapimus.*

2 **Countrey,** *read,* Couentrie.

1 **Warriangles)** Be a kind of birdes full of noyse and very rauenous, preying vpon others, which when they haue taken, they vse to hang vpon a thorne or pricke, & teare them in pieces and deuoure them. And the common opinion is, that the thorne wherupon they thus fasten them and eate them, is afterward poysonsome. In Staffordshire and Shropshire the name is common.

1 **Waketh,** *read,* Waketh.

1 **A kichell)** A cake which Horace calleth *Libum: Vtq; sacerdotis fugitivus liba recuso:* and with vs it is called a Gods kichell, because godfathers and godmothers vsed commonly to giue one of them to their godchildren, when they asked blessing.

1 **Ouide,** *read,* Euclide.

2 **Philosophie,** *read,* Historie.

2 **Commending now the Marquesse gouernance, &c.)** This is the nature of the common people, as the Poet Claudianus also truly saieth, *Mobile mutatur semper cum principe vulgus.* And another Poet, *Qualis enim rex est, talis quoque subditus illi esse solet populus, studiisq; tenetur eisdem.*

1 **Of Constellacion)** That is, the motion or inward working of the Starres or heauenly Elements, vpon our earthly bodies.

2 **Denmarke,** *read,* Penmarke.

Touching

Annotations with some Corrections.

Fol.	Pag.	
52	1	**Touching the 24 mansions)** The moone hath 28 mansions, and therefore there is an errour in putting 24 for 28.
52	1	**And such folly, &c.)** To this purpose speaketh *Cornelius Tacitus* also of Mathematicians: *Genus hominum, inquit, potentibus infidum, & sperantibus fallax.*
52	2	**His Tolitane Tables, &c.)** *Alphonsus* tables to calculate the motion of the Planets for the Meridian of *Toledo.*
52	2	**Collect, &c.)** Collect, Expans, Yeares, & Roots, are tearmes belonging to the Tolitane tables, & so be his Centers, his Arguments, Proportionels, &c. Face and Terme be dignities belonging to the Planets.
52	2	**Alnath was shoue, &c.)** Alnath is a fixed starre in the hornes of *Aries*, from whence the first mansion of the moone taketh his name, and is called Alnath.
53	1	**Eight maidens of Meleſie)** *Aulus Gellius* reporteth this wofull history.
54	1	**And sithens,** *read,* Soothly.
54	1	**Which in,** *read,* Within.
61	1	**As his booke Semor woll beate witnesse)** Read as in his booke *Senior* will bear witnesse: *Senior Zadith Hamuelis filius de Chymia librum scripsit. Gesner.*
62	2	**The woune of conscience woll arise)** *Lege deûm ſtabili ſemper metus angit iniquos.* For they know, that God, as *Homer* saith, [illegible] Looketh on men and punisheth them that offend.
64	1	**Battaile,** *read,* Carraile.
65	2	**In no Canon, ne in no Fenne, &c.)** Auicen deuideth his Canons into partitions, which he calleth Fennes.
67	1	**Gamilion of France, &c.)** Which betraied the army of the Christians vnder Charlemaine to the Sarracens, and was therefore torne in peeces with foure horses.
67	1	**To day,** *read,* To dine.
69	1	**O mater,** *read,* O martir.
69	2	**O yong Hugh of Lincolne slaine also, &c.)** In the 29 yeare of Henry the third, eighteene Iewes were brought to London from Lincolne, and hanged for crucifieng a child of eight yeares old.

The country of Fairy) Then read thus, which is maimed in the text:

Wherein he sought North and South
And oft he sperred with his mouth
In many a forrest wild
And in that countrey was there none
As farre as he had tid and gone
Neither wife, ne child.
Till him there came a great Giant
His name was cald Sir Oliphant
A perrilous man of deed
He swore, child, by Termagaunt
But if thou prycke out of my haunt
Anon I slea thy steed
Here is the Queene of Fairy
With Harpe and Pipe and Simphony
Within this place and lure
The child said als so mote I thee
To morrow will I meeten thee
When I haue mine armour

And

Annotations, with ſome Corrections.

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		And yet I hope par ma fay That thou ſhalt with this launce gay Abien it thzough thy mawe Thy hauberke ſhall I pierce if I may Oz it be full pzime of the day Foz here thou ſhalt be ſlawe.
84	1	Till foztune on the gallowes made him gape, &c.) This *Cræſus* was the richeſt of all other, yet when hee asked *Solon* whether hee thought him the happieſt of all other, *Solon* anſwered, Πρὶν δ' ἂν τὸν τελευτὴν μίαν φράσῃ: I thinke thee rich indeede *Cræſus*, and a King ouer many men, but that which thou askeſt, thou ſhalt not heare of mee till I heare how well thou dieſt.
85	2	Foz when degrees 15 were aſcended, &c.) Fifteene degrees of the equinoctiall riſe euery equall houre: ſo that when 15 degrees were aſcended in the Horizon after mid-night (for ſo he meaneth) then it is one of the clocke, about the which time is the firſt cocke, as they call it.
86	1	Where the ſunne is in his aſcenſion, &c.) Read thus: Ware the ſunne in his aſcenſion Ne find you not replete of humours hote, Foz if it doe, &c.)
86	1	One of the greateſt auctheurs that men read, &c.) namely *Valerius Maximus* in his firſt booke and the ſeuenth chapiter telleth this hiſtory of two Arcadians trauelling to Megara.
86	2	Two men would haue paſſed the ſee, &c.) Valerius in the ſame chapter hath this hiſtory of Simonides the Poet, but here it is enlarged by Chaucer.
86	2	Wonders bene, *read*, Whether dreames bene.
86	2	Lo in the life of Kenelme we read, &c.) This Kenelmus king of the Mercians was innocently ſlaine by his ſiſter Quenda, wherby he obtained the name of a martir.
87	1	Of Taurus was run fozty degrees and one, &c.) This place is miſprinted, as well in miſnaming of the ſigne, as the miſreckening the degrees of the ſun: for that the two and twenty of March, the ſunne is in Aries, and that but eleuen degrees or thereabouts, and hath in all but thirty degrees.
87	2	I haue well read Dan Burnell the aſſe, &c.) Nigellus Wireker, Monke of Canterbury, a man of great reading and iudgement, as Leland writeth of him, was not afraid to write of the faults of curates, & the miſpending of churchgoods euen to William Longſhamp Biſhop of Ely and Lord Chancellor of England, a man of all men vnder the Sun moſt malicious. He did write in verſe to the foreſaied William, a booke vnder the title of Brunellus, called *Speculum ſtultorum*: and this is it which Chaucer calleth here, Burnell the aſſe. He liued *Anno* 1200. in the daies of king Iohn.
88	2	I trow that yee haue dzonken wine Ape, &c.) *Vinum Apianum*: that maketh one in ſuch taking, that he cannot with a ſtraw hit a broad fanne: The cauſe is, for that after the drinking thereof vnmeaſurably one thing ſeemeth two to the eyes: as ſaith *Iuuenall: Geminis exurgit menſa lucernis.* And *Horace: Saltat Milonius, vt ſemel icto acceſſit feruor capiti, numeruſque lucernis.*

Annotations with some Corrections.

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88	2	**O Bacchus yblessed be thy holy name, &c.)** Therevpon wine is called by another Poet, λυσιφρονα, *i. Curam soluens.* And *Tibullus* saith, *Adde merum vinoque nouos compesce dolores.* And *Propertius* speaking to *Bacchus, Eleg.* 3. *Curarumque tuo sit medicina mero.* So likewise *Homer*: Δοῦ ἐ Κ πομποῦη μέτα μέγα λυσε πόνοιο Wine much helpeth a wearied man.
89	1	**Take any bird and put him in a cage, &c.)** Like *Ouid*: *Cum bene sint clausa cauea Pandione nata, Nititur in silnas quaquè redire suas.* And the Prouerbe is, *Naturam frænare potes, sed vincere nunquam.*
89	1	**On lower thing to persorme her delite, &c.)** Agreeing with that in *Homer*, ὃ γὰρ ἕκαστος, Φίλεται ὃ πολύφημος, τὸ μὲ κρῆθ', κρῆθ' πέφανται. To him that loueth, often times *Poliphemus*, that which is foule, seemeth faire.
89	1	**The worde must needes accord with the deed, &c.)** According to the old rule: *In cunctis rebus sint verba affinia rebus.* And much like vnto this is that which *Cicero* writeth in his 3. booke *De oratore*: *Si est honestas in rebus ipsis, existit ex rerum natura quidam splendor in verbis.*
89	2	**Wzien,** *read,* Wrien.
90	2	**Pilloure,** *read,* Pelure.
90	2	**Lange of many,** *read,* They feed of many.
90	2	**Miters mo then one or two,** *read,* Miters they weare more then one or two.
91	1	**Choweth,** *read,* Throweth.
92	1	**Rough,** *read,* Thus.
95	1	**Region,** *read,* Religion.
97	1	**Tenne at clocke it was, &c.)** This must needs be two of the clocke: for that at tenne of the clocke the Sunne is in Ascension.
97	1	**I meane Libia)** read Taurus: for Taurus is the moones exaltation.
102	1	**Lenes,** *read,* Sinnes.
121	2	**The lords son of Windsore)** This may seeme strange both in respect that it is not in the French, as also in that there was no lord Winsore in those daies. But I take it thus: That although it stand not so in the French coppy, yet Chaucer vpon some conceipt did adde it, thereby to gratifie Iohn of Gaunt, or some other of the sonnes of Edward the third; who might well be called the lord of Windsore, not only for that hee was borne there, but also because at that time when as this booke was translated, the king had newly builded the castle of Windsore in such beautifull sort as could be deuised by that prouident and discreet surueyour *William Wicham*, and therefore was euery way the right lord of Windsore.
146	2	**Iustinian the that made lawes, &c.)** In the eleuenth booke of the *Code*, *De mendicantibus validis*: where it is enacted, that it any shal begge hauing no cause either by need or maim, the same shalbe examined and searched: and who so shall find him to counterfet, and prooueth the same, *dominium eius consequetur*: and saith Bartol. He shall be punished *Ad arbitrium iudicis.*
154	1	**That he was well nigh wood, &c.)** This madnesse counted by some an *indecorum* in such a valiant man, for as much as it proceeded of earnest loue, doth nothing disgrace *Troylus.* For *Socrates* in *Phædro Platonis*, praising loue, saith that it is not to be despised, because it is a kind of madnesse, and making there foure kindes of madnesse, bee proueth them all to be profitable. *vaticinalem, misterialem, poeticum, & Amatorium.* With this last was *Troilus* possessed.
171	1	**At Dulcarnon)** Dulcarnon is a proportion in Euclide, lib 1. *Theorem.* 33. *propos.* 47. Which was found out by *Pythagoras* after an whole yeares study, and much beating of his

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his brain. In thankfulneſſe whereof he ſacrificed an Oxe to the gods, which ſacrifice he called Dulcarnon. Alexander Neckam an ancient writer in his book *De Naturis rerum*, compoundeth this word of *Dulia*, and *Caro*, and will haue Dulcarnon to bee *quaſi ſacrificium carnis*. Chaucer aptly applieth it to Creſeide in this place: ſhewing that ſhee was as much amazed how to anſwere Troylus, as Pythagoras was wearied to bring his deſire to effect.

171 2 **By ordall, &c.)** *Ordalia* is a triall of chaſtity by going through the fire, as did Emma the mother of Edward the confeſſor: els ouer hote burning cultes of yron barefooted, as did Gunegond the wife of Henry the fifteene Emperor of Romains, as writeth Crantius in his Chronicles of Almaine.

173 1 **Entreat,** *read,* Encreaſe.
195 1 **But,** *read,* Bour.
195 1 **Philologi,** *read,* Phlegone.

195 1 **Underſmiling ſhe was, &c.)** So Homer often calleth Venus φιλομμειδέα and Theocritus φιλάγελον: ſmiling or laughing Venus.

196 1 **Vane,** *read,* Way.

204 1 **Let him read Argonauticon)** That is, let him read Appollonius Rhodius Alexandrinus, who did write a booke ſo called, where he ſpeaketh of Iaſon & of them, which went with him to Colchis to fetch the golden fleece.

205 2 **Right as a wolfe, &c.)** Read, right as when a Wolfe findeth a lambe alone.

208 1 **The Oule all night aboue the balkes wond, &c.)** Owles are accounted among thoſe birds which are called *Aues ſiniſtræ*, becauſe (as they write of them) they are forerellers of ſorrow. *Ouid. Fœdaque fit volucris venturi nuncia luctus ignamus bubo, dirum mortalibus omen.* And *Virgil, Solaque culminibus ferali carmine bubo.*

232 2 **Dignitie,** *read,* Deſteny.

246 2 **The Storke)** This bird breedeth in the chimney tops of houſes, and as it is written of him, if the man or the wife commit adultery, he preſently forſaketh the place. Therefore Chaucer calleth him the wreker, or rather the bewraier of adultery.

247 2 **Thou murderer of the Heiſugge)** The Heiſugge called *Curruca*, is a little bird, in whoſe neſt, the Cuckow laieth her egs, and when they be hatched and growne to ſome bigneſſe, they eat the bird that bred them.

248 2 **Frere,** *read,* Farre.
254 2 **Diſdame,** *read,* Diſtaine.

272 1 **Athalaus)** read Athalanta who was daughter to Cæneus, and contending in running with them which did woe her, ſhee was at the laſt ouercome by Hippomenes, who caſt three golden apples in her way, which ſtaied her in taking of them vp, and ſo ſhee was ouercome.

279 1 **Anticlaudianus)** is a certaine booke written by one *Alanus de inſulis. Geſner.*

330 1 **To reken them all and alſo Roſamond)** This Roſamond, the fair daughter of Walter lord Clifford, was forced to be concubine to Henry the ſecond, who builded for her at Woodſtocke an houſe with a Labyrinth vnder the ground, much whereof at this day

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is to be ſeene: as alſo a goodly Bath or well called to this day Roſamonds well. In the end ſhe was poyſoned by Queene Elianor, as ſome write, and being dead, was buried at Godſtow in an houſe of Nonnes beſide Oxford: Not long ſince her graue was digged, where ſome of her bones were found, and her teeth ſo white (as the dwellers there report) that the beholders did much wonder at them.

352 2 Make vp the verſe thus: My name alas, my hart why makes thou ſtrange.

358 2 Conſeint, *read,* Forſent.

360 1 Qwene, *read,* Other then.

Theſe faults and many mo committed through the negligence of Adam Scriuener, notwithſtanding Chaucers great charge to the contrary, might haue ben amended in the text it ſelfe, if time had ſerued: Whereas now no more, then the Prologues only, are in that ſort corrected: which fell out ſo, becauſe they were laſt printed. Sentences alſo, which are many and excellent in this Poet, might haue ben noted in the margent with ſome marke, which now muſt be left to the ſearch of the Reader: of whom we craue in Chaucers behalfe that, which Chaucer in the end of one of his bookes requeſteth for himſelfe.

Qui legis, emendes oretenus, non reprehendas.

FINIS.

Faults eſcaped, and ſome things omitted in the newe Additions.

Epiſt. 3. Tullie in de Oratore, *read*, Tullie in his 3. Booke de Oratore. Ouid in de Arte amandi, *read*, Ovid in arte amandi.

In Chaucers Life. Geometricam, *read*, Geometriam. Edmundus de la Pole Dux, *read*, Comes. Ewhelme, *read*, Ewelme. Lyrne, *read*, Lyon. *Hæc ſacra*, read, *Hac ſacra*. This *Alice* had a daughter, &c. This diſcent gathered out of ſome Chronicles is found otherwiſe in the Office of the Heralds, and is therefore to be left out as altogither miſtaken. For this *Alice* daughter to the Earle of Salisbury, was by a former wife called *Eleanor*, daughter to *Thomas Holland* Earle of Kent.

Addition.

This *Alice* had a ſonne called *Iohn* by her third husband *William* Duke of Suffolke: as appeareth in the booke of the foundation of the hoſpitall of Ewhelme, (which is to be ſeene in Maſter *Stowes* Librarie) where the Maſter, Miniſter, and the poore men are enioined to gather themſelues at appointed times about the Tombe of *Thomas Chaucer* and *Maude* his wife, father and mother of the Ducheſſe, and there to ſay certaine praiers appointed: which beeing ended, one of them is to ſay openly in the Engliſh tongue: *God ſaue in body and ſoule our Soueraigne Lord the King: my Lord William Duke of Suffolke: my Lady Alice Ducheſſe of Suffolke his wife our Foundreſſe: my Lord Iohn their ſonne, and all Chriſtian people:* the brethren anſwering, *Amen*. This is added, becauſe ſome haue held, that ſhe neuer had child, but that the Duke had this ſonne by another wife: although indeed the deſcending of the *Chaucers* lands to the *Poles* and after to the King, might ſufficiently confute them. But what is it, wherein ſome will not cavill. Moſt worthieſt, *read*, moſt worthy.

Arg. of the Romant. More, *read*, Moe.

In the Authors cited. In hunting, *read*, In warring.

Catalogue of Lidgate. *Gaudite*, read, *Gaudete*. *Defendi Chriſti*, read, *Deſende Chriſte*. *Intereauit*, read, *Intermeauit*.

In the explanatiõ of the olde words. Oppium, *read*, Opium. Auelace, *read*, Anelace. Autem, *read*, Antem. Prickeweed, *read*, Prickwood. Couering, *read*, Coueting. Oriſon, *read*, Horizon. Skwes, *read*, Sewes.

Addition.

Relagor, Ratsbane. **Ruel bone**, of the French worde *Riolé*, that is, *diuerſly coloured*. An *Antiſtæchon* common in many wordes deriued from another language: as in Law, from *Loy*: and *Roy*, from *Rex*. **Depire**, *Philtrum*, id eſt, *Pharmacum amatorium*, A drinke cauſing one to loue.